Community Involvement in
the Restoration of Historic Urban Parks
- with a specific focus on the Heritage Lottery Fund's
Urban Parks Programme grant-aided park restoration projects

by

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Abstract

Community involvement is nowadays commonly recognised as an integral part of any successful environmental planning, development and regeneration process. Focusing on a selection of park restoration projects grant-aided by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in 1997 under the Urban Parks Programme (UPP), this research aimed primarily to investigate the involvement of local communities in the process of regenerating run-down historic urban parks. The study adopted a triangulation methodology which combined both quantitative and qualitative research approaches and employed multiple data-collecting techniques including a postal questionnaire survey, semi-structured interviews, focus groups and on-site park user surveys.

The results of the postal questionnaire survey reveal that park restoration partnerships between local authorities, private sector, voluntary organisations and local community-based groups can commonly be observed in many of the historic urban park restoration projects funded by the HLF under the UPP. Local authorities in general played the leading role in forming and running park restoration partnerships and they were the major contributors to the matched funding and the required technical support for the restoration projects. The involvement of friends groups and other local organisations in park restoration partnerships was relatively moderate, but the case studies of this research demonstrate that friends groups and other local organisations can have a more substantial influence on the overall development of the restoration project when the park restoration partnership is formally established.

The study has found that local communities have been extensively involved in the restoration process of historic urban parks. The two most significant objectives of engaging local communities in regenerating run-down historic urban parks are to generate a sense of ownership of the restoration project and its outcome and to better reflect local needs. Local communities tend to be more involved at early stages of the restoration project than at later stages. The methods that have been commonly used to involve local communities are mainly for information giving and consultation.

The seven in-depth case studies reveal that 'Friends of Parks' groups are in general the focus of community involvement in the UPP funded park restoration projects. 'Friends of Parks' groups can act as pressure groups, guardians and/or supporters of the park and to be the local community's voice. They can make considerable contributions to the regeneration of their local parks, mainly in the areas of publicity, park events and activities, fund raising, public

consultation, project monitoring, involving school children, and the ongoing management of the restored park.

The most important contributory factor to effective community involvement is a good relationship between the local authority and the 'Friends of Parks' groups, which can be achieved mainly by establishing friends groups' trust in the local authority's commitment to caring for urban parks and taking on board the friends groups' views and concerns. Project managers and other practitioners engaged in involving local communities in park restoration processes as well as executive members of 'Friends of Parks' groups are all required to have good communication skills in order to achieve effective community involvement.

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Lastly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my parents. Their immense support and continuous encouragement has been the cornerstone of my studies. I would also like to thank my older sister, Shiao-ching, who has constantly offered me various sorts of help, and my younger brother, Ming-yueh, who has from time to time given me warm encouragement. I cannot seal this statement of gratitude without thanking my boyfriend, David, who has always been there for me, and whose patience and company has supported me to overcome many difficult moments in completing this research.

Ming-chia Lai
Telford, UK
May 2002

To
my dear parents

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List of Abbreviations Frequently Used in the Thesis

CCT	Compulsory Competitive Tendering
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DETR	Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (1997 to June 2001)
DTLR	Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions (since June 2001)
DoE	Department of the Environment
DoNF	Department of the National Heritage
EH	English Heritage
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
ETRASC	Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Select Committee
GHS	Garden History Society
HLF	Heritage Lottery Fund
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
ILAM	Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management
LGA	Local Government Association
LI	Landscape Institute
NOF	New Opportunities Fund
PPG (1, 2, 3, ...)	Planning Policy Guidance Notes (produced by the then DoE and DETR and now the DTLR.)
TCP	Town and Country Parks (the public inquiry by the House of Commons Environment Sub Committee into town and country parks, with the memoranda submitted 1998-99 and the report published 1999. Hence TCP Inquiry, TCP memorandum and TCP Report.)
UGST	Urban Green Spaces Taskforce
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Key words: community involvement, 'Friends of Parks' group, historic urban park, partnership, restoration, Urban Parks Programme.

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PART ONE:

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter One
Introduction

"Every park needs its local friends, community-based groups, to put forward ideas for making them attractive places and a thriving natural habitat."

- Conway, H., People's Parks, 1991

1.1 Scope of the Research

In 1992, the Landscape Institute (LI) published a discussion paper about urban parks, drawing attention to the decline of many of Britain's traditional urban parks, as these spaces had become "unpleasant and unsafe" (Turner, 1992, p. 1) as a result of neglect and vandalism. The following year, the Garden History Society (GHS) and the Victorian Society jointly published the *Public Prospects: Historic Urban Parks under Threat* report, urging strongly for action to be taken to protect historic urban parks. Conway and Lambert (1993), authors of this report, pointed out that many British urban parks had become "places to avoid rather than places of pride and delight" (inside front cover) due to their historic importance and social value being under-valued, vandalism and neglect, continuous local authority budget cuts for their management and maintenance, and the threat of redevelopment.

Thenceforward, a renewed interest in issues relating to urban parks has grown considerably, demonstrated by the staging of a number of conferences (e.g. the Glasgow Cities 2000 Conference and the Future of Urban Parks Conference, both in 1994) and the publication of several reports (e.g. Greenhalgh and Worpole 1995 & 1996). As Greenhalgh and Worpole (1995) observe, the deteriorating quality of many of Britain's urban parks and open spaces has become "a matter of extensive public concern" (p. 1). The launch of the Urban Parks Programme (UPP) by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in January 1996 marked an important milestone in this new wave of park movement: for the first time in the history of park development in Britain, a huge sum of public money was poured into restoring run-down historic urban parks, gardens and other urban open spaces. A fuller description of the UPP and its effect is presented in Section 3.5 of this thesis.

This continuously growing concern about the serious decline of urban parks and the need to halt, or even reverse, this trend gained momentum when the Environment Sub-committee of the House of Commons Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Select Committee (ETRASC) initiated a Public Inquiry into Town and Country Parks (TCP Inquiry) in March

1999. A two-phase research project to assess the condition of local authority owned public parks throughout the United Kingdom and establish need in relation to these spaces to better inform decision-makers was initiated and funded by the HLF, Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR, which was restructured to become the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) in June 2000), English Heritage (EH) and the Countryside Agency (CA). The Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management (ILAM) and the Urban Parks Forum (UPFOR) were commissioned to undertaken the first and second phase of this study respectively, with Phase 1 Report being published in July 2000 (ILAM, 2000b) and Phase 2 Report in May 2001 (UPFOR, 2001a).

In addition, more debates on how to provide good quality urban parks and open spaces have been stimulated and issues relating to urban parks and open spaces have been moving up the political agenda. Most notably of these: urban parks have been included in the Government's new Urban White Paper (UWP) (DETR, 2000e), which has led to a number of further developments, including: the establishment of a governmental advisory committee, the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce (UGST), to advise the Government on its proposals for improving the quality of urban parks, play areas and green spaces (UGST, 2001); the DTLR funding to the Urban Parks Forum (UPFOR) for three years; and a DTLR commissioned research project on improving urban parks, play areas and green spaces which was undertaken by the Department of Landscape, the University of Sheffield (Dunnett *et al.*, 2002). More discussion about the TCP inquiry and its influence can be found in Section 3.6.

One of the key themes that has run through the publications mentioned above and, indeed, a lot of other literature about urban parks and open spaces, the TCP Inquiry, the UWP and the final report of the UGST (published in May 2002) is the importance of and necessity to involve local communities in the process of revitalising run-down urban parks and in the provision and management of these spaces. Barber (1993) argues that local people and special interest groups play an important role in helping to protect public parks. Turner (1994) states that "parks need a very much greater degree of community involvement in their control". Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996) regard community involvement as the key to successful urban parks and open spaces.

While this belief in the value of community involvement is prevalent, its practice in park development specifically has been relatively restricted (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996), in particular prior to the advent of the UPP. This funding programme explicitly requires community involvement in the development and implementation of the historic urban park restoration project, and where appropriate in the long-term management of the park once it is restored (HLF, 1996). In addition to providing considerable sums of capital investment for the

regeneration of many of Britain's historic urban parks, the UPP has also provided researchers who are interested in community involvement in parks provision and management excellent opportunities to look at issues relating to this subject. For instance, the popularity of the UPP has been evident, but what about the idea of involving local communities in the restoration process of historic urban parks? How has community involvement been put into practice and achieved in those park restoration projects funded by the UPP? What have been the benefits of involving local communities in developing and implementing the restoration scheme?

In Britain, empirical studies on the subject of community involvement have largely focused on the area of urban regeneration (e.g. MacFarlane, 1993; Clarke, 1995; Taylor, 1995; McArthur *et al.*, 1996; Duncan and Thomas, 2000). Only a relatively small number of research projects have been undertaken to look at the involvement of local communities in other various subject areas such as urban nature conservation (Millward, 1983), greening (Bradley, 1986; JURUE, 1986; GFA Consulting, 1996), the designation of Conservation Areas (Pendlebury and Townshend, 1999), the creation of Millennium Greens in England (Curry, 2000), and the development of Estuary Management Plans (Roe, 2000b). In such studies, issues concerning community involvement in urban park-related projects were sometimes touched on, to a varied extent. The research carried out by Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996) is possibly by far the one that has examined the involvement of local communities in the provision of urban parks in the greatest depth in a British context (more research on this subject has been undertaken in the United States of America, to be discussed in Appendix 4.2). However, community involvement was only one of the ten areas of good practice in urban parks which their study highlighted.

Thus, with a specific focus on a selection of UPP grant-aided park restoration projects, this current research aims to answer questions such as those posed in the paragraph before the preceding one. In addition to providing valuable information about community involvement in historic urban parks regeneration, this study is intended to deepen the current knowledge and understanding of this subject area. Moreover, it is anticipated that the findings of this research will be of substantial value for people who are concerned about the restoration of historic urban parks and the involvement of local communities in such processes, be it environmental design-related professionals, local authority officers, practitioners, or park-based community groups.

1.2 The Research Context

From the last decade of the 20th century, the delivery of a better quality of life for all of its people has become one of the British Government's most important ultimate goals in the drawing up of public policy. Sustainable development, urban regeneration, and, in the most

recent years, the restoration of historic urban parks, are some of the cross-cutting issues closely relating to the achievement of this goal. These issues are in many ways interrelated with each other. One of the common points that can be found in many of the Government's policies and initiatives addressing these cross-cutting issues is the importance of involving local communities in the process of achieving the objective of the policy or initiative, and hence people's quality of life can be improved. The following discussion gives a brief overview of this broader policy context, as illustrated in Figure 1.1.1, from which the current study emerged. This helps to establish a sounder basis for the research.

Figure 1.1.1 The research context
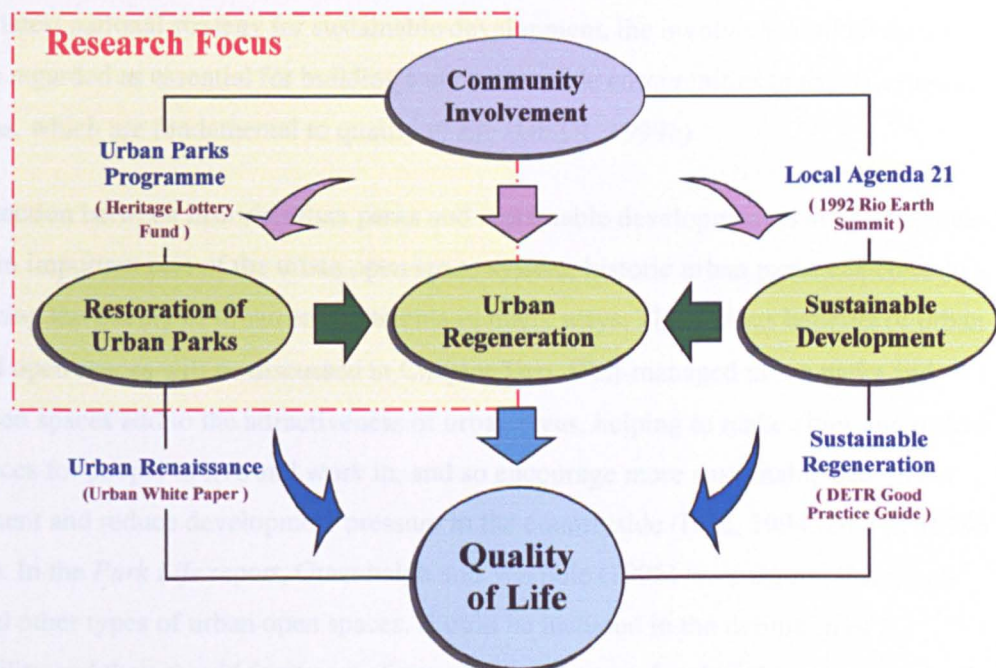
(1) Sustainable development and Local Agenda 21

At the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, nearly 180 countries embraced Agenda 21, the action plan to promote sustainable development worldwide (United Nations, 1992; Young, 1996). In recognition that local action would be vital for fulfilling the objectives of Agenda 21, every local authority was required to adopt, by 1996, a Local Agenda 21 (LA21) for the community (United Nations, 1992; Sibley, 1998). In 1994, the British Government published its first nationwide strategy for sustainable development (DoE, 1994, Cm. 2426), in which it is recognised that sustainable development in urban areas is closely associated with quality of life. The revised United Kingdom strategy for sustainable development, published in 1999, further acknowledges that "at the heart of sustainable development is the simple idea of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come" (DETR, 1999b).

Because the level of their governance is the closest to the general public, local authorities have a vital role in promoting sustainable development (United Nations, 1992). The need for local authorities to involve local communities, including individuals, local organisations and private enterprises, through consultation and consensus building, in forming strategies for LA21 was specifically mentioned in Chapter 28 of Agenda 21 (Ibid.). As Bishop *et al.* (1994) have observed, the British Government's commitment to advancing LA21 has brought with it a demand upon local authorities to develop their policies with an integral element of community involvement. Many writers, for instance, Young (1996), Davidson (1998), Sibley (1998), Curry (2000) and the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (2002) also address the important link between community involvement and LA21. Furthermore, in Britain's latest national strategy for sustainable development, the involvement of all sectors of society is regarded as essential for building truly sustainable communities in towns, cities and rural areas, which are fundamental to quality of life (DETR, 1999b).

The connection between historic urban parks and sustainable development is at least twofold. First, as an important part of the urban open space system, historic urban parks can contribute to enhancing the quality of urban environments in many ways. The various benefits of urban parks and open spaces will be discussed in Chapter Two. Well-managed urban parks and public open spaces add to the attractiveness of urban areas, helping to make cities and towns better places for people to live and work in, and so encourage more sustainable patterns of development and reduce development pressure in the countryside (DoE, 1994; DETR, 1999b & 2000e). In the *Park Life* report, Greenhalgh and Worpole (1995) have argued that urban parks, and other types of urban open spaces, should be included in the definition of sustainability and they should form part of any set of indicators developed to measure sustainability. They also suggest that local authorities should ensure urban parks and open spaces be a key part of their LA21 policies (Ibid.).

Second, historic urban parks are part of the historic environment. As EH (1997b) has pointed out, the historic environment makes a major contribution to local distinctiveness and quality of life, both of which are important elements of sustainability. The need to conserve and re-use local heritage and to ensure that any development takes account of the historic landscape is also acknowledged in the new sustainable development strategy for the United Kingdom (DETR, 1999b).

(2) Urban regeneration, urban renaissance and sustainable regeneration

Since the late 1960s, urban regeneration has been an area targeted by successive governmental policies and initiatives such as the Urban Programme, Urban Development Corporations, Inner City task Forces, City Challenge, Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and New Deal for

Communities (NDC) to name but a few. In February 1998, the British Government published a White Paper, *Planning for the Communities of the Future*, which was mainly concerned about the best use of previously developed sites to meet the demand for new homes (DETR, 1998a). The then Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott stated in the forward of the document that the renaissance of Britain's towns and cities "go hand in hand" with the protection of the countryside (Ibid.). It was proposed in this document that at least 60% of the estimated additional 4.4 million households needed in England between 1991 and 2016 should be built on previously developed land, particularly those located in urban areas, by 2008. This unquestionably relates closely to the successful regeneration of deprived urban areas.

The establishment of the Urban Task Force (UTF), chaired by Lord Rogers of Riverside, in April 1998 reinforced the need for an urban renaissance, which, in essence, was the regeneration of cities and towns and the communities within them (UTF, 1998). With the reuse of previously developed sites in and around major conurbations of England being a major focus of their work, the UTF sought to answer the question about how much housing and related activities could be accommodated within urban areas so that sustainable urban communities could be built and the quality of urban life improved (ibid.). The work completed by the UTF was adopted to advise the Government on its publication of an Urban White Paper, which was subsequently published in November 2000 and titled *Our Towns and Cities: The Future – Delivering an Urban Renaissance*.

The necessity to incorporate sustainable development into the process of urban regeneration was explicitly pointed out in the bidding guidance for SRB Round 5 (DETR, 1998e). In an Annex to this document, local authorities were required to take into account the contribution of regeneration proposals to sustainable development when preparing SRB bids (Ibid.). The guidance also identified a number of key aspects of sustainability in connection with urban regeneration which should be considered in developing regeneration proposals. The encouragement of community-based initiatives which enable community involvement in environmental improvements and the promotion of greening as an easy way of integrating economic, environmental, social and educational benefits in infrastructure and development projects were two of those aspects being identified (Ibid.).

The connection between sustainable development and urban regeneration has been further intensified by the publication of a good practice guide for sustainable regeneration, issued by the DETR in October 1998 (DETR, 1998f). Focusing on SRB partnerships, the guide indicated that local regeneration partnerships should link SRB working with Agenda 21, as a wide range of schemes and projects within the SRB supported programmes conformed to the principles of Agenda 21, most notably being the principles of community involvement and empowerment

(DETR, 1998f). Indeed, in addition to the SRB funded programmes, community involvement and partnerships (between the public, private and voluntary sectors and local communities) have been a key theme running through the British Government's successive regeneration policies and programmes (in particular those initiated in the most recent decade), including the Urban White Paper. More discussion in this respect is given in the first section of Chapter Four and Appendix B.

Urban parks and the regeneration of cities and towns are interrelated. Greenhalgh and Worpole (1995) argue that placing urban parks at the centre of central government and local authorities' regeneration policies and funding strategies, and including urban parks within SRB bids where feasible, is one possible way of restoring the vitality of urban parks and the contribution these spaces can make to urban as well as social renewal. Regeneration initiatives such as the SRB have become a new funding source for park restoration (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996) (see Section 3.3). On the other hand, it has been demonstrated by a number of international examples, such as Barcelona, Paris and New York, that urban parks can make a considerable contribution to urban regeneration (ETRASC, 1999b). In Britain, Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996) report in *People, Parks and Cities* two examples (Hulme and Castlefield, both in Manchester) in which the refurbishment of existing parks and creation of new parks have been central to the regeneration of the two areas.

Urban parks and open spaces, for their significance in terms of leisure, recreation and cultural policies, the role they play in reflecting the sense of community and place, and the powerful economic function they may have, are identified in the *Sustainable Regeneration Good Practice Guide* (DETR, 1998f) as one of the policy areas which can contribute to sustainable regeneration. Moreover, in the latest Urban White Paper, the importance of well-managed urban parks, together with children's play areas and other types of green spaces, to enhancing the quality of urban environment and the quality of life is acknowledged, and actions that have already or should be undertaken to improve the management and maintenance of these spaces are specified (DETR, 2000e) (see Section 3.5).

(3) The restoration of historic urban parks

There has always been a strong association between urban parks (and open spaces) and the quality of life in terms of both people's perception and the real effects on various aspects of urban living (Burgess *et al.*, 1988; Llewelyn-Davies Planning Environment Trust Associates Ltd, 1992; Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995). Morphet (1994) indicates that parks are important in people's consciousness of quality of life or place regardless of the way people use parks. Welch (1995) also points out that even people who rarely or never use parks perceive an improved quality of life because of the existence of parks and would consider urban areas to be

less attractive and claustrophobic without parks. The contribution that urban parks can make to improve the quality of urban environment and the overall quality of urban life is given more discussion in the second section of Chapter Two.

The increasing awareness that many of Britain's historic urban parks are in need of restoration as well as the necessity of involving local communities in this process has been briefly described in the previous section. The connection between urban parks and sustainable development and urban regeneration also has been discussed earlier in this section. In short, community involvement has been included as an integral element of the successful regeneration of historic urban parks in restoration projects funded by the HLF under the UPP and this forms the focus of this research.

1.3 Definitions of Key Terms

'Community', 'community involvement' and 'urban parks' are widely-used terms which possess different meanings to different people for various purposes. By drawing on some definitions and discourses on these terms, in particular those associated with environmental planning and development, the following discussion aims to establish their meanings in this thesis.

1.3.1 The community

As Wilcox (1994) has pointed out, 'community' can be a "problem term" (p. 5) when it is used by practitioners as a "blanket description for all those other people" (ibid.). Many writers, for instance, Florin and Wandersman (1990), Hill (1994), Hamdi and Gorthert (1997), and Richardson and Baggott (1998) have noted that there are two key dimensions in defining a community, namely spatial and social dimensions. In terms of the spatial dimension, communities of place are formed by inhabitants who share a geographically defined territory, e.g. an estate or a neighbourhood. While with regards to the social dimension, communities of interest are comprised of people who share some form of commonality, be it as age, gender, ethnicity, religion, culture and language, profession, leisure pursuits, values, or needs (Florin and Wandersman, 1990; Hill, 1994; Wilcox, 1994; Richardson and Baggott, 1998).

Although the spatial dimension alone can be used to define a community (e.g. Carley, 1995), several writers, including Taylor (1995) and Hamdi and Gorthert (1997), adopt both the spatial and social dimension and argue that the community are the residents of a specific area who have some common interests (e.g. living on the same estate or having similar needs). Furthermore, it is now commonly recognised that an area usually contains a number of communities of which the members are brought together by shared interests and these communities may share all or just part of the same area (Taylor, 1992; Wilcox, 1994; DETR,

1997; Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997).

In the context of urban and rural regeneration, noting that all regeneration programmes are intended to benefit defined areas, the DETR (1997) defines the community as people who live or work within those target areas and are intended to benefit from those regeneration initiatives. Many historic urban parks are nowadays located in densely populated urban areas and local people usually are the major users of most parks (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995). Thus, a similar meaning of the community to that defined by the DETR (1997) is adopted in this thesis. In other words, for the purpose of this research, **the community means primarily local residents who live in areas surrounding an historic urban park and whose life will be affected by the restoration of the park**. They may be in organised groups or as individuals without joining any local organisations. Additionally, as many historic urban parks are important local amenities, local schools and businesses should also be considered as part of the community.

1.3.2 Community involvement

'Community involvement' and many other phrases such as 'public participation', 'public involvement', 'community participation', 'citizen participation' and 'citizen involvement' have been used by many different writers, sometimes as synonyms, to describe the process of engaging local people in environment-related planning, development and regeneration activities (e.g. in Johnson, 1984; Bishop *et al.*, 1994; Hill, 1994; McArthur, 1995; DETR, 1997; Wild and Marshall, 1997; and Foley and Martin, 2000). In addition, a number of other terms, including 'consultation', 'empowerment', 'capacity building', 'partnership' and 'community development', have also frequently been associated with community involvement or public participation (e.g. in Florin and Wandersman, 1990; Wilcox, 1994; Taylor, 1995; Abbott, 1996; Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997; Roe, 2000a; Seymoar, 2001).

As far as the meaning of 'community involvement' is concerned, Taylor (1995), in the context of estate regeneration, defines the term as "anything from telling residents about decisions already taken to giving residents control over services and decisions" (p. 107). A similar definition of 'community involvement' is adopted in the DETR's guide for practitioners to involve local communities in urban and rural regeneration, in which the phrase is used to describe "any effort to involve the community in regeneration, from informing people of what decisions have been made and what is planned, through to delegating full decision making powers and responsibility for expenditure to a community organisation to deliver some element – or the totality – of a regeneration programme" (p. 10). Both definitions suggest that there is a wide range of activities which endow local communities with different degrees of influence or control over decisions, touching on the concept that there are different levels of

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community involvement which will be discussed in Chapter Four. Indeed, the delegation of decision-making power and the existence of different forms of participation are the two most striking themes emerging from a brief review of a number of discourses on the meanings of public/citizen/community participation, including Johnson, 1984; Bamberber, 1986; Wulz, 1986; Florin and Wandersman, 1990; Wilcox, 1994; Tower, 1995; Atkinson and Cope, 1997).

In the context of historic urban park restoration, the phrase 'community involvement' is therefore adopted to mean a process in which local communities, either as individual or as organised groups, are engaged in various activities which allow them to exercise different degrees of decision-making power, ranging from no to full control, over the outcomes of the restoration project. This process may be initiated either by local communities themselves or by people who are responsible for managing and developing the restoration project, or who control funds and other resources.

1.3.3 Urban parks and historic urban parks

Within the literature about parks (e.g. Lasdun, 1991; LI, 1992; Conway and Lambert, 1993; Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995 & 1996; Barber, 1996b; ETRASC, 1999; ILAM, 2000b; Reeves, 2000; and Woudstra, 2000), the terms 'urban park' and 'public park', and sometimes 'municipal park', have to a great extent been used loosely as synonyms. Despite the term 'urban park' being so extensively used, surprisingly, there is not a single definition of this term found in the course of the literature review on this subject. Although not all public parks are in the city, as many country parks are publicly owned and managed, definitions of the term 'public park' are frequently associated with the urban setting. For instance, Chadwick (1966) defines the public park as "an area of land laid out primarily for public use amidst essentially urban surrounding" (p 19); and the Landscape Institute (1992) defines the public park as "a special type of urban space: vegetated, owned by the public and laid out for recreation" (p 5).

Municipal parks are one of the various types of public parks and, as the term 'municipal' suggests, are associated with the power local authorities have had to provide parks since the 1870s (Conway, 1991). Historically, the major difference between municipal parks and other types of public parks lay in the accessibility of the space. As Conway (1991) has argued, while the term 'public park' implied free and unrestricted accessibility, this had not always been the case. Using Regent's Park in London, a royal public park, as an example, she indicated that only a restricted area of the park was accessible to the public for many years. In addition, some other public parks required payment of an admission fee or only permitted free access for limited periods of time (e.g. Derby Arboretum prior to 1882) (Ibid.). In contrary, "the unalienable right of public access for recreation" (Conway, 1991, p.6) for all time was secured in municipal parks. However, this distinction gradually became blurred as local authorities

increasingly became the largest provider of public parks, either through creating parks themselves or by acquiring parks from private estates.

Urban parks are often considered as part of a whole range of different types of open spaces in urban areas (e.g. Morphet, 1994; Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1994). In the case of the UPP, urban parks, together with gardens and other types of urban open spaces such as "town squares, town moors, seaside promenade gardens, memorial gardens, historic cemeteries" (HLF, 1996, p.1), are embraced in the definition of 'park'. The confusion about what constitutes a park or an open space and the lack of clearly defined definitions of these spaces has been acknowledged in the *Local Authority Owned Parks Needs Assessment: Phase 1* report (ILAM, 2000b). However, any attempt to clarify the definitions of the various types of parks and open spaces can be lengthy and undoubtedly beyond the scope of this thesis.

For the purpose of this research, the term 'urban parks' is used to refer to formal parks that are located in urban areas and owned and/or managed by local authorities, charitable bodies, or other non-for-profit organisations for public uses. Hence, the phrase 'historic urban parks' is used to mean urban parks that are of national, regional or local historic importance. The most basic criterion adopted by both the HLF (1996) and EH (2000b) to consider an urban park as 'historic' is that the park should be at least thirty years old. Indeed, as almost all of Britain's urban parks were created prior to the Second Ward War (ILAM, 2000b), this "30 year rule" (Ibid., p. 18) is not a difficult criterion to meet for the vast majority of Britain's urban parks. With regards to historic importance, a number of criteria can be used to evaluate the historic interest of an urban park, including whether the site is included on a national or local listing system for parks and gardens of historic significance, the association of the site with a listed building or a designated Conservation Area, the visibility of historic features in the physical structure of the site, and the association of the site with any historic events (HLF, 1996; ILAM, 2000b). In short, any urban park that has been awarded grants or is qualified for funding from the HLF under the UPP are regarded as an 'historic urban park' in this study.

1.4 Aims of the Research

As noted earlier, this research attempts to answer questions such as how has community involvement been put into practice and achieved in the restoration process of historic urban parks? What have been the benefits of involving local communities in developing and implementing the restoration scheme? By focusing specifically on a selection of park restoration projects which were awarded grants by the HLF under the UPP in 1997, this study aims to:

- examine the composition of partnerships formed specifically for the restoration of historic urban parks, with a focus on the funding, technical-support and community/

voluntary sector partners;

- explore the process of community involvement in the regeneration of historic urban parks, focusing in particular on the objectives and methods of involving local communities; and

- investigate the effectiveness of involving local communities in restoring historic urban parks, focusing on contributory factors of as well as constraints on effective community involvement.

1.5 Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis contains ten chapters which are structured into three parts. The first part provides the historical, theoretical and policy background to the study. The second part deals with the design and methodology of the research. The final part includes research findings and discussions. This structure is intended to enhance the clarity and comprehensibility of the thesis. The chapters comprising each part and the themes covered in every chapter are explained below.

Part One: Introduction and Literature Review

Chapter One begins with a discussion of the scope of the research, followed by an overview of the broader policy context which relates closely to the study. The main aims of the research are also explicated in this chapter.

Chapter Two reviews, briefly, the historical development of urban parks in Britain, the value of such spaces, and the factors causing the pervasive decline of many urban parks.

Chapter Three looks at measures that have been taken to protect historic urban parks, focusing on situations in England. These include the development of national and local listing system for historic parks and gardens, the protection provided by the planning system, current approaches to the restoration of historic urban parks, and new funding opportunities that have become available to urban parks in the most recent decade. A fuller discussion about the Heritage Lottery Fund's Urban Parks Programme and the House of Commons Environment Sub-committee's Town and Country Parks Inquiry is given in this chapter.

Chapter Four commences with an overview of the development of community involvement, with a specific focus on urban regeneration, followed by a discussion of the key elements of community involvement. The chapter then continues by exploring how local communities have been involved in bringing improvements to public urban parks and open spaces in a British context.

Part Two: Research Design and Methodology

Chapter Five describes how the research was developed and carried out. The chapter starts by

outlining the key research concept and explaining the rationale for selecting the 1997 UPP funded park restoration projects as the focus of the study. This is followed by a description of the research design. The rest of this chapter gives detailed explanations to the research approaches and data-colleting techniques adopted in the study.

Part Three: Results and Discussions

Chapter Six presents the results of a postal questionnaire survey to 58 park restoration projects awarded grants by the HLF under the UPP in 1997. Some background information of the survey sample is described first, followed by a discussion of the composition of partnerships in the surveyed restoration projects. The chapter then continues by examining the process of community involvement in these surveyed projects.

Chapter Seven presents the results of individual case-study restoration projects. The discussion for each site includes a brief introduction to the restoration project, a description of the methods adopted to involve the local community, and a discussion of the involvement of the 'Friends of Parks' group where such a group exists. The involvement of local communities in the long-term management of the restored park is also discussed in each case study.

Chapter Eight is the longest chapter of this thesis. It presents the results of cross-case analysis of the seven case studies. The chapter discusses first the matched funding, the preparation of the HLF bid and the development of the restoration project. This is followed by examining the process of involving local communities in the case-study restoration projects. Comparisons of the involvement of local communities in the long-term management of restored urban parks and 'Friends of Parks' groups' involvement in the regeneration of historic urban parks are then presented. Finally, the chapter looks at the effectiveness of community involvement in the case-study restoration projects.

Chapter Nine presents the results of on-site park user surveys at the seven case-study parks. It starts by examining a number of demographic characteristics of the survey respondents, followed by looking at a number of park usage variables. The chapter continues to explore general park users' awareness of the restoration project and their participation. In addition, a discussion about park users' attitudes towards community involvement in the restoration of historic urban parks, measured by a Likert-type attitude scale, is also presented in this chapter.

Chapter Ten discusses first the findings of the current research in relation to the main research questions. Conclusions are consequently drawn based on the key research findings presented in the previous chapters. Finally, a range of recommendations for the achievement of effective community involvement in park restoration processes are made and a number of possible areas for future research are identified.

Appendices

In addition to the ten chapters, this thesis also contains five appendices (A to E) which provide supplementary information to some of the main chapters. As a supplement to Chapter Three, Appendix A gives an overview to the international context of historic parks and gardens conservation and discusses the national listing systems for historic parks and gardens and the protection provided by the planning system for these spaces in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Appendix B complements Chapter Four, with the first part of this appendix giving a fuller review of the relationship between community involvement and urban regeneration initiatives, and the second part providing American experience of community involvement in improving urban parks and open spaces.

Appendix C relates to Chapter Five. It includes all the data-collecting instruments used in this research and some relevant records of the data-collecting work.

Appendix D supplements Chapter Seven by providing an introduction to and outlining the community context of each case-study site.

Finally, as a supplement to Chapter Nine, Appendix E presents the detailed statistical analysis outputs of the on-site park user surveys.

Chapter Two
Historic Urban Parks in Britain

Britain has a long history of providing public parks for its people. From small towns to big cities, parks have become an essential element of the urban fabric. For more than one and a half centuries, they have been used by the public for various purposes: to get fresh air, to escape from the stressful urban life, to take a stroll or walk a dog, to play football or cricket, and to sit and watch the seasons changing and the world going by.

Two themes, the value and decline of historic urban parks, have constantly appeared in literature on urban parks (e.g. Turner, 1992; Conway and Lambert, 1993; Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995; ETRASC, 1999b). Instead of seeing these two themes as contrary views, the value of urban parks and reasons for their decline should be considered together as they represent two important facets of the whole issue. Only when people understand how important urban parks are to the quality of life and what the factors resulting in their deterioration are, can positive and proactive actions be taken to reverse their decline.

In order to have an overall understanding of the research subject, this chapter begins with a brief review of the historical development of urban parks in Britain. The benefits of such spaces and the reasons for their decay are then examined respectively in the second and third sections.

2.1 The Historical Development of Urban Parks in Britain

A complete chronological review of the history of urban parks in the United Kingdom is beyond the scope of this thesis. Detailed information on this subject can be referred to in a number of publications, including Chadwick (1966), Conway (1991), Lasdun (1991) and Jordan (1994a). However, a summary of the historical development of urban parks, based primarily on the first three references noted above, is outlined below.

2.1.1 Impetus to the development of the park movement

It is commonly recognised that the Select Committee on Public Walks (SCPW) in 1833 initiated the creation of public urban parks in Britain (Chadwick, 1966; Conway, 1991; Lasdun, 1991; Whitehand, 1992). In the report of the select committee, the value of public parks in improving the health of and providing accessible open space for recreation for working-class urban dwellers was officially acknowledged. The SCPW not only undertook the first survey of

accessible open space in the major towns and cities of England but also recommended action for the future, which included a park for the East End of London (i.e. Victoria Park as the recommendation was acted upon) and several other sites (e.g. Hackney Downs and Kennington Common) for public walks in London (Conway, 1966; Conway, 1991; Lasdun, 1991).

From the 1830s onwards, a park movement, as Conway (1991) has identified, began to develop. Public parks started to be created first only in major industrial centres of the northwest of England (e.g. Derby, Sheffield, Manchester) and in Glasgow, Scotland and increasingly in almost every city and town in Britain (Conway, 1991). By the end of the 1930s, every large town had not only one park but also a range of public open spaces such as gardens, promenades and recreation grounds (Conway and Lambert, 1993). The main impetus to the development of the park movement can be summarised into the following factors: (1) legislation; (2) concern with recreation; (3) economic incentive; and (4) civic consciousness.

(1) Legislation

Conway (1991) points out that the park movement accelerated considerably after 1845, with more than three times the number of parks opened between 1845 and 1859 than in the period of 1833 to 1845. The enactment of the Towns Improvement Clauses Act 1847 and the Public Health Act 1848 were the first catalysts to promote the creation of parks. The former allowed rates to be used for acquiring land for parks, but local authorities still were not granted the power to maintain parks which were given to them as gifts (Conway, 1991; Welch, 1991). It was the 1848 act which empowered local authorities to purchase as well as maintain land for parks (Conway, 1991; Lasdun, 1991).

The number of parks continued to grow substantially during the 1860s and 1870s, partly as a result of the increasingly important role of private benefactors in park development. Private benefactors were encouraged to donate land and/or money for creating public parks by the passing of the Recreation Ground Act 1859 and the Public Improvements Act 1860 (Conway, 1991). The 1859 act restricted the donation of land not exceeding £1,000 and this provision was extended to land up to 20 acres in the Public Parks, Schools and Museums Act 1871 (Conway, 1991; Jordan, 1994a).

The Public Health Act 1875 further enhanced the development of the park movement, for it was the first major statutory provision which enabled the local authority not only to levy its own rate but also to raise central government loans for acquiring or maintaining land for public recreation (Conway, 1991; Lasdun, 1991; DETR, 1999c). In addition, the geographical spreading of the park movement was broadened from the industrial towns of northwest

England to seaside resorts (e.g. Hartings and Ilfracombe) and smaller towns and suburbs not particularly associated with industry (e.g. Croydon and Chester), as a result of the enactment of the 1875 act (Conway, 1991).

(2) Concern with recreation

One of the reasons for the provision of public parks being promoted at the early stage of the park movement related to the concern over working-class recreation. With cities and towns became increasingly congested due to the rapid growth of population, and also with the expansion of urban centres and enclosure of commons which were traditionally used for recreation, the availability of open spaces for public recreation decreased (Conway, 1991). Parks promoters, in tune with social reformers and moralists, considered that most forms of working-class recreation, such as public houses and pleasure gardens, had a physically, socially and morally destructive impact on society. Public parks, on the other hand, would provide suitable recreations to working-class urban dwellers (Ibid.).

The park movement was further heightened after the late 1840s as a consequence of the 1847 Ten Hour Act and the Saturday Half-Holiday Movement. The former reduced the length of a normal working day to ten hours and the latter, which was initiated in 1843 in Manchester and grew steadily throughout the 1850s in northern England, pushed through the cessation of work at 1.00 p.m. on Saturday (Conway, 1991). As Saturday half-day-off became widespread in 1880 (Welch, 1919) and the length of a normal working day continued to decrease gradually during the course of the 19th century (Conway, 1991), the time available for recreation increased.

(3) Economic incentive

Economic considerations were the chief incentive for the development of some public parks. There are four types of considerations. First and in general, recreation and exercise in the open air was recognised to be able to improve the physical fitness of city dwellers and therefore would consequently improve their productivity and extend their economically active life (Welch, 1991).

The second type of economic incentive associated the creation of public parks with housing development. The economic benefit of parks in boosting the value of building land was first recognised in the creation of Regent's Park, London, a royal public park, in the early 19th century. The layout of the park was incorporated with housing development surrounding the park, commissioned by the Prince Regent and designed by Nash (Chadwick, 1966; Taylor, 1998). Initially only accessible to inhabitants of the surrounding villas, the park gradually became more accessible to the public. As Conway (1991) points out, the importance of Regent's Park to the later development of the park movement resided in the economic lessons

to be learned from combining the development of a park with housing development.

Victoria Park in East End of London was developed not only to provide open space for public recreation, but also to stop the decline in land values in that area through housing development around the park (Conway, 1991). In addition to speculative developers who clearly saw the benefit of public parks in raising the value of building land, private benefactors also quickly recognised the interest in the land surrounding a park which they retained. The former was exemplified by Richard Vaughan Yates, who commissioned the development of Prince's Park, Liverpool; while examples for the latter included Vernon Park in Stockport, donated by Lord Vernon, and Albert Park in Middlesbrough, donated by H. Bolckow (Conway, 1991; Lasdun, 1991).

Apart from being an incentive to park development, housing development on land surrounding a park was also considered as a means to raise money for developing and maintaining a park. This was usually achieved through including sites for housing development in the land for park development (e.g. Newsham, Stanley and Sefton Parks in Liverpool) or selling part of the land acquired for developing a public park as building plots for houses (e.g. Birkenhead Park in Birkenhead) (Lasdun, 1991). Consequently, it became a government policy that where a new park development was proposed in cities, an extra strip of land would be acquired for the development of housing estates (Lasdun, 1991).

The development of Victoria Park in Bath demonstrated the third and fourth types of economic incentive. The former was to improve the tourist facilities of the town so as to reverse the effect of recession at the time (Lasdun, 1991). The latter was to alleviate the unemployment problem through creating new jobs in the process of laying out the park. In the case of Victoria Park, Bath, over 200 people who became unemployed because of the recession were given employment (Ibid.). Several parks created in the 1860s in Lancashire, such as Miller Park in Preston, Corporation Park in Blackburn and Alexandra Park in Oldham, also used unemployed cotton workers, caused by the cotton famine, a result of the American Civil War, in park construction (Conway, 1991; Lasdun, 1991).

(4) Civic consciousness

As Conway (1991) has observed, local authorities in the late 1870s obtained an increased sense of civic consciousness as they gradually acquired the powers which enabled them to confront some of the major urban problems at that time. Parks, together with town halls, libraries, museums and art galleries, were considered as something that could be used to measure civic consciousness. Such a view could be illustrated by the acquisition of Roundhay Park advocated by the Mayor of Leeds to the Council in 1871, who argued that the purchase of

the park would contribute to the building up of civic pride and status (Ibid.). Public parks increasingly became a symbol of civic pride (Jordan, 1994a), and, by the end of the 19th century, every local authority, no matter how small, found it needed its own park (ETRASC, 1999b).

Civic consciousness was also shown in various features within the parks, because it was regarded as an aspect of local pride (Conway, 1991; Conway, 1994). As it is noted in the TCP Report (ETRASC, 1999b), local authorities competed intensely with each other on who had the best show of spring bulbs, roses or bedding-out plants, flowering clocks, or floral coats-of-arms throughout the first half of the 20th century.

2.1.2 The means of creating urban parks

Historically, public urban parks in Britain were created in a variety of ways, including: (1) public use of royal parks in London; (2) central government grants or loans; (3) local authority initiatives; (4) philanthropy of private benefactors; (5) public subscription; and (6) speculative developments. While some urban parks were the result of one of the above means, some were brought into being by the combined effect of two or more of these means.

(1) Public use of royal parks in London

Public use of London's royal parks can be traced back to the 1630s when Hyde Park was opened to the public by Charles I (Chadwick, 1966; Conway, 1991). Royal parks which became accessible to the public in the 19th century were developed in two major ways: initiatives of the Crown and Parliament actions in responses to public demand. Examples of the former include Regent's Park and St James's Park, which remain as royal parks today. Examples of the latter are Victoria Park and Battersea Park, which eventually became municipal parks owned by the public (Conway, 1991).

There were some variations between the development of Regent's Park and St James's Park. Opened in 1828, Regent's Park was not freely accessible to the public until 1838, as it was initially developed as part of a speculative residential development initiated by the Crown (see Section 2.1.1). On the contrary, St James's Park, completed in 1835, was laid out for public use from the outset (Chadwick, 1966).

Although the need to provide a public park in the East End of London was recognised by the SCPW, it was the effort of a few Members of Parliament and the strong demand of the general public in that district for such a space, demonstrated by a petition of 30,000 signatures to the Queen, which initiated the development of Victoria Park in the 1840s (Chadwick, 1966; Conway, 1991; Lasdun, 1991). Victoria Park was initially a royal park, as the money for purchasing and laying out the park was raised by selling York House, a Crown property, and

the park was managed by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests until 1854. In 1887, Victoria Park, together with other royal parks created between 1840 and 1887, was transferred to the Metropolitan Board of Works, which was subsequently succeeded by the London County Council a year later. Thus, Victoria Park became a municipal park to be maintained by the council (Conway, 1991).

Victoria Park was the first of its kind – royal parks created explicitly for public use. The example was followed by Battersea Park and Kennington Park. Nevertheless, the former was acquired with funding authorised by a special act of Parliament in 1846 (Chadwick, 1996; Lasdun, 1991), while the latter was created largely through subscriptions organised by a small number of local gentry (Lasdun, 1991).

(2) Central government grants or loans

The first park to be created out of central government's money was Birkenhead Park, Birkenhead. With the Royal Asset being given to the town's third Improvement Act in 1843, the local authority was able to purchase land for the laying out a public park, using a loan of £60,000 from central government (Chadwick, 1966; Lasdun, 1991). However, only 125 out of the 226 acres of land purchased were dedicated to public use for all time; the rest was sold as house plots.

Battersea Park, London, exemplified another type of central government money used to provide public parks. In this case, £200,000 was granted by Parliament for the purchase of the land, laying out of the park and planning (Chadwick, 1996; Conway, 1991).

As an indirect result of the Select Committee on the Health of Towns in 1840, a fund of £10,000 was made by Parliament to promote the opening of public parks. Local authorities who wanted to apply to this fund were required to match the grant with at least the same amount of their own money (Chadwick, 1966; Lasdun, 1991). Manchester was one of those local authorities which benefited from this scheme, with £3,000 granted towards the creation of Philip's Park, Queen's Park and Peel Park (later taken over by Salford) (Chadwick, 1966; Conway, 1991). During the 1840s, Dundee, Arbroath, Portsmouth and Preston also secured some money for park development from this fund, while applications from Leicester, Harrogate, Stockport, Sunderland and Oldham were still pending in 1849 (Ibid.).

Following the 1875 Public Health act, substantial funds were made available by central government in the form of loans to lay out urban parks (Jordan, 1994a), with three applications being made in the first year and the number of applications increasing to 25 by 1890 (Conway, 1991).

(3) Local authority initiatives

It is pointed out by Conway and Lambert (1993) that the greatest number of public parks were created by local authorities. Moor Park, Preston, created between 1833 an 1835, was the first municipal public park ever developed solely by a local authority (Chadwick, 1966; Conway, 1991). However, the actions of local authorities in providing parks was limited during the 1840s and 1850s. During this period of time, local authorities intending to acquire parks needed to use a variety of other methods and required much ingenuity in order to overcome the restrictions caused by legislation at that time (Conway, 1991). Apart from becoming the beneficiaries of local philanthropy, the approach of raising money through public subscription, was supported by a number of local authorities, with Manchester being the first major industrial city to do so in 1846 for the development of Philip's Park, Queen's Park and Peel Park (Ibid.).

Opened to the public in 1847, Birkenhead Park, Birkenhead, was also considered as an early example of a municipal park acquired and maintained by the local authority out of public funds, even though the money for purchasing the land was raised through a central government loan as discussed earlier.

With the enactment of the 1875 Public Health Act, local authorities were fully empowered to develop and manage public parks (see section 2.1.1). Subsequently, the role of local authorities in park development continued to be of growing importance and around 50 urban parks were created as local authority initiatives between 1875 and 1885 (Conway, 1991).

(4) Philanthropy of private benefactors

The private benefactor is regarded by Conway (1991) as one of the two main 'protagonists' (p. 3) of the park movement, with the other one being the local authority. The first benefactor to come forward to donate a park was Joseph Strutt, a wealthy textile manufacturer, who presented the Arboretum to the Corporation of Derby in 1840 for the purpose of providing open spaces for recreation for his fellow-citizens (Chadwick, 1966; Conway, 1991; Lasdun, 1991; Taylor, 1998). The philanthropy of Strutt was quickly followed by the Duck of Norfolk, who donated 50 acres of land in 1841 for the development of the first public park, Norfolk Park, in Sheffield (Chadwick, 1966; Lasdun, 1991).

The role of private benefactors in the development of the park movement was enhanced during the 1860s and 1870s, with the enactment of several statutes, including the Recreation Ground Act 1859, the Public Improvements Act 1860 and the Public Parks Act 1871 (see Section 2.1.1). Benefactors who gifted land for public parks and/or money for the purchasing and laying out of a park usually came from the ranks of local dignitaries, landowners and successful entrepreneurs (Conway, 1991). For instance, People's Park, Halifax (opened in

1857), was a gift from Sir Frank Crossely, a manufacturer whose wealth derived from the town's carpet mills. However, the area and size of the land for developing a park, its value and the extent to which the park's laying out were included in the gift would vary considerably between different cases (Jordan, 1994a). Occasionally, the philanthropy was combined with self-interest of the benefactor, most notably being the interest in the land surrounding the park which was still owned by the donor (Conway, 1991). This situation could be illustrated by the examples of Vernor Park, Stockport, and Albert Park, Middlesbrough, mentioned in Section 2.1.1.

(5) Public subscription

As early as 1829, public subscription was initiated by a handful of local tradesmen in Bath to raise money for the creation of Victoria Park (later to become the Royal Victoria Park to commemorate the accession of Victoria in 1837) (Lasdun, 1991). By 1830, more than £4,000 in donations were made and nearly 1,000 subscriptions varying form £1 to £100 annually were promised. Victoria Park, as Lasdun (1991) suggests, was the first park to be formed through public subscription, which "paved the way for other parks before public funding was provided" (p. 146). In Conway's (1991) classification, however, the Royal Victoria Park did not qualify as a municipal park because the Corporation of Bath did not own the land but rented it.

Therefore, Manchester became the first of the major industrial cities to acquire municipal parks through public subscription (Conway, 1991). The subscription scheme was launched in 1844 to raise the estimated cost of £25,000 for the acquisition of four public parks (ibid.). By the end of that year, in excess of £26,000 was raised successfully (Lasdun, 1991) and by the Christmas of 1845, the subscriptions reached around £32,500 (Conway, 1991). Provided that the local subscriptions reached £30,000, a grant of £3,000 from central government (see p.20) was secured. Consequently, three sites were purchased and laid out as Philip's Park, Queen's Park and Peel Park, all opened to the public in 1846 (Chadwick, 1966; Conway, 1991; Lasdun, 1991). Peel Park was handed to Salford after the official opening as it was located in the middle of the town (Conway, 1991).

Conway (1991) notes that in Manchester the whole community was involved in the fund-raising for creating the town's first public parks and explicitly regards this action as 'the involvement of the community in park development' (p.39). Not only did local major dignitaries make their contributions, working people and those that were less affluent also took an active part in the process even though their contributions were small individually (Conway, 1991; Lasdun, 1991).

The example of Manchester was followed by Bradford for the development of Peel Park in 1850. The fund raising for purchasing the land and laying out the park was initiated by Sir Titus Salt, a mill-owner and philanthropist, who himself donated £1,000 to this end and influenced other wealthy people to subscribe (Chadwick, 1966). Kennington Park, London, although initially a royal park, also owed its birth to the general public, as the money needed to enclose Kennington Common as a public park in 1852 was raised through public subscription (Lasdun, 1991).

In addition to being adopted to raise money for purchasing the land and usually the subsequent laying out of the park as well, public subscription was also used to raise a maintenance fund for a park. This is illustrated by the experience of Derby Arboretum. Because funds for maintaining the Arboretum were not endowed by Strutt, nor were local authorities at that time allowed to use the rates to maintain parks which they received as gifts, money was raised by subscriptions and by charging for admission fees in order to main the Arboretum (Conway, 1991; Lasdun, 1991).

(6) Speculative developments

The creation of a park being incorporated in a speculative residential development was first demonstrated by the development of Regent's Park, London, as described in Section 2.1.1. The economic lessons illustrated by the example of Regent's Park was put into practice by R. V. Yates of Liverpool in the early 1840s, who acquired a site with £50,000 and intended to develop a park with housing for the middle classes (Conway, 1991). The park thus created, named Prince's Park, was exclusively for the use of the villa's inhabitants and the costs required to maintain the park were met by rental from the surrounding villas (Lasdun, 1991). Prince's Park eventually became a municipal public park in 1908 when it was acquired by the Corporation of Liverpool (Conway, 1991).

Other examples of parks created by speculative developments included Crystal Palace Park (1856) and Alexandra Park (1863), both in London; and the Arboretum (1874), Walsall (Conway, 1991).

2.2 The Value of Urban Parks

Urban parks, as an important part of the entire open space system of a city, contribute to a better urban living environment in a variety of ways. For example, the London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC) considers that there are seven roles that open space can play, namely recreational, structural, amenity, ecology, educational, social and cultural (Llewelyn-Davies Planning Environment Trust Associates, 1992); while six themes persistently appeared throughout the evidence presented to the House of Commons Environment Sub-committee's

Inquiry into Town and Country Parks (TCP Inquiry) regarding the value of urban parks: (1) environmental benefits, (2) health and relaxation, (3) play, entertainment and recreation, (4) community spirit, (5) education, and (6) urban economic (ETRASC, 1999b). It should be noted that many of these benefits are not contributed exclusively by urban parks but are common to other types of green spaces in urban areas, as well as private parks.

A wealth of comments on the value of urban parks and green spaces has been established by a variety of authors (e.g. Neal, 1994; Barber, 1995a; Woolley, 1999; Reeves, 2000) and, more than ever, the evidence submitted to the TCP Inquiry and the final report of this inquiry (TCP Report). This section intends to summarise the ideas that have been put forward about the value of urban parks and to gain an overall view on the importance of public urban parks to the quality of life in the city. Eight categories of value are identified and discussed respectively under the following headings:

- structural and aesthetic value (Section 2.2.1);
- environmental benefits (Section 2.2.2);
- contact with nature (Section 2.2.3);
- health (Section 2.2.4);
- education (Section 2.2.5);
- social, cultural and community benefits (Section 2.2.6);
- recreation (Section 2.2.7); and
- economic value (Section 2.2.8).

2.2.1 Structural and aesthetic value

Historically, many public urban parks were developed to help shape the physical structure of the expanding industrial cities in the Victorian time. Some were provided as barriers between different districts (Conway, 1991) and some were provided as a stimulus for housing development (Welch, 1991). According to Conway and Lambert (1993), parks became an essential part of the urban fabric by the end of the nineteenth century. Together with libraries, public baths and museums, they were the efforts of the Victorian in raising urban living standards (Conway and Lambert, 1993) and contributing to the 'public realm'. However, urban parks alone may not seem to be able to fulfill the structural role completely unless the definition of park is considered in a wider sense to encompass other types of open spaces.

The importance of open spaces' structural role to the quality of city life is possibly best explained by Lynch's theory. Kevin Lynch (1960) asserted in *The Image of the City* that the only important property of a beautiful city is the 'legibility' of its cityscape (Lynch, 1960, p2-3). A legible city is capable of producing a clear image (or images) which not only is vital to an individual's orientation or way-finding and mobility in the city but also has wide

practical and emotional significance to individuals in terms of collective memories and a sense of security as well. The city image is made up of five types of elements: paths, edges, districts, nodes and landmarks (Lynch, 1960). Various types of open spaces can act as such elements; for example: tree-lined avenues and linear parks as paths; seaside promenades and river-side walks as edges; large-scale parks such as Hyde Park a small district; local parks as nodes for people to meet and for activities; and many features such as memorials, statues or old trees in parks may be identified by local people as important landmarks. Indeed, London's open spaces, as recognised by the LPAC who drew up a new approach to open space planning for the city, make an important contribution to the image of London at both the city and local levels (Llewelyn-Davies Planning Environment Trust Associates, 1992).

In addition to this structural role, open spaces contribute to the beauty of cities by providing greenery, openness and other contrasts to the built environment. Historic urban parks in particular are of great significance in this regard as many of them are works of art (Turner, 1992) designed by famous landscape designers such as Loudon, Boxton and Major. The floral displays which used to feature in traditional Victorian parks provided, and will continue to do so, if well-maintained, great visual attractions to users (Conway and Lambert, 1993).

2.2.2 Environmental benefits

Urban parks and other open spaces contribute to a healthier urban environment in many ways including improvement of air quality, moderation of microclimate, nature and wildlife conservation, and maintenance of biodiversity. Parks were originally established to act in William Pitt's words 'as lungs for the city' (Welch, 1991) to provide fresh air for people living in the polluted industrial cities. It was, to a great extent, this belief that parks help the ventilation and purification of the air that led to the creation of Manchester's first parks (Lasdun, 1991). Today, this role is still valid when traffic exhaust fumes have replaced polluted emissions from factories to choke the cities and towns.

Urban parks contribute to a better air quality in at least two ways. Firstly, through photosynthesis, trees and other vegetation in parks transfer carbon dioxide into oxygen. A figure revealed by Conway (1999) indicates that "one hectare of urban park, with trees, shrubs and grass can remove 600 kg of carbon dioxide from the air and deliver 600 kg of oxygen in a twelve hour period". Secondly, leaves of trees filter out the pollutants, fumes and dust from the air.

In terms of the effect on ameliorating the microclimate of urban areas, the openness of parks, especially large ones, enhances circulation and airflow and aids the movement of hot air (Llewelyn-Davies Planning Environment Trust Associates, 1992). Trees and lakes can help

the hydrological cycles and therefore have an effect on the modification of temperature in surrounding areas.

Urban parks and green spaces, as the residual nature in cities, are vital to urban wildlife conservation. The different areas in a single park such as a pond, woodland, meadow, copse, or even formal lawns and flower beds can provide a variety of habitats for wildlife (LGA, 1999) or form the basis for the creation of new habitats (Goode, 1997). They, when linked to form a green network, can allow wildlife to migrate freely from cities to the countryside (ETRASC, 1999b). These in turn help the maintenance of biodiversity in both the urban and the rural environment.

Effective action at a local level is considered as the means to achieve successful implementation of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan which was published by the government in 1994. The role that urban parks can play in this aspect has been demonstrated by some local authorities who already include areas of wildlife interest in parks and other open spaces (DETR, 1998d) and by the inclusion of parks in a number of local Biodiversity Action Plans (e.g. the Lincolnshire Biodiversity Action Plan) (Wildlife Trusts and Urban Wildlife Partnerships, 1999).

2.2.3 Contact with nature

The development of most urban parks was a response to the gradual exclusion of nature in large cities (Nicholson-Lord, 1994; Ophuis, 1997). In contrast to the inorganic world of buildings and streets, parks supply the city with a living world in which an encounter with plants, wildlife and other natural elements can easily take place. English Nature (1999) states that "human beings need to make contact with nature in the course of their daily lives, and no special effort (or journey) ought to be required for obtaining it". Similarly, Burgess et al. (1988) have found that the sensuous pleasure of contact with nature and the natural world is one of the most significant popular values for urban green spaces and is "enjoyed by all sections of the community in the context of people's everyday lives".

Regular contact with nature not only brings various sorts of enjoyment but also other types of benefits to the urban population. Although carried out in the context of urban wildlife areas, the four categories of benefits revealed in Mostyn's (1979) research into the personal benefits and satisfactions experienced by participants of wildlife projects are to some extent valid to urban park users. These four categories: the emotional, intellectual, social and physical benefits, actually correspond to the values of urban parks for the mental health, education, social life and physical health of city dwellers respectively. They will be discussed in more details in the following sections. Before doing this, it is important to note that since people

enjoy making contact with the natural world on a daily basis and in a commonplace environment (Burgess *et al.*, 1988), the significance of public urban parks, especially those in the inner-city areas, as sources of such encounter is evident.

2.2.4 Health

Concern for public health was the first motive for the creation of the Victorian urban parks (Turner, 1992; Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995; Welch, 1995; Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996). And through the early years of park development, the provision of urban parks was to a great extent promoted by legislation relating to public health (Pettigrew, 1937; Reeves, 2000). Not only are the environmental benefits that a park provides in making the city a healthier place to live and work is beneficial to the health of the urban population, but also the use of urban parks by individuals as places for exercise and for relaxation makes significant contributions to both the physical and mental health of city dwellers.

2.2.4.1 Physical Health

One of the major contributions of urban parks to city residents' physical health is through the provision of fresh air and spaces for exercise. It was suggested in the Victorian time that bad air was one of the sources of disease and the circulation of fresh air was essential (Conway, 1991). Thus parks were created to serve the crowded industrial cities as lungs to provide the inhabitants with clean air. Rohde and Kendel (1994, in Wildlife Trusts and Urban Wildlife Partnerships, 1999) carried out an extensive literature review on urban natural landscapes and confirmed that air quality could affect people's transient physical state.

It is a common belief that regular exercise helps keep people physically fit and healthy (Turner, 1992; Barber, 1995b). Medical evidence also strongly supports such an idea, as pointed out by the Department of Health in its national guidance for exercise referral schemes published in 2001. The benefits of physical activities, in particular those taken on a regular basis, are identified in this document, most notably being the decrease of the risk of cardiovascular disease mortality, the prevention or delay of the development of high blood pressure, the reduction of the risk of colon cancer, and helping the control of body weight (Department of Health, 2001).

Bristol City Council (1999) addresses the potential of public urban parks in improving poor health, pointing out that this is particularly important to people who are unlikely or unable to use formal sports facilities, such as the elderly (Bristol City Council, 1999). Walking, with or without one's dog(s), jogging, playing football, tennis or cricket, and many other activities that park users frequently participate in can all contribute to the improvement of health, especially when they are taken on a regular basis.

In practice, the *Health Walks in Battersea* of London Borough of Wandsworth and *Doorsteps Walks* of Salisbury, two of the many initiatives promoting the Government's Health Strategy, *Our Healthier Nation* (OHN), have started using their parks and green spaces as health sources for the local community (Our Healthier Nation, 2000). Furthermore, as public urban parks are accessed and used free of charge most of the time, the Urban Parks Forum (UPFOR) (1999a) has argued that urban parks, if well-managed and maintained, could be ideal venues for the development of 'Healthy Living Centres' – the community-based projects that are set up by the New Opportunities Fund and will contribute to OHN (Department of Health, 2000).

2.2.4.2 Mental Health

The contribution of public urban parks and other open spaces to people's mental health may seem to be mostly related to their role as 'nature in the city'. Kaplan and Kaplan (1990) notes that the natural environment in general is beneficial to human beings because of their restorative functions; by this they mean the effects to help people recover from the hassles and pressures of everyday life. Urban parks as one of the many forms of 'nearby nature' (Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989) have the potential of supplying such restorative experience. Supportive evidence of this idea is shown in Ulrich's review on his own studies on the psychological effects of natural scenes. He concludes that "views of nature, compared to most urban scenes lacking natural elements such as trees, appear to have more positive influences on emotional and psychological states" and thus "foster recuperation" (Ulrich, 1986).

Mostyn (1979), as already mentioned in section 2.2.4, also suggests that the emotional benefit indeed is the most significant among the four categories of personal benefits and satisfaction that people obtain through their participation in urban wildlife projects. Within this category are "the relief of escaping from the city; the unique opportunity to identify with nature; a welcome sense of freedom and having a peaceful retreat to repair one's emotions" (Mostyn, 1979, p.29). Burgess *et al.* (1988) likewise identify a similar value for urban parks and green spaces, indicating that such spaces offer "creative and imaginative" opportunities for people "to escape for a while from the stresses of urban life".

2.2.5 Education

The potential for urban parks as valuable educational resources to provide both formal and informal educational opportunities was only recognised in the last decade but was extensively mentioned in more than 30 pieces of evidence submitted to the 1999 TCP Inquiry (ETRASC, 1999b). In a discussion paper regarding urban parks, the Landscape Institute (LI) argues that "good parks contain historical, cultural, botanical and wildlife interests" (Turner, 1992, p.5) which can be an educational resource not only for schools but also for adult education as well.

The Learning through Landscapes project carried out in the context of schools grounds pointed out that children need rich and diversified sensory experiences and varied encounters with the environment which offers stimulus and challenge (Adams, 1990). This research also demonstrated that "much learning, common to a variety of curriculum areas, can be promoted strongly and naturally outside" (Billimore et al., 1990, p. iv). Urban parks can be used as extended school grounds or 'outdoor classrooms' (Wildlife Trusts and Urban Wildlife Partnerships, 1999) to provide the educational opportunities for a wide range of curriculum including local history, environmental sciences, art and architecture (English Heritage, 1999). In fact, this has been demonstrated by the case of Central Park, New York. According to Timothy Marshall, the former deputy administrator of the Central Park in New York City, the park is used by teachers and park staff as an extension of the classroom and as a tool to teach history, natural sciences, mathematics and civic pride (Marshall, 1999).

In addition to assist school education, there are two other aspects regarding the educational role of urban parks worthy of discussion despite only relatively little evidence being available. First, with an increasing awareness of environmental issues in recent decades, the importance of effective environmental education becomes more and more prominent. It is suggested that by using parks and open spaces as an educational resource for environmental education, citizens can be made more environmentally aware and responsible (Llewelyn-Davies Planning Environment Trust Associates, 1992; ILAM, 1999). Second, historic urban parks in particular are valuable for they can provide "a living textbook example of a past style" (Harvey, 1993, p. 6). They are one of the various ways in which the historic landscape can be understood (Conway, 1999). More generally, urban parks and open spaces can offer intellectual benefits to their users. Through being with and amongst nature, people learn about how nature works, life cycles, general growth and nature maintenance (Millward and Mostyn, 1989).

2.2.6 Social, cultural and community benefits

Public urban parks were undoubtedly a kind of social device in the eyes of the nineteenth-century reformers as they provided opportunities for social contact between people from different social classes, with the hope that such contacts would help to reduce social tensions and promote social harmony (Conway, 1991). Free and accessible to all sections of the society, regardless of age, gender, race, culture, education, and socio-economic status, most urban parks nowadays still provide city dwellers with opportunities for social encounters which, as Burgess et al. (1988) observe, are as important as contact with nature.

Basically, urban parks perform their social role at two broad levels. First, for the society as a whole, the all-inclusive and democratic nature of parks makes them ideal stages for all sorts of social, cultural and community events. Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996) report in *People,*

Parks and Cities that parks are used informally as places for social events such as children's parties, picnics, religious celebrations and weddings. And because parks are 'adaptable and flexible' (Greenhlagh and Worpole, 1995, p. 29), they can become key cultural locations in towns, cities or communities to provide alternative venues for concerts, plays and other various cultural events. Thus, as English Heritage (1999) suggests, parks can "introduce a wider audience to the pleasure of a green setting". In addition, parks have been used for both large and small scale community events throughout the year including festivals, school sports days, guided walks, ethnic minority fairs and many other activities similar to those recorded in the *Park Life* study (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995, p.12). Such events not only enhance the relationship between the park and community life (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996) but also facilitate social interaction (Llewelyn-Davies Planning Environment Trust Associates, 1992) and promote ethnic and social harmony (ETRASC, 1999b).

At a second more individual level, urban parks and open spaces embody rich personal and social meanings (Burgess *et al.*, 1988). In terms of social interaction, such places provide opportunities for family and group outings, meeting grounds for friends and co-workers, and chance encounters with neighbours or acquaintances (Llewelyn-Davies Planning Environment Trust Associates, 1992). These kind of opportunities are evidently of particular importance to socially disadvantaged groups such as the elderly, young people, children, people with disabilities, single parents, low-income families and ethnic minorities (Burgess *et al.*, 1988; Garden History Society, 1999) whose mobility and financial considerations are most likely to be limited. Visits to parks with family or friends often become important milestones in one's life cycle (Llewelyn-Davies Planning Environment Trust Associates, 1992; Bristol City Coundil, 1999). Such experiences of park visiting, especially those from childhood, usually last long in people's memories, shaping the value of such spaces held at the later stages of their life, and influencing the ways that adults take their children or even grandchildren to use a park.

2.2.7 Recreation

The concern for public recreation was one of the major impetus to the park movement in Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century. Public urban parks were created to provide "suitable or healthy recreations" (Conway, 1991, p. 34) to the working class as an alternative to the public house and the pleasure garden and to provide opportunities for the recreation of all members of the family to enhance family togetherness (Conway, 1991). Today, as "one of the most widely available and accessible leisure facilities" (Welch, 1995, p.82), urban parks are continuously offering city dwellers a variety of recreational experiences including passive and active recreation and children's play.

2.2.7.1 Passive recreation

Lasdun (1991) points out that Victorian parks were considered mainly for passive recreation such as taking gentle exercise in fresh air, listening to music, learning about plants and animals, visiting an art gallery and enjoying nature in the company of others. Indeed, many design elements of traditional Victorian parks, for instance, the winding paths, flora displays, lakes, bandstands and picturesque settings, seem to suggest such passive forms of recreation. Conway (1999) also argues that, rather than organised sports, "what most people like about parks is the freedom to do what they want, to be alone, or in company as they choose, away from the pressures of the city and to enjoy the space, the flowers, the greenery and the wildlife".

This view is generally supported by available park use surveys. The report on *Open Space Planning in London* showed that between 76 and 90.3% of users went to parks for passive recreation: sitting, walking and enjoying the fresh air and greenery (Llewelyn-Davies Planning Environment Trust Associates, 1992). Similarly, *Park Life* research, by summarising a number of local park use surveys and its own more extensive study, indicates that "the majority of visits (to parks) are to bring children, to go for a stroll, to walk a dog, or where there are particular features such as a good café, or an animal enclosure, to visit these" (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995, p. 10).

2.2.7.2 Active recreation

Despite the fact that passive recreational activities account for most park visits, urban parks have been providing space for a variety of sports since they were created (Conway and Lambert, 1993). For instance, spaces for active sports such as quoits, skittles and archery were required by the Manchester Public Park Committee as one of the necessary facilities to be incorporated into the design of their new parks in 1844 (Conway, 1991). In addition, open-air swimming, bowling, tennis, putting, football, cricket, hockey and all kinds of outdoor sports were considered as essential facilities that should be provided by municipal parks where possible (Pettigrew, 1937). Collins (1994) emphasises that offering opportunities for sports and recreation is still a major function of urban parks nowadays, especially at the neighbourhood level.

Since 1938, urban parks have been included in the calculation of the local provision of outdoor recreation space for sports and children's play by local authorities throughout the United Kingdom to meet the National Playing Fields Association's "Six Acre Standard" which suggests a minimum of six acres of open space for per 1,000 head of population (National Playing Fields Association, 1999). Apart from providing a variety of formal pitches for organised sports games, most urban parks comprise a large open grass area, sometimes more

than one, in which all sorts of informal sports and ball games can take place. It is conservatively estimated that some 7.5 million adults and 2.1 million children use parks for both formal and informal sports activities each year (Collins, 1994).

2.2.7.3 Children's play

Play is very important to children's general development because it improves their coordination skills, the growth of bones and muscles, strength, agility and endurance; it enables the development of social skills and emotions; and it is through play that children learn to discover, explore and develop an understanding of the surrounding environment and the world in which they live (Titman, 1992). The significance of urban parks and open spaces in providing children's play is broadly recognised by both the professionals and park users.

The LI points out that "parks provide for safe children's play, away from the motor car and traffic fumes" (Turner, 1992, p. 5). Greenhalgh and Worpole (1995) likewise argues the importance of parks being the places where children can play with some degree of freedom when more and more public space becomes commercialized and disciplined. With inadequate sports facilities in primary and secondary schools and the loss of playing fields, the Central Council of Physical Recreation (1999) thus asserts that local parks are becoming increasingly important in the provision of sport and recreation facilities for children.

In terms of the park users' viewpoint, Burgess et al. (1988) have found in their four group discussions that parents recognised the need for their children to have a variety of safe but challenging open spaces close to their homes. Meanwhile, the study carried out by Comedia in 1994 suggested that the majority of users visited parks because of their children: accompanying children to play was the single most important reason for visiting the park in most of the parks surveyed; the same reason was identified as the second main motivation for using the park, inferior to taking a walk, in the household surveys in two areas (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995). Thus, it is evident that issues regarding children's play such as play structures and equipment can continue to be, as demonstrated in the two case studies in the *People, Parks and Cities* (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996), the focus of any successful park project.

2.2.8 Economic value

A well managed and maintained park contributes to the urban economy in many ways including increasing property values, making the city more attractive and therefore increasing the opportunity for inwards investment and tourism. The economic benefit of urban parks in increasing the value of adjacent lands was recognised as early as in the Victorian time. The development of Regent's Park in the 1810s – 1820s, for example, was associated with the

housing development around the park (Conway, 1991) and this then became a pattern copied else where in the country, for instance, Prince's Park in Liverpool and Birkenhead Park in Birkenhead.

Some contemporary empirical studies have given their support to such an idea. More *et al.* (1988) adopted the hedonic valuation technique to calculate the 'dollar value' of the economic benefits produced by urban parks and concluded that parks did have an influence on the value of surrounding properties. They even worked out the ratio of benefits produced by parks to the cost for operating them as 3.40:1, suggesting that parks could pay the city to maintain them (More, *et al.*, 1988). The study carried out for the LPAC regarding open space planning in London (Llewelyn-Davies Planning Environment Trust Associates, 1992) also indicates that the availability of local open spaces, recreational facilities and views apparently have a major influence on higher property values and such an effect can extend to several streets away for larger public open spaces. In addition, Bolitzer and Netusil (2000), adopting also the hedonic pricing technique, further verify that proximity to an open space such as a public park or a natural area has a positive and statistically significant effect on a home's sale price.

Urban parks can also add attraction to the amenity of a city/town and thus enhance its tourism value (e.g. Royal Victoria Park, Bath, discussed in Section 2.1.1). The LI argues that "Britain's public parks are critical to the civic image and attraction of many cities" and are "green heavens for visitors" (Turner, 1992, p.6). The Local Government Association (LGA) (1999) likewise advocates that parks with heritage merit are frequently "the basis of tourism trails" and growing tourism can subsequently encourage inward investment, boost local economies and increase employment opportunities (LGA, 1999). The successful stories of Paris, Barcelona and New York where the development of parks and open spaces were addressed in the regeneration of these cities strongly demonstrate the benefits such spaces can provide to both the urban economy and regeneration (ETRASC, 1999b).

2.3 The Decline of Historic Urban Parks

While the value of urban parks seems to be widely recognised from the above analysis, the concern over the decline of many historic urban parks throughout the United Kingdom has grown considerably, especially in the last decade of the 20th century. The seriousness of the problem is illustrated with many photos and descriptions of deteriorating park scenes in the *Public Prospects: Historic Urban Parks under Threat* report (Conway and Lambert, 1993). The 1995 Comedia and Demos' *Park Life* report (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995) indicates that an apprehension about the decline of parks is widespread across several local park use surveys. Such concern reached an important stage when the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) launched the Urban Parks Programme (UPP) in 1996 with a focus on the regeneration of

run-down historic urban parks, gardens and other open spaces; and eventually climaxed with an official recognition in the TCP Inquiry in 1999. The evidence submitted by the Landscape Heritage Trust (1999) referred to a limited survey commissioned by the HLF, showing that across the United Kingdom a quarter of the parks and gardens under local authority control were in a poor condition and only 12% were in a good condition. The survey of local authority owned historic parks undertaken by the UPFOR for the Public Park Assessment study further demonstrated the serous decline of many urban parks in the United Kingdom (UPFOR, 2001a).

It is commonly perceived that the 1970s was the time when most of Britain's historic urban parks which mainly developed in the 19th and early 20th centuries started experiencing serious decline (Conway, 1999; LHT, 1999; LGA, 1999; Victorian Society, 1999). The deterioration of these spaces, as many commentators have suggested (e.g. Barber, 1996a; Conway and Lambert, 1993), is an insidious process; however, the accumulative effect of this slow process has become so obvious that no one can hardly ignore it. From being "places of pride and delight" (Conway and Lambert, 1993, inside front cover) downgrading into "unsafe places to be avoided" (LGA, 1999), the gradual deterioration of many Britain's historic urban parks is the result of a number of complex and very much interrelated factors. Often described as a "spiral of decline" (Conway and Lambert, 1993; ETRASC, 1999b), the picture of this process is vividly portrayed by Welch (1991):

> "Shabby parks with their structures languishing for want of investment attract fewer people. Falling attendances produce lower status. Diminished status results in lower priority. Management is buried deep in other administrative structures. Lowly functionaries lack the clout to demand the cash the system needs. Cash starvation reduces standards and more customers are lost." (p. 12)

Some factors inducing the decline of urban parks can actually be identified in this short paragraph of text cited above, i.e. lack of investment, decreasing user numbers, low priority in local authorities' agenda and competition for resources with other services. Conway and Lambert (1993) consider the reasons for this decay to be vandalism, the pressure of redevelopment, the problem of local authority funding and the reorganisaiton of local government in the early 1970s. Furthermore, the Environment Sub-committee suggests that there are four major factors causing the decline of urban parks: (1) cultural changes; (2) under-funding; (3) safety fears; and (4) staffing (ETRASC, 1999b). This section discusses these factors under the following seven headings:

- lack of funding (Section 2.3.1);
- undervalued (Section 2.3.2);
- understaffing (Section 2.3.3);
- Compulsory Competitive Tendering (Section 2.3.4);

- the absence of a dedicated national agency for parks (Section 2.3.5);

- competition from sports, leisure centers and countryside recreation (Section 2.3.6); and

- vandalism (Section 2.3.7)

The above factors concern with the deterioration of urban parks in general, i.e. not only parks of historic importance but also those created in recent decades. A brief discussion relates specifically to the decline of historic urban parks is presented in Section 2.3.8.

2.3.1 Lack of funding

The lack of funding for both the maintenance and the future development and management of urban parks is undoubtedly one of the most significant factors accounting for the widespread decline of Britain's urban parks (Lasdun, 1991; Conway and Lambert, 1993; Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995; Digwall and Lambert, 1997; ETRASC, 1999b). Such a situation, however, is actually the interaction of several fundamental problems regarding the whole funding system for parks.

The first problem lies in the present funding regime for local authority services. The cost for park maintenance is not included in the central Government's Standard Spending Assessment (SSA) formula (Turner, 1992; Conway and Lambert, 1993; Barber, 1996a; Reeves, 2000) which determines the Revenue Support Grant each local authority obtains from the Government. Thus, unlike education and health services or even roads, the provision, management and maintenance of urban parks is a non-statutory duty (Conway and Lambert, 1993; Barber, 1997; GHS, 1999; HLF, 1999b). Such a position leads us to the second problem confronting urban parks financially: budget cuts.

As the Garden History Society (GHS) (1999) has pointed out, British local authorities in general have been experiencing budget cuts over the past twenty years. For this to be reflected in the provision of local authority services, making cuts in budgets for park maintenance appears to be an attractive option to ease the financial burdens because: (1) park provision and upkeep are not statutory responsibilities which make the park a more vulnerable target in comparison with statutory services; and (2) the effect of such cuts does not show immediately and apparently when compared with cuts in other non-statutory leisure services such as museums and sports (Barber, 1997). In the Public Park Assessment survey, it has found that the most dramatic budgets reductions for parks and open spaces occurred during 1979 and 1985 (UPFOR, 2001a).

It was argued in the TCP Report (ETRASC, 1999b) that no authoritative figures were available to decide whether urban parks have really been subjected to budget cuts since the 1970s or not.

The report also indicates that variations between local authorities and changing department responsibilities within them make the acquisition of reliable figures more difficult. Whereas available figures are quoted in the report, there seem to be a huge gap about the extent of the problem. The Government suggests that there is a £100 million difference in the expenditure on parks between the year 1990/91 (£638m) and now (£538m) (Ibid.). While Bill Swan (1995) reported in January 1995, Horticultural Week, estimating that each year £80 million less had been spent on parks since the introduction of Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT). The latter figure is the same to that suggested by Barber (1996a), who considers that local authority expenditure on maintaining urban green spaces has been reduced by at least £80 million per annum during 1990 to 1996.

Despite this inconsistency about the amount of spending that has been reduced , it is extensively recognised by the majority of organisations and individuals who either submitted written evidence or gave oral witness that local authority budgets for park maintenance have been cut since 1970 and until today (ETRASC, 1999b). Through a questionnaire survey to all the local authorities which might own and manage parks, the ILAM (2000b) indicates that over the past twenty years (1979/80 to 1999/00) the revenue expenditure on all parks and open spaces has decreased by 18%, after consideration of inflation. For parks of national or local historic importance, the fall in revenue expenditure over the same period of time was 26%. In addition, based on the UPFOR's survey for the Public Park Assessment study, an authoritative figure regarding the reduced local authority expenditure on parks and open spaces has now been established: the total cumulative under-spend on parks revenue expenditure for all local authorities across the twenty-year period (1979/80 to 1999/00) is estimated to be in the region of £1.3 billion (UPFOR, 2001a). Parks of historic interest in particular have experienced disproportionate reduction in revenue expenditure throughout the last twenty years (Ibid.)

The third problem regarding the funding regime for public urban parks in many, if not all, local authorities stemmed from the 1974 local government reorganisation. Based on the recommendations of the 1972 Bains Report, British local government underwent a major reorganisation in the year of 1974, resulting in the merger of parks departments with other leisure services, such as recreation services, swimming pools and the arts to form new bigger leisure services departments (Conway, 1991; Barber, 1993; Conway and Lambert, 1993). While Barber (1997) disagrees with the idea that this reorganisation should be blamed for the neglect of urban parks by the local authority, as some of the local authorities that first took the route own good parks, many other commentators consider the 1974 reorganisation caused negative impacts on the management and maintenance of parks, particularly in terms of funding. Conway and Lambert (1993), for instance, argue that the parks department lost its individual identity as a result of being incorporated into the bigger leisure services, and

consequently parks had to compete with other leisure services for funds. The GHS (1999) expresses a similar concern, indicating that funding for parks were squeezed because of the competition with other "high-profile" leisure services such as sports and museums. In addition, Welch (1995) suggests that the reorganisation has resulted in the decline of the quality of maintenance and new investment in park facilities such as shelters, pavilions, bandstands, fountains, etc. in some parks because of the competition for resources and capital.

Two other factors causing the decline of urban parks also financially impact on the management and maintenance of such spaces; they are: Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT), and the absence of a dedicated national agency for urban parks. These factors will be discussed later in Section 2.4.4 and Section 2.4.6 respectively, but it is worth mentioning briefly here about their financial impacts. With regard to CCT, although cost savings have been made as a result of reducing the spending on open space maintenance, very little of this money has been reinvested in parks (Barber, 1994; Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996). Finally, unlike other non-statutory leisure services such as sports and arts, or some of their counterparts, for instance, country parks and Royal Parks, urban parks are not supported by any national agency which can provide financial support and advice to the local authority regarding park provision, management and maintenance (Lasdun, 1991; Barber, 1996a; ILAM, 1999).

One may argue that now there is the UPP dedicated to the renovation of historic urban parks; however, it should be noted that this funding opportunity only came into being in 1996. While some threats of budget cuts to this funding programme occurred before the HLF published its *Strategic Plan 1999-2002*, the budget for urban parks was eventually secured when the plan was published (Fieldhouse, 1999a; UPFOR, 1999a). The HLF's budget for historic park restoration is currently secured until 2007 (HLF, 2002); nevertheless, it is estimated in the HLF's *Strategic Plan 2002-2007* that £1 billion is needed to restored historic public parks (Ibid.). Moreover, the number of parks which have already obtained grants from the UPP is relatively small in comparison with the number of parks awaiting for similar financial support. The UPP will be discussed in more details in Chapter Three.

As pointed out in the TCP report, the effects of the shortage of funding, as the outcome of all these financial restrictions discussed above, accumulated and often triggered a spiral of decline (ETRASC, 1999b). The typical scenario of this could be found in the following description.

> "Lack of fund leads to dereliction, and dereliction causes further expense; lack of funds prevents the further dereliction being promptly and appropriately attended to, and even more dereliction results. Repairs are not carried out quickly and effectively, so later they have to be carried out expensively or inappropriately. The ultimate effect of this too-little too-late maintenance is that repair costs rise well beyond what the already straightened

budget can allow " (para. 86).

2.3.2 Undervalued

Although it seems that, from the analysis in Section 2.2, the value of public urban parks is so enormous and extensively recognised by many leading organisations and individuals caring for the future of these spaces, it has on the other hand been argued that urban parks in Britain are undervalued (Turner, 1992; Conway and Lambert, 1993; Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995; LGA, 1999). Not being included in the central Government's SSA formula, as already discussed in the previous section, is considered by Conway and Lambert (1993) as a sign that the social value of parks is under-rated. The Institute of Historic Building Conservation (1999) likewise argues that many urban parks have been undervalued by local authorities because of a lack of clear central government guidance on the importance of public parks and partly because of the reduction of local government budgets. Barber (1996a) regards the absence of any national agency to inform the work of local authorities as one of the reasons for the lack of appreciation of the value of urban parks.

However, one of the strongest supports for such a viewpoint comes from the under-representativeness of public urban parks in national listing systems. As pointed out by the HLF (1999b) in the TCP Inquiry, public parks have been "notoriously under-represented" on the lists produced by English Heritage (EH), Historic Scotland, CADW and the DoE Northern Ireland. EH, the leading national organisation for the protection of historic landscapes in England, was severely critised in the Inquiry for showing no interest in "retaining the integrity of park designs even for parks on its list" (ETRASC, 1999b, para. 125) and was urged to "take its responsibility for parks much more seriously" (para. 127). Conway and Lambert (1993) reported in the *Public Prospects - Historic Urban Parks under Threat* report that among the 1,100 sites listed on the *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England* at the time, only about 40 of them were parks. The *Register* has undergone a programme of review and update; however, by the time the EH submitted its memorandum to the TCP Inquiry, there were still only about 120 of the 1,300 sites listed in the *Register* are public urban parks (EH, 1999). The findings of the Public Park Assessment study (UPFOR, 2001a) further verify the under-represntativeness of public parks in the national listing systems: of the 2,150 historic parks identified by participated local authorities, only 239 sites are included in the EH or CADW register. .

In addition, together with other public open spaces, urban parks have a low status in the planning system. Turner (1996) argues that local authorities were more interested in other revenue-generating activities as a result of local government reorganisation in the 1970s and the growing popularity of sports in the 1980s. Subsequently urban parks and other open spaces

dropped off the local planning agenda as a result of the CCT in the 1990s which downgraded the role of park managers to open space contracts management (Ibid.). At the national level, the Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) also shows no particular interest in parks and open spaces as, according to Barber (1996a), local authorities are only invited to "draw up their own standards of provision for formal and informal sport and recreation" and there is no direct mentioning of public parks in the PPG 17 which relegates "all types of open space of public value" to a footnote. The DTLR has planned to revised the PPG 17. However, despite the fact that parks were directly mentioned in the published draft of the revised PPG17, the value of these spaces were still not recognised in that document (see Section 3.2.2.5).

2.3.3 Understaffing

The reduction of direct park staff such as park keepers, wardens and gardeners in recent decades is another key issue in the decline of public urban parks. Morphet (1994) notes that the almost total withdraw of park keepers and attendants was one of the main changes in the public perception of open space management over the last thirty years. It is also pointed out in the TCP Report that the number of park keepers and parks with dedicated staff have considerably reduced (ETRASC, 1999b).

Several reasons have been suggested to account for the problem regarding park staff. First, the shift of emphasis to sports rather than informal recreation and the retreat from horticulture have led to the understaffing of urban parks (Lasdun, 1991). Second, the dismantling of parks departments in many local authorities resulted in the loss of funds and opportunities for horticultural training, consequently causing a negative impact on the skills levels of park staff (ETRASC, 1999b). Additionally, in many areas, dedicated park staff had been replaced by mobile maintenance teams, that is contractors, mainly as a result of the introduction of CCT (Turner, 1992; Welch, 1995; Reeves, 2000).

The influence of understaffing on urban parks is, as debated in the TCP Inquiry, reflected in the declining quality of park maintenance and the decreasing sense of safety perceived by the park users (ETRASC, 1999b). Morphet (1994) indicates that the quality of an open space is mainly assessed by three factors: the level of maintenance, design and 'visible management' such as the presence of park keepers and wardens. The research carried out by Burgess et al. (1988) also suggests that the users judge the quality of open space by the standard of maintenance provided by park staff and the presence of resident staff especially is very important in promoting and maintaining "harmonious communal use". The decreasing number and skills levels of park staff could mean less frequent and lower quality maintenance, implicitly sending out a signal that the park is not well cared for and consequently leading to concern for safety. The continuous presence of on-site supervision which used to be provided by resident park

keepers, superintendents, gardeners etc. is essential to park users' perception about the safety of the park. Many parks are perceived as less safe when on-site supervision is reduced or completely withdrawn. (Barber, 1993; Conway and Lambert, 1993). The Audit Commission (1988) also argues that "the trend in recent years of reducing or eliminating park attendants appears to have had a negative effect on the potential park user" (p. 10). The presence of trained park staff is considered as a positive force in encouraging the use of parks by local communities, in particular for young children's play (Ibid.). Poor maintenance and lack of on-site supervision on the other hand often discourage visitors, and less well-used parks then easily become the target of vandalism and other antisocial behaviours (Lasdun, 1991); vandalised parks attract even less users thus further hastening the decline of urban parks.

2.3.4 Compulsory Competitive Tendering

Introduced under the terms of the 1988 Local Government Act, Compulsory Competitive Tendering (CCT) has changed the management and maintenance of urban parks significantly. CCT required all the services for open space maintenance and management provided by the local authority to be put out to tender. It was suggested by the Audit Commission (1988) that such a system could help the councils to save from 5% to 25% of the money spent on open spaces maintenance. Moreover, by acting only as the client department without taking on contractor's role at the same time, the local authority could provide a more effective service and give greater attention to the local community's needs (Ibid.). On the one hand, savings have indeed been made. Conway and Lambert (1993) and Barber (1994) both suggest a saving of 6.5% being made as a result of CCT. Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996) referred to two studies for evidence: the first one was a study carried out by Walsh and Davis (1993, in Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996) whose findings suggested that, after taking account of the costs of the client side, a saving of 7% was made across all services and a saving of 11% in grounds maintenance; the second study was Swan's (1995) survey of local authorities, showing that CCT in parks had resulted in an average saving of 16%.

On the other hand, more negative impacts on urban parks, notably on the funding, staffing and general quality of park maintenance, have been created by the implementation of CCT. In considering funding for parks, the main critique is that savings made by this system have rarely been re-invested back to the parks services (Conway and Lambert, 1993; Barber, 1994; Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995; UPFOR, 1999a). One of Swan's (1995) research findings indicates that two thirds of the local authorities studied did not redirect any proportion of the money saved by CCT back to park development work. Extrapolating from the Audit Commission's (1988) estimation of £480m being spent annually on parks in local authorities, Swan (1995) further suggests that local authority urban parks may have lost up to £80m in

funding each year as a direct result of CCT.

With regards to the impact on staffing, it is the displacement of site-based park staff (e.g. permanent on-site gardeners and park keepers) by mobile maintenance teams and security services that arouses most concern. This resulted in the diminution of the spontaneous and informal supervision which used to be provided by on-site park staff (Turner, 1992; Welch, 1995; Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995), further impairing public perception of personal safety in the park as has been discussed in Section 2.3.3. The loss of horticultural expertise was another victim of CCT (Turner, 1992; Institute of Horticulture, 1999; UPFOR, 2001a). In addition to the reduction of permanent on-site gardeners, the provision of horticultural training, which was a common feature in almost all parks departments prior to the introduction of CCT (Swan, 1995), to park staff has decreased, from either the contractor side or the client side. After the implementation of CCT, although about two thirds of direct services organisations (DSOs) maintained training, the level of training provided by many of them was reduced vastly (Swan, 1995). The ILAM (1999) also points out that "contractors are unwilling to invest in any more than the minimal skills demanded by their grounds maintenance contracts". On the client side, Swan (1995) found that only half of the local authorities surveyed ran any staff training and, for those who did so, it was managerial training rather than horticultural training that was provided. The reduction of horticultural training and the consequent lower skills levels, in the viewpoint of the Local Government Association (LGA) (1999), hastened the decline of urban parks.

The quality of park maintenance in general and horticulture in particular in many areas have also suffered from the introduction of CCT although there have been a few exceptional cases reported by Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996) and found in the Green Flag Park Award Scheme (Institute of Historic Building Conservation, 1999). Conway and Lambert (1993) argue that the system has resulted in "a less incomplete maintenance regime, with subtle but insidious losses of detail and quality in the horticulture" (p. 13). The tendency for local authorities to go for the cheapest tender (Ibid.; LGA, 1999) in response to constant budget cuts also means that standards are sacrificed for financial savings, resulting in further decline of the quality of park maintenance. In addition, Morphet (1994) notes that more of the park mangers' time is spent on contract management rather than on the management issues and less effort is put into involving local communities in the day-to-day management of urban parks.

With the enactment of the Local Government Act 1999, CCT was eventually abolished in January 2000 (DETR, 1999c). The act also sets up the legal framework for the Best Value regime, which is defined as "a duty to deliver services to clear standards, covering both cost and quality, by the most effective, economic and efficient means available" (Ibid., para. 28).

Local authorities were required to publish their first Best Value Performance Plans by the end of March 2000, and the regime came into effect in April 2000 (DETR, 1999d). A further review of Best Value is clearly beyond the scope of this study. As far as public parks are concerned, it is commonly anticipated that Best Value would have positive effects on parks provision, management and maintenance (e.g. DETR, 1999c; ETRASC, 1999b; ILAM, 2000b; Reeves, 2000; Dunnett *et al.*, 2002).

2.3.5 The absence of a dedicated national agency for parks

The absence of a national agency with a remit for urban parks was only recognised indirectly as one of the factors accounting for the decline of urban parks lately, largely because of the advocacy for the establishment of such an agency as one of the ways to halt the decline of these spaces in the TCP Inquiry. As early as 1991, in her discussion about the various threats to parks, Susan Lasdun (1991) stated that "no national authority or policy regulates their management, and there is no legal protection of their land". Barber (1996a) then argued in his speech for the launch of *'People, Parks and Cities'*, DETR's good practice guide for parks, in 1996 that, a lack of appreciation of the value of urban parks among local authorities partly accounted for parks being the easy target of budget cuts; and the lack of a national agency to inform the work of local authorities was one of the reasons for that.

Parks are not the only non-statutory leisure services provided by the local authority (Barber, 1996a; ILAM, 1999); however, all the main leisure services except parks and green spaces have specialist national agencies, known as quangos, to promote and support them (Barber, 1999b). The most notable examples are the Sports Council, Arts Council and the Museum and Galleries Commission. These bodies help to persuade local authorities to protect budgets, provide partnership funding for new initiatives, commission and publish research, offer well-informed policy advice to local authorities and lobby Government (Barber, 1999b; ILAM, 1999). Moreover, the strong role that the former Countryside Commission, now the Countryside Agency, has played in supporting country parks and rural areas and promoting countryside recreation by providing grants, undertaking and publishing research, etc. (Barber, 1996a; ILAM, 1999) further demonstrates the strength of a dedicated national agency.

As Barber (1999a) has argued in a draft proposal for a statutory agency for parks and green spaces, lacking the support from a quango has placed the parks and green spaces service in local authorities at an increasing disadvantage; most notably, the service becomes an easy target for budget cuts (the effect of continuous budget cuts has been discussed in previous sections). Another disadvantage resulting from the absence of a dedicated national agency for urban parks and green spaces is that issues relating to the provision, management and maintenance of these spaces have a low profile at both the local and national levels.

Consequently, urban parks are in an inferior position in comparison with other cultural and recreational provision whenever competitions of resources occur.

2.3.6 Competition from sports, leisure centres and countryside recreation

The increasing emphasis on sports provision within urban parks throughout the 20th century gradually became a threat to urban parks. In response to the growing demands for more sports facilities, many ornamental horticultural features in the park were displaced by tennis courts, bowling greens, large playing fields for games (e.g. football), etc. (Lasdun, 1991; Jordan, 1994a; Taylor, 1998). The direct result of this retreat from horticulture has been the reduction in park staff (Lasdun, 1991) and the problem derived from understaffing is already discussed in Section 2.3.3.

When purpose-built leisure centres which house various exercise facilities under one roof became fashionable in the 1970s and 1980s, not only did urban parks have to compete for money and resources for their maintenance (Welch, 1995; ETRASC, 1999b), but there was also pressure from such leisure development proposals being accommodated within parks (Conway and Lambert, 1993; Morphet, 1994). As Conway and Lambert (1993) observed, this type of development is difficult to be rejected, first because a leisure use seems compatible with the function of a park and, second, because many such proposals are put forward by local authorities themselves. Nevertheless, many of these new developments added into urban parks were either on a scale or style detrimental to "the historic character and the open space value of the site" (Ibid., p.10).

The negative impact of country parks on the decline of urban parks was first pointed out by Conway and Lambert in 1993. The 1968 Countryside Act empowered local authorities to provide country parks and enabled the establishment of the Countryside Commission (became Countryside Agency in 1999). Conway and Lambert (1993) indicates that the legislation resulted in drawing grant aid for country parks, countryside rangers and amenity tree-planting from Government sources. As country parks were able to attract grant aid and were more economical to maintain and popular with the car-owning population, local authorities became concentrating on their development, and subsequently, urban parks were largely ignored (Ibid.; Reeves, 2000).

This view was expressed in the TCP Inquiry, in which the Environment Sub-committee noted that the growing popularity of country and wildlife parks was considered as one of the contributory factors for the deterioration of urban parks, not only in the informal discussion prior to the Inquiry but also in the evidence submitted to them (ETRASC, 1999b). However, the argument seemed to centre on the decreasing use of urban parks as a result of the fact that

most people who own cars prefer to visit country parks, supported by the evidence given by Turner (1999) and Worpole (1999) and the committee's visit to a number of parks in the North West of England (ETRASC, 1999b). The extent to which funding country parks had brought about restrictions to the amount of money available for traditional urban parks was not established explicitly.

Overall, urban parks are left at a disadvantage when there is competition for resources, from either sports (including leisure centres) or country parks with both each has a strong quango to safeguard their interests, leading the fundamental issue back to the absence of a dedicated national agency for urban parks and green spaces, as discussed in the previous section.

2.3.7 Vandalism

Vandalism and other anti-social behaviours impact upon the decline of urban parks not only by physically destroying ornamental features, buildings and furniture within the park, but also by conveying a sense of neglect of the space and thus an insecure feeling to other users. With safety being one of the major concerns of most people who use public parks (Burgess, *et al.*, 1988; Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995; Brace, 1998), vandalism can consequently hinder park usage and a decrease in park user numbers is hardly a convincing reason for the already financially restricted local authorities to invest money in parks, thus pushing parks into the spiral of decline described in Section 2.3.1.

While being a cause of park deterioration, vandalism is simultaneously the consequence of some other factors which resulted in the decline of urban parks. It is commonly recognised that the removal of park gates and railings during World War II left many urban parks vulnerable to vandalism and other anti-social activities (Conway, 1991; Conway and Lambert, 1993; Open Spaces Society, 1999; Victorian Society, 1999). The shortage of funding in many local authorities often delayed or obstructed repairs to be undertaken promptly, and the longer the repair took, the stronger a signal of the park being neglected by the local authority was, which consequently encouraged vandalism and other anti-social behaviours (Conway and Lambert, 1993). Furthermore, the lack of on-site supervision as a result of the number of dedicated park staff being reduced considerably in recent decades resulted in a decreasing sense of security for most park users and fostered vandalism and other types of anti-social behaviours (Audit Commission, 1988; Conway and Lambert, 1993; ETRASC, 1999b).

2.3.8 Discussion

As already noted in Section 1.3.3, the vast majority of Britain's urban parks can be considered as historic based on the '30 year rule' adopted both by the HLF and EH. Therefore, the factors discussed above have adversely affected both parks that are of historic interest and those

created in the last three decades. It is difficult to decide if historic urban parks have been subject to more severe decline than non-historic urban parks due to the lack of direct empirical evidence. Although the *Public Park Assessment* study made a comparison between the entire park stocks owned by British local authorities and historic parks (which comprised around 9.3% in number of sties and 32% in hectares of the whole stock) regarding their condition (UPFOR, 2001a), it remains impossible to tell whether urban parks of historic importance have deteriorated at a greater rate than urban parks in general. This is mainly due to the fact that the entire local authority owned park stocks surveyed in the study includes not only urban parks but also other types of recreational open spaces.

Having said that, the information revealed in the *Public Park Assessment* report sheds light on factors that may have more adverse effect on historic parks than parks with no historic importance. The report indicates that overall the reduction in local authority annual revenue expenditure through out the period between 1979/80 and 1990/00 has caused disproportionate damage to parks of historic interest (UPFOR, 2001a). The data obtained in the study further suggests that local authorities have managed their dwindling total budgets for parks services by diverting money away from historic parks and allocating it to their entire park stocks instead (ibid.).

The Urban Parks Forum also undertook a detailed investigation into the loss of individual features and facilities within historic parks as part of the assessment study. It was found that the rates of loss of features with strong association with historic parks (such as ice-houses, public glasshouses, bandstands, paddling pools, fountains, boathouses and aviaries/pets corners) were in general greater than features or facilities of certain functions (e.g. playgrounds, visitor centres, grass sports pitches and skateboard/BMX ramps) (UPFOR, 2001a). The former group of features are often considered as "expensive items to maintain and provide" (Ibid., p. 4-5) and, thus, are more likely to be in serious decline as most local authorities continue to have restricted budgets for parks. Moreover, the study suggests that features such as railings and ornamental gates were lost mainly during WWII for the war effort and others such as shelters, monuments and follies have deteriorated considerably because of neglect or vandalism (Ibid.).

In addition, historic urban parks may be more adversely affected by the implementation of CCT (see Section 2.3.4) than urban parks in general, because historic urban parks usually require intense labour for high levels of horticultural skills and cares (UPFOR, 2001a).

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Chapter Three
The Protection and Restoration of Historic Urban Parks in Britain

Having outlined the historical development of urban parks in Britain, their value and the factors causing the widespread decline of these spaces, the thesis now examines the way historic urban parks have been protected and restored. The first section reviews the development of listing systems of historic parks and gardens and the second section discusses the protection provide by the planning system. Both sections focus on the case of England. A brief discussion of current approaches to the restoration of historic urban parks is given in the third section, and a number of new funding opportunities that are now available to urban parks are examined in the fourth section, with the Urban Park Programme (UPP) of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) being discussed exclusively in the fifth section. The last section focuses on the impact of the Environment Sub-committee Inquiry into Town and Country Parks (TCP Inquiry) on the future of urban parks.

3.1 The listing of historic parks and gardens

In considering the conservation of historic buildings, several writers, for example, Feilden (1994) and Mynor (1995), have argued that the identification of such properties is the first step towards their protection. There is little doubt for the same philosophy to be applied to the protection of parks and gardens which are of historic importance. Gruffydd (1977), one of the pioneers in exploring the development of a listing system for historic parks and gardens in Britain, states that:

> " "Listing" could give protection to our garden and park landscapes as it does to historic buildings, with help for repair and maintenance suitably arranged" (p.7).

Pendlebury (1999) goes further to suggest that such a system should be based on a systematic approach which records sites meeting defined criteria if either controls or policy to the protection of historic parks and gardens are to be introduced. That was what has occurred to the listing of historic buildings and the scheduling of ancient monuments. Moreover, according to Shacklock (1994), a listing system which identifies important parks and gardens worthy of protection should define what makes these places so and set out the information in a way that may "inform decision making". In other words, there seems to be at least three key elements for a practicable listing system: a set of criteria for inclusion on a list, a systematic way of recording sites, and the production of information which would notify decision makers

about the importance of the site.

In the United Kingdom, the production of lists for parks and gardens of historic significance was initiated relatively late in the history of conservation in comparison with other elements of the historic environment such as archaeological sites, historic buildings and conservation areas. Its development at the national level can be divided into two phases: unofficial listing and official listing. Although basically there is an order in time of the two phases as unofficial listing occurred first, paving the way for official listing, the former did not stop because of the inception of the latter. Along with the development of national listing systems, local lists have also been produced as part of the effort in pursuing official listing and as supplements to published national lists at the later stage. A brief review of the development of historic parks and gardens conservation at the international level in the 1960s and 1970s is presented in Appendix A-1, which had certain influence on the development of listing historic parks and gardens in Britain.

3.1.1 Unofficial listing

The initial efforts to produce a list of parks and gardens of historic importance in Britain can be traced back to 1969 when the Garden History Society (GHS), which formed itself as a learned society in 1965, announced in its newsletter the start of a 'Register of Gardens' (Jacques, 1986). But it was not until 1974 that the first of such lists, the *Interim List of Gardens and Parks of Historic or Design Interest in England and Wales*, which included 311 sites, was prepared by the GHS (Jacques, 1986; Roberts, 1995; Pendlebury and Green, 1998). However, this list was seen more as an attempt to demonstrate the feasibility of producing this kind of list rather than a successful action itself (Jackques, 1986). Roberts (1995) argues that the increasing supportive legislation, for example, the Town and Country Amenities Act 1974, was the grounds upon which unofficial listing continued throughout the 1970s. Jacques (1986) likewise indicates that the 1974 Act "introduced the concept of historic landscapes to legislation". Nevertheless, it should be noted that the statutory protection was provided to "the setting of a listed building" (Dingwall and Lambert, 1997, p.4) rather than mentioning historic parks or gardens directly. It was the provision for grant aid in the 1974 Act that recognised historic gardens and parks in their own right without a connection to historic buildings (Goodhild, 1996; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997).

Concern about the necessity and urgency for establishing a system of listing historic landscapes as a measure of protection resulted in Gruffydd (1977) initiating a study in 1975 to look at the way of dealing with this issue. The report of this research was published in 1977, in which he suggested a classification of historic landscapes, a set of standards for identifying historic gardens and parks and the methods of recording the sites on maps and forms. By

applying these standards in the examination of Oxfordshire, Gruffydd recorded 84 sites which were of potential interest for listing. This result revealed the scale of the issue in producing the lists for the whole Britain. In his conclusion, he states:

> "The investigation should be extended over the whole country in order to provide data for qualitative assessment of the heritage of designed landscape. It would be likely to occupy a dozen landscape architects for about two years, at an approximate total cost of £300,000" (Gruffydd, 1997, p. 45).

In 1976, the GHS produced *A Preliminary List of Gardens, Parks, Grounds and Designed Landscapes of Historic Interest in England and Wales* (Roberts, 1995) which was in fact the work of Peter Goodchild, who was one of the chief leaders of the GHS's listing work at the time and who had devised forms for the recording of historic parks and gardens (Jacques, 1986). This list was incorporated into the ICOMOS UK Historic Gardens Committee's list of historically important British parks and gardens in 1978 (Jacques, 1986; Roberts, 1995). The ICOMOS UK Historic Gardens Committee published *A Preliminary and Interim List of Gardens and Parks of Outstanding Historic Interest* in 1979 (Goulty, 1993; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997) in which Scotland was for the first time included (Goulty, 1993). According to Dingwall and Lambert (1997), the ICOMOS UK list was undoubtedly influential. Further work on the listing of historic parks and gardens by heritage agencies in different parts of the United Kingdom, e.g. English Heritage (EH), CADW, etc. (Lambert, 2000a), was stimulated by the production of this list (Dingwall and Lambert, 1997).

The late 1970s and early 1980s saw more actions being taken across the country. Jacques (1986) indicates that members of the GHS began to prepare lists for an unofficial Gardens Committee of the Historic Building Council (HBC) since late 1978, with the intention that these lists could ultimately be adopted when the production of official lists became possible. This was what eventually happened when EH was authorised in 1984 to compile a list of parks and gardens of historic significance in England (discussed in Section 3.1.2). Furthermore, county-based voluntary organisations, such as County Gardens Trusts, have also started making increasingly important contributions in identifying historic parks and gardens since the early 1980s (Roberts, 1995; Goodchild, 1996).

Another important contributor to the development of listing of historic parks and gardens at this time and thereafter has been the Centre for the Conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens which was established by Peter Goodchild in 1982 at the University of York's Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies (Jacques, 2000). The name of the Centre was simplified to 'Landscapes and Gardens' in 1995 to emphasis its interest in cultural landscapes while its host department changed to the Department of Archaeology in 1998 (ibid.). In addition to assisting EH with the compilation of the official listing, the Centre initiated a

national survey and inventory of historic parks and gardens (Roberts, 1995; Goodchild, 1996). As Roberts (1995), the developer of the project, has indicated, the aim of the inventory is to produce a comprehensive list which includes not only sites of national significance but also those of regional or local interest so that it can be a source for reference.

Efforts have also been made in computerising the information gathered and establishing a database since the 1980s, but real progress was not made until the early 1990s when a database, the first version of the United Kingdom Database of Historic Parks and Gardens (UKPG), was successfully developed (Jacques, 2000). Since then the UKPG has undergone several revisions and upgrade; the current one is Version 4.1, of which an abbreviated version is publicly accessible via the World Wide Web (ibid.). The database has been compiled by bringing together information already available such as published national lists of historic parks and gardens and local or private printed lists. Jacques (2000), the director of the UKPG project, indicates that the number of sites currently included in the database is in excess of 3,300, which includes parks and gardens of national significance and a selection of regionally or locally important sites. On slightly conservative estimates, he suggests that there are about 10,000 sites in the United Kingdom (England, Isle of Man, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales) worthy of inclusion in the UKPG (ibid).

The database is significant because it demonstrated the feasibility of assembling various sources of information on historic parks and gardens and disseminating this information via the Internet. Moreover, as Jacques (2000) points out, some potential applications of the UKPG are being explored, including a Parks and Gardens Record, an Inventory of Urban Parks, an Index of Management Plans for historic parks and gardens, and a European convention for gardens databases. With the funding for the project exhausted in 1999, the database will be maintained and updated but unlikely to be developed further (ibid.). Nevertheless, it is doubtless that the UKPG has formed a sound basis for all the national and local lists of historic parks and gardens and has provide a single, easily accessible gateway to the information on historic parks and gardens holding by diverse organisations.

The process of advocating the importance of identifying sites of historic importance and the production of these unofficial lists by those voluntary groups undoubtedly raised the awareness of the necessity of such a listing system for historic parks and gardens both at the national and local levels. In addition, as Roberts (1995) has commented, these unofficial lists established the feasibility of registering historic parks and gardens, illustrated the scale of the resource and, most importantly, they prepared much of the foundation for the production of official lists.

3.1.2 Official listing in England: *the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England*

Nowadays, England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland have all established a listing system to identify parks, gardens and other kinds of designed landscapes of historic importance at the national level in each country. Table 3.2.1 summarises Dingwall and Lambert's (1997) discussion on the four national lists with additional reference to various sources regarding the updated number of registered sites. As the current research looks primarily at park restoration projects in England, the following discussion thus focuses on the

Table 3.1.1 A comparison of listing systems in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland

	England	Scotland	Wales	Northern Ireland
Title	The *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England* (1984 - 1988)	The *Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes in Scotland* (1987)	The *Register of Landscapes, Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in Wales* (1994 – 97)	*Northern Ireland Heritage Gardens Inventory* (1992)
Term	Historic parks and gardens	Historic gardens and designed landscapes	Historic landscapes, parks and gardens	Heritage Gardens
Authority	English Heritage	Scottish Development Department's Historic Buildings and Monuments Directorate; Countryside Commission for Scotland	CADW: Welsh Historic Monuments	The Institute of Irish Studies, the Queen's University of Belfast and the Department of the Environment Northern Ireland
Numbers of sites	1,085 sites	275 sites	Gwent - 55 sites Clwys - 75 sites	Just over 650 sites
Updated numbers of sites	1,350 sites[a]	355 sites[b]	386 sites[c]	Around 700 sites[d]
Evaluation system	Three categories: (1) Grade I (2) Grade II* (3) Grade II	Six different values: (1) work of art (2) historical (3) horticultural (4) architectural (5) scenic (6) nature conservation Archaeological was added in 1997	Three categories: (1) Grade I (2) Grade II* (3) Grade II	Classified the sites according to period and type
Exclusion	Owners do not have a power of veto over a site's inclusion	Sites can be excluded from the list at the request of their owners	A small number of sites have been omitted at their owners' requests	A small umber of sites were excluded from the list at their owners' request
Approach	Top-down approach	Top-down approach	Top-down approach	Bottom-up approach

Source: adapted from Dingwall & Lambert, 1997, pp. 3-4.

[a] English Heritage, 2000, http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/knowledge/conservation/parks.asp

[b] Historic Scotland

[c] CADW

[d] DoE Northern Ireland, Environment and Heritage Service, 2000, http://www.ehsni.gov.uk/ BuiltHeritage

English listing system. Discussions for the other three national listing systems can be found in AppendicesA-2 to A-4. It should be noted that there is a considerable imbalance in published information for the four national lists, with most of the literature concerning the English listing system while the Northern Irish listing system being least mentioned.

The establishment of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England, commonly known as 'English Heritage', under section 32 of the National Heritage Act 1983 was an important milestone in the development of listing work for historic park and gardens. Enabled by Section 8C of the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953, inserted by paragraph 10 of Schedule 4 to the National Heritage Act 1983 (EH, 1997), EH took upon the responsibility of compiling "a register of gardens and other land situated in England and appearing to them to be of special historic interest" (Dingwall and Lambert, 1997, p.24) and that was the beginning of official listing.

Between 1984 and 1988, EH published the first edition of the *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England* on a county by county basis (Jordan, 1994b; Roberts, 1995; Goodchild, 1996; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997), identifying 1,086 sites (Jordan, 1994b; Roberts, 1995; Pendlebury, 1997). Jacques (1986) indicates that volumes for the first ten English counties covered in the *Register* were converted from lists previously produced by the Historic Building Council's unofficial Gardens Committee with the assistance from the Centre for the Conservation of Historic Parks and Gardens, and the remaining 36 volumes were completed by Dr. Christopher Thacker, author of the *History of Gardens*.

A grading system similar to the one for listed buildings is adopted to grade parks and gardens included on the *Register*:
- Grade I: the historic layout, features and architectural ornaments of the site considered together make it of exceptional interest.
- Grade II*: the historic layout, features and architectural ornaments of the site considered together make it if not of exceptional interest nevertheless of great quality.
- Grade II: the historic layout, features and architectural ornaments of the site considered together make it of special interest (EH, 1997).

Only the top 10% of the sites are designated as Grade I, 30% classified as Garde II*, and the remaining 60% designated as Garde II (Mynor, 1996; Pickard, 1996; EH, 2000).

The *Register*, as Roberts (1995) has commented, is an incomplete and select record. EH (2000) likewise recognises the problem by stating that "the *Register* is ... by no means fully comprehensive". To remedy the situation, as early as 1989, a review of the *Register* was initiated to add additional sites to the original lists and to produce a complete set of boundary

maps (Pickard, 1996; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997). Then in 1993, in order to improve the coverage of sites, a Register Review Programme began and since then more new sites have been included to the list (Wimble, 2000). In addition, a Register Upgrade Programme was started in November 1996 in order to improve the quality and accuracy of the existing site descriptions and boundary maps (Davies, 1997; Wimble, 2000). Both the Review and Upgrade programmes have been based on a series of county-based surveys (Wimble, 2000) which have been undertaken by partnerships between EH and local authorities and other locally-based organisations to identify parks and gardens that might merit consideration of registration (EH, 2000). According to EH (2000), the *Register* currently contains 1,350 sites and the basic survey work is set for completion in 2001 and the upgrading work to be completed in 2002.

Apart from being incomplete, the *Register* has had some other problems. First, Jacques (1986) indicates that the criteria for registration in the early days sometimes differed. Using Staffordshire and Somerst as an example of this, he notes that "the Starfordshire list is conservative in giving only nine whilst the Somerset list is more widely embracing and has 35" (Jacques, 1986). Such an inconsistency in the criteria stemmed from how the lists were produced. In Jacques's (2000) view, this is because the first ten volumes of the *Register* were produced by different people in different counties and there was not enough coordination to ensure that they shared common criteria or thresholds of importance. Criteria for inclusion were reasonably consistent in the other 36 volumes; however, the criteria were not formally defined until 1987 when Jacque became the first Inspector of Historic Parks and Gardens and wrote them (Jacques, 2000). As far as public parks are concerned, the first phase of the Needs Assessment of local authority owned parks carried out by the ILAM (2000b) reveals a similar message, suggesting that there were "strong regional inconsistencies in the criteria of listing" (p.16) as in some local authorities nearly all the sites identified as of national importance were listed and in others not at all.

Second, according to Roberts' (1995) analysis of just over a thousand sites which have site descriptions entered on EH's database at the time, there have been noticeable imbalances in the *Register* regarding site types, locations, and design development. In terms of site types, the *Register* is dominated by parks and gardens associated with domestic use which account for 86.4% of sites and only a very small percentage of sites (4.9%) are public parks and other kind of public places. It is found that eighteen counties do not have public parks listed in the *Register* (ibid.). The under-representativeness of public parks in the *Register* has been much criticised in the TCP Inquiry. The Environment Sub-committee concludes from their on-site visits to the Greater Manchester area that:

> "The relevant register proved to be notable more for its omissions than its inclusion. Though the industrial North, and particularly the Greater Manchester area is usually

regarded as one of the pioneers of public parks, of the 10 authorities in the area, Manchester City was cited 3 times, Wigan twice, Stockport twice, and the other 7 authorities were cited 6 times between them. Even a short visit to each of the authorities would identify a substantial number of Victorian and Edwardian Parks, in many cases very well preserved. If one compares the Register of Parks and Gardens with the list of Historic Mill Buildings in the same area, the failure of English Heritage to provide a comprehensive listing is starkly obvious" (ETRASC, 1999, para. 124).

The distribution of registered sites also shows a clear disproportion among different regions. As Roberts (1995) has revealed, the Greater London area outnumbered the other English counties on the *Register* and there was "a clear pattern of grouping in the south of the country" and "a marked decrease in the number of registered sites in the northern counties". As far as public parks are concerned, there is also an imbalance in geographical distribution. Slightly over one third of the registered public parks are in Great London area; groups of listed public parks appear in the Midlands and North of England, "with particular clusters in Merseyside and Lancashire" (ibid.). By taking Hampshire as an example which ranks fourth among other counties with 44 sites on the *Register*, Roberts (1995) argues that this is not only a reflection of the actual picture of designed landscape activity in the county, but it also mirrors the political, financial and public support given to historic parks and gardens.

In terms of the design development of listed sites, Roberts (1995) comments that the *Register* is "preoccupied with the work of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century designers". In the region of 74% of parks and 56% of gardens on the *Register* were developed during the two centuries (ibid.). However, the parks noted here are more likely to be private parks rather than public parks as the peak of park-making activity is in the eighteenth century (54%) while the majority of British public parks created in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Undoubtedly, the Register Review and Upgrade programmes would rectify some of the problems which have just been discussed above. To tackle the situation of public parks being under-represented in the *Register*, a programme of theme studies targeting least well-represented site types such as public parks and cemeteries has been conducted along with the county-based surveys of the Register Review Programme (Jordan, 1994b). Following the criticism voiced in the TCP Inquiry, EH has also included public parks in the Register Upgrade Programme and a specific Public Parks Survey will be running for two years, of which the results are to be fed into the Upgrade Programme (Wimble, 2000). Although the picture may not be changed dramatically, Pendlebury (1999) believes that the range of sites will be broadened when the *Register* "evolves and matures". The weight of public parks on the *Register* is now increasing. In addition, Roberts (1995) suggests that the imbalance in geographical distribution will be evened out when the review exercise takes greater notice of public parks and cemeteries in the northern counties.

Nonetheless, in spite of these weaknesses, the *Register* has contributed to the protection of historic parks and gardens in England in at least three ways. First, as Roberts (1995) points out, the process of registering sites and the *Register* per se have been very important in stimulating interest and raising awareness of the value of historic parks and gardens at both national and local level. Stacey (1992) likewise suggests that the *Register* has raised the profiles of historic parks and gardens among local planning officers. The result of her survey on the protection provided by local planning authorities to historic parks and gardens indicates that around 90% of the local planning authorities with registered sites can identify applications affecting their registered parks or gardens (Ibid.).

Second, the *Register* has been an important device for local authorities to provide protection to historic parks and gardens through the planning and development control process (Davies, 1997; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997). As an advisory document (Lambert and Shocklock, 1995; Goodchild, 1996), the *Register* does not provide additional statutory protection to listed sites (Goodchild, 1996; Roberts, 1995; EH, 2000). However, its application has been incorporated into the planning development control system by three provisions (Mynors, 1995; EH, 1999). The first one is the *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 (PPG 15): Planning and the Historic Environment* which establish historic parks and gardens as a material consideration for the local planning authorities in the preparation of development plans and determination of planning applications. The other two provisions, the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 and the Town and Country Planning (Consultation with the Garden History Society) Direction 1995, introduced the statutory consultation with EH and the GHS respectively on planning applications affecting registered parks and gardens. More discussions on this aspect are given in Section 3.2.1.2.

Jacques (1986) referred to the Public Inquiry into the rebuilding of the A34 through Highclere Park as an example of the *Register* being adopted as a planning tool to reject the DoE's proposal. In a review of legislation, policy guidance and significant court and appeal decisions, Lambert and Shacklock (1995) also find the same evidence that the status of a registered park or garden has been recognised in several planning appeals which were thus dismissed. However, they argue that in appeal decisions the awareness of historic parks and gardens and their status at Inspectorate level is "erratic" as in some cases, "the *Register* was not referred to at all" (Ibid).

The third type of protection provided by the *Register* to historic parks and gardens relates to funding. For example, the *Register* was used directly in the storm-damage schemes of 1987 and 1990 which were jointly operated by EH and the then Countryside Commission to allocate limited resources for the repair of historic parks and gardens (Shacklock, 1994; Countryside

Agency, 1999). Similarly, EH's Historic Parks and Gardens Grant Scheme, which provides only a small amount of funding for both capital works and restoration plans (Lockwood, 2000), has been restricted to Grade I and II* listed sites (Jordan, 1994b; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997; Lockwood, 2000). In addition, the *Register* (and its equivalents in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland) is used as an important reference for external funding regimes. The UPP, for instance, takes into account the inclusion of a park or garden on the national list in evaluating a site's heritage merit (HLF, 1996). In fact, 26 out of 45 parks/gardens (around 58%) in England which were awarded the UPP grants in the first big announcement of the funding scheme in May 1997 are included in the English *Register*. Although there is no clear evidence to suggest that the inclusion on the national list increases the opportunity of a site to be awarded the grant as the proportion of listed sites has decreased in the two later major UPP grants announcements (48% for July announcement and 23% for December announcement, both in 1997), the Register has undoubtedly been considered as an important indicator in terms of assessing a site's historic significance.

3.1.3 Local Lists in England

As national lists only cover sites of national significance, the kinds of protection provided by the Registers/Inventories are usually not applicable to parks and gardens of regional or local interest. In recognition of the deficiency in the protection offered by the national listing system, different organisations across the United Kingdom have started to produce local lists in various ways to fill in the gap.

Lambert (1991) observes that many local authorities in England have drawn up their own supplementary lists to the English *Register* since the 1980s. Sponsored by the Manpower Services Commission, several county councils such as Avon (Dingwall and Lambert, 1997) and Hampshire (Bilikowski, 1983) conducted surveys of historic parks and gardens in their counties in the early 1980s. In some county councils, for example, Shropshire and Leicestershire, work has been undertaken by in-house archaeology and/or landscape sections (Dingwall and Lambert, 1997). In other instances, academic institutions such as the Department of Landscape at the University of Sheffield and the Centre for East Anglian Studies at the University of East Anglia have been involved in the surveys of Sheffield (Roberts, 1995) and Norfolk and Suffolk (Dingwall and Lambert, 1997) respectively.

In addition, many voluntary local organisations, notably county gardens trusts in England and Wales, have been actively involved in identifying important local sites. Since the Hampshire Garden Trust, the first of its kind, was formed in 1984 and followed by the establishment of the Avon Gardens Trust in 1986, the 'county gardens trusts movement' (Lambert, 1991) began. By 1991 there were twelve in operation (ibid.) and in 1992 the Association of Gardens Trusts

(AGT) was founded to promote gardens trusts (AGT, 1999). Nowadays there are 30 county gardens trusts in England, a London Historic Parks and Gardens Trust and the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust which has 8 county based branches (AGT, 2000). These garden trusts have been undertaking research and the recording of historic parks and gardens, intending that the information gathered would help inform national and local government bodies that are involved in the management, restoration and protection of these sites (ibid.). In fact, the AGT (1999) indicates that this information has been used in enhancing the Sites and Monuments Records of local authorities and is frequently consulted by local planners.

With the county-based approach, it is believed that the EH's Register Review Programme has had a positive impact on the compilation of local lists. In Dingwall and Lambert's (1997) terms, a county or local list could be a "by-product" of the review exercise as it would identify not only sites of national significance but also those of regional or local interest and thus form a basis for local listing. Pendlebury and Green (1998) likewise suggest that the Register Review programme has been an important support to a number of detailed local studies, e.g. Manchester and Sheffield, which have emerged from a dissatisfaction with the emphasis of the *Register* on famous sites and famous designers and from a growing interest in understanding local landscape development patterns, highlighting local characteristics and diversity.

Apparently, a local list would contain a far greater number of sites than the number of sites in that particular locality being included on a national list. For instance, there are 289 sites identified in the survey carried out by the Avon Gardens Trust and County Council while only 30 sites are listed in the Register for Avon (Dingwall and Lambert, 1997). The compendium of heritage gardens in Kent which was produced by Kent Gardens Trust in association with the Heritage Group of Kent County Council listed 363 sites; the county has 58 registered sites (Askwith, 2000).

3.2 Protection of historic parks and gardens in the planning system

Knowing which parks and gardens are of historic importance is the first step towards their protection. But this knowledge alone is not enough. The incorporation of this knowledge into the planning system is thus another important aspect in providing more substantial protection to historic parks and gardens. In addition, while there is no statutory protection for historic parks and gardens and the then DETR expressed in their response to the TCP Report that there is no such need, it is even more important to understand how historic parks and gardens are protected in the planning system in the lack of a statutory power to support this. Again, this section focuses on the English planning system, examining how historic parks and gardens could be protected by three aspects of the planning system: the legislation, national planning policy and other conservation measures. Discussions regarding the protection of historic parks

and gardens provided by the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland planning systems are presented in Appendices A-5 to A-8.

3.2.1 Legislation

The legislative framework for historic parks and gardens is relatively patchy and flimsy in comparison with the one for historic buildings and conservation areas. The statutes and regulations making up this framework can be broadly grouped into two categories: those directly referring to historic parks and gardens and those with indirect relevance. They provide protections to historic parks and gardens in five ways: (1) via grant-aid; (2) as settings of listed buildings or being included in conservation areas; (3) through general planning control process; (4) enabling official listing; and (5) through a requirement of statutory consultation. Table 3.2.1 summarises the primary and secondary legislation relevant to historic parks and gardens in England and indicates whether the statute or regulation is directly relevant or not and the type of protection enabled by the statute or regulation. It should be noted that a complete review of the legislation is beyond the scope of this study. This section focuses on primary and secondary legislation; international or European laws, case laws and court appeals are not to be discussed.

Table 3.2.1 Legislation relevant to historic parks and gardens in England

Primary Legislation	Secondary Legislation
▪ Town and Country Amenity Act 1974 [direct-G; indirect-LB & CA]	▪ Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 [direct-SC]
▪ National Heritage Act 1980 [indirect-G]	▪ Town and Country Planning (Consultation with the Garden History Society) Direction 1995 [direct-SC]
▪ National Heritage Act 1983 [direct-G & L]	
▪ Town and Country Planning Act 1990 [indirect-PC]	▪ Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999 [direct-PC]
▪ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1991 [indirect-PC(LB & CA)]	▪ Countryside Stewardship Regulations 2000 [direct-G]

Keys:

CA = conservation areas	LB = listed buildings
G = grant-aid	PC = planning control
L = listing of parks and gardens	SC = statutory consultation

3.2.1.1 Primary Legislation

The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 was the first piece of primary legislation concerning historic parks and gardens (Dingwall and Lambert, 1997). Under section 4(1) of this Act the government was enabled to provide grants for the preservation of historic buildings, their contents and adjoining land. The link was established by recognising parks and gardens as the setting of historic buildings.

Nevertheless, it was the Town and Country Amenity Act 1974 that made the first direct

reference to historic gardens in the British legislative system and enabled grant aid for historic parks and gardens in their own right (Stacey, 1992; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997). Amendment to the 1953 provision referred to above regarding grants was made by section 12 of the Town and Country Amenity Act which added into the original statement the followings words:

> "the upkeep of a garden or other land which appears to the Secretary of State to be of outstanding historic interest but which is not contiguous or adjacent to a building which appears to him to be of outstanding historic or architectural interest" (Great Britain, 1974).

Dingwall and Lambert (1997) point out that the Town and Country Amenity Act 1974 contributed to the protection of historic parks and gardens, indirectly though, in two other ways. In the first instance, the Act introduced statutory protection for the setting of a listed building in England and Wales. Second, it strengthened conservation law by introducing a critical principle in determining proposed developments within a conservation area, requiring special attention to be paid to the desirability of 'preserving or enhancing the character or appearance' of that area (ibid). However, these provisions (Ss 1-11) had been repealed by various planning statutes afterwards and relevant requirements were set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (to be discussed later in this section).

Further statutory power to grant aid for the historic environment was established by the National Heritage Act 1980 which brought the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) into existence. Under the Act, the NHMF may make grants and loans to the Secretary and State or other non-for-profit organisations such as local authorities and the National Trust to assist in the acquisition, maintenance or preservation of any land, building or structure, object and collection of outstanding scenic, historic, architectural, aesthetic, artistic, or scientific interest (Mynors, 1995). The remit of the NHMF extends to the whole of the United Kingdom (DCMS, 2000). As a result of the National Lottery Act 1993 under which the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) was set up, the NHMF assumed a new responsibility to administer the HLF in distributing the heritage share of the proceeds of the National Lottery (Mynors, 1995; HLF, 1999a). The contributions of the HLF towards the protection of historic parks and gardens is discussed in more detailed in Section 3.4.

The National Heritage Act 1983 brought about protections to historic parks and gardens in two respects. First and specifically for England, as already described in Section 3.1.2, this Act, through amendment to the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953, enabled EH to compile the *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England.* Nonetheless, statutory protection to historic parks and gardens was not introduced accordingly because the statute did not make any reference to the status of the *Register* in the planning system nor did it entail any responsibilities upon owners or decision makers (Lambert and

Shacklock, 1995). Secondly, the 1983 statute introduced further modifications to the Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 regarding the arrangements of grant-aid for historic parks and gardens. In England, the power to make grants or loans for the preservation of historic gardens or other lands was transferred to EH (s. 3A).

Other statutes of relevance to historic parks and gardens are those governing town and country planning (Dingwall and Lambert, 1997). Basic provisions for planning control including the need for planning permissions for development and decision-making are contained in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 which extends to England and Wales. As Dingwall and Lambert (1997) comment, the section 54A of the 1990 Planning Act, inserted by section 26 of the Planning and Compensation Act 1991, introduced a new and critical principle in the planning system through the requirement that the determination of any planning permissions have to be made in accordance with the development plan. Under such a provision, policies for the conservation of historic parks and gardens such as those contained in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15: Planning and the Historic Environment* (see Section 3.2.2.1) thus obtain statutory weight (ibid.). Lambert and Shacklock (1995) observe that the desirability of conserving or preserving historic parks and gardens from harm has also been addressed in an increasing number of policies in structure and local plans in the light of section 54 of the 1990 statute, and many of these policies extend to parks and gardens of local or regional significance and not included in the English *Register*.

Historically and in practice, the protection of historic parks and gardens has been connected with the park or garden being considered as the setting of an historic building or it being included in a conservation area. How the two conservation measures have been applied to historic parks and gardens is discussed later in the chapter (Section 3.2.3). As primary legislation is concerned, specific controls regarding buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest are set out in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (extended to England and Wales). According to the statute, special regard should be made to the desirability of preserving the setting of an historic building when considering whether to grant listed building consent for any kind of work or planning permission for development affecting a listed building or its setting.

In respect to conservation areas, the statutory power to designate "areas of special architectural or historic interest the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance" as conservation areas is rest with the local planning authority, or the planning authority in the Scottish legislation, or the Secretary of State under section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The local planning authority, on the other hand, has the duty to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of

conservation areas. In addition, special attention has to be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area in exercise of any planning functions relating to any buildings or other land within that conservation area. There are also provisions indicating that grants or loans may be made by EH for the preservation or enhancement of conservation areas.

As the focus of this thesis is about community involvement, it is worth noting that the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 has actually introduced a basic level of public participation/community involvement for the protection of historic parks and gardens into the planning system. The local planning authority is required to publish information regarding applications for planning permission for development which would affect the setting of a listed building or the character or appearance of a conservation area, to publicly display the application, plans and relevant documents for public inspection, and to consider any representations concerning the application received during the time of public display in making the decision. Moreover, any proposals made for the preservation and enhancement of a conservation area have to be submitted for consideration to a public meeting in the related area and any views expressed in the meeting should be taken into account by the local planning authority/the planning authority.

3.2.1.2 Secondary Legislation

In addition to primary legislation, there are a number of statutory instruments that are of relevance to parks and gardens of historic importance (see Table 3.2.1). This subsection focuses on secondary legislation making direct reference to historic parks and gardens.

Statutory consultation with appropriate interested bodies on development affecting historic parks and gardens is introduced into the British planning system via several statutory instruments. In England, it is the Article 10(1)(o) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 that requires the local planning authority to consult EH on planning applications for development which is likely to affect any park or garden listed as Grade I or Grade II* in the *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England* (Goodchild, 1996; Mynors, 1995; EH, 1999). In addition, English local planning authorities are required to consult the GHS on planning applications affecting any registered parks or gardens, regardless of their grade, under the Town and Country Planning (Consultation with the Garden History Society) Direction 1995 (Mynors, 1995; EH, 1999).

Basically, the two provisions just mentioned were summarised in two Circulars: (1) the ex DoE Circular 9/95 (WO 29/95): *General Development Order Consolidation 1995* which was jointly published by the former Department of the Environment and the Welsh Office; and (2)

the ex DETR Circular 14/97 (DCMS 1/97): *Planning and the Historic Environment –
Notification and Directions by the Secretary of State* which was jointly published by the DETR
and DCMS.

Historic parks and gardens in rural areas in England enjoy a bit more protection in the form of
grant aid. Extended only to England, the Countryside Stewardship Regulations 2000 revoked
and replaced, with savings, the previous legislation governing the Countryside Stewardship
Scheme, a grant scheme operated by the Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF)
since 1996. Historic features such as parklands, orchards and buildings and a number of other
landscape types and features are eligible for applying to the scheme (MAFF, 2000). The
regulation specifies the maximum rates of payments for activities supported by the scheme.
Parks of historic interest are mentioned directly in three activities, including planting of a
standard tree (£6 per tree), installation of a parkland guard (£30 per guard) and installation of
deer fencing (£3.50 per metre). While not specifically referred to, many other activities are
undoubtedly applicable to historic parks and gardens.

Generally speaking, many of the activities specified in the Countryside Stewardship Scheme
can benefit the restoration or management of historic parks and gardens in rural areas.
However, as far as urban historic parks and gardens are concerned, the remits of the scheme do
not seem to extend to them; nor is there any such statutory funding arrangement being made
for them as yet.

The other statutory instruments and rules that can be seen as of direct relevance to parks and
gardens of historic importance relate to environmental impact assessment. The Town and
Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations
1999 identify, among others, (1) nature reserves and parks, and (2) landscapes of historical,
cultural or archaeological significance as areas where particular attention should be drawn
concerning the 'absorption capacity of the natural environment' – one of the factors that have
to be considered regarding the location of development affecting the environmental sensitivity
of a geographical area.

3.2.2 National Planning Policy: Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs) in
England

As Mynors (1995) has commented, the advice issued by the Secretary of State from time to
time including Planning Policy Guidance notes (PPGs), as in the case of England, and
Circulars is at least as important as the actual planning legislation itself. Some circulars that
are of relevance to historic parks and gardens have already been discussed. PPGs basically set
out the Government's policies or principles on various planning matters. Local authorities are

required to take into account the contents of PPGs in preparing development plans, and PPGs may also be material considerations for development control (DoE, 1997).

3.2.2.1 PPG15: Planning and the Historic Environment (1994)

In England, the Government's planning policies for historic parks and gardens are set out in PPG15, *Planning Policy Guidance: Planning and the Historic Environment*, jointly issued by the then DoE and Department of the National Heritage (DoNH) in 1994. This PPG provides statements of Government policy on the identification and protection of the historic environment including historic buildings, conservation areas, World Heritage Sites, historic parks and gardens, historic battlefields and the wider historic landscape (section2). In addition to being embraced in the concept of historic environment throughout the guidance, specific advice on historic parks and gardens is given in paragraph 2.24 (Lambert and Shacklock, 1995; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997), which states:

> "Local planning authorities should protect registered parks and gardens in preparing development plans and in determining planning applications. The effect of proposed development on a registered park or garden or its setting is a material consideration in the determination of a planning application. Planning and highway authorities should also safeguard registered parks or gardens when themselves planning new developments or road schemes" (DoE and DoNH, 1994).

Dingwall and Lambert (1997), while commenting that PPG15 is "the most comprehensive advice on parks and gardens issued to date by Government" (p. 25), argue that the word 'should' used in paragraph 2.24, the only direct Government advice on the English *Register*, is "ambiguous" (p.5). Nevertheless, they consider the reference to the setting of a registered park or garden to be especially valuable (ibid.).

The advice contained in PPG15 on two particular aspects of the historic environment, i.e. the setting of listed buildings and conservation areas, is also of relevance to parks and gardens (Lambert and Shacklock, 1995; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997). With regard to the first aspect, paragraph 2.16 recognises the importance to preserve the setting of a listed building and states that:

> "The setting is often an essential part of the building's character, especially if a garden or grounds have been laid out to complement its design or function" (DoE and DoNH, 1994).

While it is indicated in paragraph 2.17 that "the setting of a listed building may be limited to obviously ancillary land, but may often include land some distance from it", the lack of a clear provision on the extent to which the setting can be extended may be problematic when applied in practice. On the one hand this allows great flexibility in the interpretation of the term and often results in successful protection to parks and gardens in appeal decisions; on the other

hand, since the term is not substantially defined, there is always a certain degree of uncertainty in making the case successfully (Stacey, 1992).

In respect of the second aspect, although conservation areas designation for landscape has been accepted in DoE Circular 8/87 (Stacey, 1992), of which the policy content was cancelled by PPG15 (Mynors, 1995), there seems to be strictures against such a measure to be used to protect areas of landscape (Lambert and Shacklock, 1995). Dingwall and Lambert (1997) suggest that the policy guidance provides supportive argument for the designation of historic parks and gardens as conservation areas. Paragraph 4.6 states:

> "Designation may well, however, be suitable for historic parks or gardens and other areas of historic landscapes containing structures that contribute to their special interest and that fall within the categories subject to conservation area controls" (DoE and DoNH, 1994).

In addition to above advice, PPG15 clearly asserts the significance of historic parks and gardens for people's understanding and appreciation of the historic environment. It addresses that "England is particularly rich in the designed landscapes of parks and gardens, and the built and natural features they contain", indicating that the greatest of these are as important as England's greatest buildings to both the national and international culture (Lambert and Shacklock, 1995; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997).

The policy guidance also contains a number of other references which are of associated interest to historic parks and gardens. These have been identified by Dingwall and Lambert (1997) and can be referred to the Appendix to their book, *Historic Parks and Gardens in the Planning System: A Handbook*.

3.2.2.2 PPG2: Green Belt (1995)

The former DETR indicates in the memorandum submitted to the TCP Inquiry that *Planning Policy Guidance: Green Belts* (PPG2) is one of the planning policy guidance notes containing planning policy which would affect parkland (DETR, 1999c). This PPG was revised in 1995 to replace the 1988 version of PPG2 and a number of advice in Circulars and other PPGs. With a fundamental aim of preventing urban sprawl and protecting the countryside, the guidance requires the use of land within Green Belts to fulfil several objectives; four of which that parks and gardens can contribute to include:

- the provision of opportunities for access to the open countryside for the urban population;
- the provision of opportunities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation near urban areas;
- the preservation of attractive landscapes, and enhancement of landscapes, near to where people live; and
- the securing of conservation interest (DoE, 1995, para. 1.6).

Dingwall and Lambert (1997) note that specific reference to historic parks and gardens is made in paragraph C12 of Annex C to the guidance in which gardens and grounds of special historic interest are recognised as a type of major developed sites and local authorities are required to take into account the desirability of their preservation. The paragraph also regards sites listed on the *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England* as of particular importance and PPG15 is referred to (DoE, 1995).

3.2.2.3 PPG3: Housing (2000)

The relevance of *Planning Policy Guidance Note No.3: Housing* (PPG3) to parks, gardens and other types of open spaces is identified in several references, for example, Dingwall and Lamdert (1997), DETR (1999c) and ILAM (1999). A consultation draft of the revised PPG 3 to replace the 1992 version was issued in March 1999 (DETR, 1999a) and the new PPG3 was published a year later (DETR, 2000b).

As far as public parks and gardens are concerned, although the then DETR (1999c) claimed that the importance of protecting valuable urban open space was highlighted in the 2000 version of PPG3, the fact that no direct reference to parks and gardens was made in the guidance should not be overlooked. Such a deficiency has actually been pointed out by the House of Commons Select Committee on Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs in its report regarding the consultation draft of the revision of PPG3 (ETRASC, 1999a). The Select Committee argued that the draft guidance did not give sufficient emphasis to the importance of parks, suggesting that:

> "There should be specific reference to public parks and gardens as well as playing fields in paragraph 52. The section should be entitled "Protecting and improving parks, other open spaces and sports provision"" (ETRASC, 1999a, para. 77).

Despite quoting this recommendation word by word in the *Government's Response to the Environment, Transport and Regional Affairs Committee's Report* (DETR, 2000c), there seems to be no positive reaction to this particular concern shown either in the response itself or in the new PPG3. Parks and gardens are still encompassed in the notion of 'open space' and the relevant planning policy is abridged into the following statement:

> "Local planning authorities should have clear policies for the protection and creation of open space and playing fields, and new housing developments should incorporate sufficient provision where such spaces are not already adequately provided within easy access of the new housing. Developing more housing within urban areas should not mean building on urban green spaces" (DETR, 2000b, para. 53).

Another criticism to the revised PPG3 regarding parks and gardens has been articulated by ILAM. In the memorandum submitted to the TCP Inquiry, ILAM (1999) argued that the consultation draft of the guidance failed to recognise public parks and other types of designed

recreational spaces as "part of the shared urban heritage and the social, economic and environmental capital of towns and cities" (para. 26) as these spaces were excluded from the definition of 'previously developed land' in the guidance. This particular definition was adopted without any change in Annex C to the 2000 version of PPG3.

3.2.2.4 PPG16: Archaeology and Planning (1990)

Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning (PPG16) may be related to historic parks and gardens in two broad ways. First, Dingwall and Lambert (1997) indicate that the policy framework contained in PPG16 is applicable to historic parks and gardens because in England there is the probability of archaeological remains either within a garden or which make up the remains of a garden. Second, as Lambert and Shacklock (1995) have pointed out, planning policy set out in PPG 16 regarding Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) can be applied to historic parks and gardens, either contained in the English *Register* or included in a county's own schedule of historic parks and gardens, that have been added to the SMR, as several counties have already done.

According to the guidance, prospective developers are suggested to consult with the County Archaeological Officer or equivalent who holds the SMR or EH in London at the early stage of their planning applications (DoE, 1990). Before making any decision on the planning application, local planning authorities can require applicants to carry out archaeological field evaluations if there are indications that important archaeological remains exist, and the authorities themselves should consult the County Archaeological Officer or equivalent and the County SMR for the assessment of likely archaeological impact (ibid.).

3.2.2.5 PPG17: Sports and Recreation (1991)

The Government's guidance on planning for open space is set out in *Planning Policy Guidance: Sports and Recreation* (PPG17), published by the then DoE in 1991. The DETR (now DTLR) plans to revise the guidance (ILAM, 1999; DETR 2000a) and a draft of the revised PPG17: Sport, Open Space and Recreation was issued for public consultation in March 2001; however, at the time of writing, the expected revised PPG 17 has still not been published yet.

Apart from stating the role of the planning system in assessing opportunities and needs for sports and recreation provision, the present PPG17 also gives advice on how open space with recreational value should be protected (DoE, 1991). A range of other roles that open space may play are noted in the guidance, including: contributing to the quality of urban life; enhancing the character of conservation areas, listed buildings and historic landscapes; attracting business and tourism; and as part of the urban regeneration process (ibid, para.25). In considering granting planning permission for the development of golf courses, the guidance

note mentions a guidance prepared by EH on golf course proposals in historic landscapes, such as archaeological remains, conservation areas, and parks and gardens; the English *Register* of historic parks and gardens is also specifically referred to (ibid, para.58).

Nevertheless, in Dingwall and Lambert's (1997) point of view, the guidance note is 'disappointing' (p. 25), for the importance of parks and gardens, in particular those in urban areas, are not recognised. ILAM (1999) raises concern on the quantitative approach to public open space and recreation provision suggested in the guidance, arguing that it does not offer a planning framework supporting the achievement of the full range of social, economic and environmental benefits which the best public parks and green spaces provide.

Undoubtedly, people who are concerned about the future of public parks expect the draft of the revised PPG17 would reflect these problems. While the then DETR (2000a) suggested in the Government's response to the TCP Report that some possible positive changes, such as affirming the Government's commitment to good quality, well-managed parks and open spaces and encouraging a more strategic approach to protecting existing recreational provision, would be made in the revision of PPG 17, the published draft guidance note failed again to recognise the value of urban parks (GHS, 2001; ILAM, 2001).

Despite the fact that the phrase 'open space' was added into the title of the revised PPG 17, the whole content of the draft document focused almost entirely on organised sport and recreation (Civic Trust, 2001; English Nature, 2001). The inconsistent use and lack of clear definitions of several key phrases such as 'informal open space' and 'recreation facilities' in the draft guidance note were strongly criticised by a number of organisations responding to the consultation document (e.g. GHS, 2001; ILAM, 2001). Arguing that the revised PPG 17, as it stood at that time, "would not only fail to give strategic guidance on open space; it would have a negative impact as a result of its confusing wording", the GHS (2001) suggested that fundamental revisions to the draft of the revised PPG 17 would be needed.

3.2.3 Other conservation measures

As Lambert and Shacklock (1995) indicate, in addition to the basic national legal and policy framework, there have been other conservation measures adopted by some local planning authorities to provide greater control over matters affecting historic parks and gardens. Stacey (1992) undertook a survey to a limited number of local planning authorities in England on how historic parks and gardens, both registered and non-registered sites, were protected. The result of her study reveals seventeen different measures used by the respondents to protect historic parks and gardens. Among them, the five most popular measures are tree preservation orders, consulting county conservation officer, listed building legislation, conservation areas and local

plans (Stacey, 1992). A thorough review of all those measures is beyond the scope of this thesis; therefore, this section focuses on two of them which have generated more concerns in literature on historic parks and gardens: the setting of a listed building and conservation area designation.

3.2.3.1 The setting of a listed building

As the second phase of the Public Park Assessment study has revealed, a total of 1,860 listed building are recorded from the 2,150 historic parks identified by the responding local authority officers (UPFOR, 2001a). The desirability of preserving the setting of historic buildings is highlighted in the planning legislative framework. As Mynors (1995) declares, gardens are a key feature of the setting of many listed buildings. In fact, Stacey (1992) indicates that considering parks and gardens as the setting of listed buildings is a common technique to protect these spaces, whether registered or not, from developments. Both Stacey (1992) and Lambert Shacklock (1995) have identified several examples of this measure being successfully applied in court and appeal decisions.

Nonetheless, as already discussed earlier, this measure has been criticised for not being consistently reliable due to the lack of clearly defined geographical limits of the setting of a listed building (Stacey, 1992). Lambert and Shacklock (1995) discover that the setting may be extended beyond the 'visual envelope' around the listed building, be considered in association with the ambience or atmosphere of the place, or may incorporate views across the park or garden. As Stacey's (19992) survey results have shown, although listed building legislation comes on the top five measures used by local planning authorities to protect historic parks and gardens, mainly through the setting of listed buildings and listed garden features, it slips to the bottom of the list when the respondents were asked to identify their preferred or the best possible measures which would offer specific protection to parks and gardens.

3.2.3.2 Conservation area designation

It is commonly recognised that designating a historic park or garden as a conservation area, either by creating a new one or by extending an existing one to cover the park or garden, is an important means for local authorities to provide additional protection to historic parks and gardens (Stacey, 1992; Lambert and Shacklock, 1995; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997; Institute of Historic Building Conservation, 1999). Not only is this measure popular among the local authorities as Stacey's (1992) survey has discovered, but it is also advocated by various conservation groups such as the GHS, EH and local Gardens Trusts (ibid.). In addition, as Lambert and Shacklock's (1995) have argued, this measure is of particular importance to the protection of non-registered historic parks and gardens.

The national planning policy supporting the designation of parks and gardens as conservation

areas is contained in PPG 15 for England and NPPG 11 for Scotland. Such designation is helpful in at least three respects: (1) it offers controls over demolition; (2) it limits permitted development; and (3) local authorities are required by planning legislation to prepare schemes for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas (Stacey, 1992; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997).

3.3 Current Approaches to the Restoration of Historic Urban Parks

The listing and planning systems discussed in the previous two sections may to a certain extent protect historic urban parks from the threat of new development proposals. However, for parks that have already been in decline, actions which can physically prevent them from falling into disrepair are highly desirable. It is indicated in the Burra Charter (Australia ICOMOS, 1981, see Appendix A-1) that the conservation of places of cultural significance encompasses a range of activities including maintenance, preservation, restoration, reconstruction and adaption (Article 1). In an article discussing the regeneration of public parks, Woudstra (2000) suggests three categories of action: restoration, reconstruction and redesign.

As far as restoration is concerned, the Burra Charter defines the term as "maintaining the fabric of a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration" (Australia ICOMOS, 1981, Article 1, para. 1.7), and Marcus and Barker (1997) regard the action of putting back details of a site as it was in the past as restoration. It is different from reconstruction, that is to return a place "as nearly as possible to a known state" (Australia ICOMOS, 1981, Article 1, para. 1.8) and involves the introduction of new or old materials into the fabric of the site (Ibid.). Woudstra (2000) argues that accurate restoration work and reconstruction of former features are in general more appropriate than redesign for older parks in view of the value of distinctiveness and the importance of memory in parks. A redesign will be preferable only when a historic urban park has been damaged beyond recognition (Ibid.).

Currently, there seems to be no specific approaches to the restoration of historic urban parks. A brief analysis of descriptions of the 1997 UPP grant-aided restoration projects (Heritage Lottery Fund, 1997 b, c and d) shows that, on most occasions, the work that has been undertaken to regenerate a park is in essence a combination of restoration and reconstruction. The former includes mainly the restoration, repair and/or refurbishment of the park's physical fabric to the original design or a known designer's layout, and/or important historic buildings and features in the park. The latter includes primarily the reinstatement or re-creation of important features in the park which have been lost or become dilapidated.

As Woudstra (2000) points out, park regeneration projects sometimes involve the introduction of new facilities (such as vehicular access and sports facilities), new features (e.g. park

furniture, gates and children's play equipment) and new materials in order to meet the needs of modern users. This is indeed reflected in many of the 1997 UPP grant-aided restoration projects, showing a wide range of new additions which have been introduced into historic urban parks. Examples of such new addition include: a visitor/community centre (e.g. Norfolk Heritage Park, Sheffield), a garden (e.g. Central Park, Southampton), a fountain (e.g. Waterlow Park, London Borough of Camden), a children's play area (Manor House Gardesn, London Borough of Lewisham), and public toilets (e.g. People's Park, Halifax).

3.4 New Funding Opportunities for Urban Parks

As several writers, for instance, Stacey (1992), Shacklock (1994), Roberts (1995) and Lambert (2000a) have argued, one of the fundamental issues for the conservation and restoration of historic parks and gardens is funding. While the funding system within most of the local authorities is likely to remain unfavourable to parks, seeking alternative sources of financial support is inevitable and important.

Dingwall and Lambert (1997) have identified a number of conventional funding sources for historic parks and gardens, including national heritage bodies, such as CADW, EH and Historic Scotland; national countryside organisations, like Central Scotland Countryside Trust, Countryside Council for Wales and Countryside Commission (now Countryside Agency); and other organisations, such as National Heritage Fund and Forestry Commission, to name but just a few. Nevertheless, as far as urban parks are concerned, most of these funding opportunities are either applicable to only a very limited number of them, i.e. listed sites or those of outstanding historic interest, or applicable only to country parks. For instance, as mentioned in Section 3.1.2, only Grade I and II* listed urban parks are eligible for EH's Historic Parks and Gardens Grant Scheme (Jordan 1994b; Dingwall and Lambert, 1997; Lockwood, 2000). While the Countryside Stewardship Scheme (now under the administration of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affair) can benefit the conservation of historic landscapes, it is dedicated only to land in countryside and, therefore, is unlikely to support urban parks. To date, the HLF's UPP is the only funding programme that has been set up specifically for historic urban parks. Its development and influence are discussed in Section 3.5.

As Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996) suggest, there could be and will be new sources of funding for urban parks which may be in the form of direct financial inputs, such as lottery money or Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) bids, through partnership schemes, volunteer schemes or other resources in kind. Thus, this section looks at four funding opportunities that have been created in the recent decades which may be beneficial to urban parks: the Single Regeneration Budget, European Regional Development Fund, Landfill Tax Credit Scheme and New

Opportunities Fund. Some of them may not encompass urban parks directly but have been successfully acquired to assist park projects in kind; while others have more explicit concerns over urban parks.

3.4.1 Single Regeneration Budget (England only)

The Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) was established in 1994 as "an important instrument of the Government's drive to tackle social exclusion and promote equality of opportunity" (DETR, 1999c). It incorporates twenty different regeneration programmes formerly operated by five different Government departments into one integrated budget to provide a more flexible fund for regeneration initiatives in England undertaken by local partnerships (DETR 1997). The priority of the SRB is to "enhance the quality of life of local people in areas of need by reducing the gap between deprived and other areas, and between different groups" (DETR, 1999c).

Although funding through SRB does not directly encompass public parks, chances for accessing this funding opportunity may be increased by promoting the growing awareness of the various roles which public urban parks can play in regeneration areas (Sheffield City Council, 1999a). Indeed, a successfully renovated and/or well-managed and maintained public park can help to achieve many of the objectives which this funding regime intends to support. These objectives include addressing social exclusion, promoting sustainable regeneration, improving and protecting the environment, and supporting and promoting growth in local economies and businesses (DETR, 1999f). In addition, DETR (1998f) indicates in its *Sustainable Regeneration Good Practice Guide* that parks and open space are one of the areas associated with regeneration in which the principles of sustainability may be introduced.

Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996) identify in their report, *People, Parks and Cities*, a number of park projects that have benefited from SRB funding. The safer parks project in Rossmere Park, Hartlepool, for example, obtained part of its funding from SRB; London Borough of Hounslow allocated some of the SRB funding secured for the regeneration of the Brentford area of the borough for parks and open spaces (ibid.). Sheffield City Council is one of those local authorities who have managed to make use of some of their SRB money for their public parks. In Sheffield, SRB 2 has contributed to the partnership funding for the restoration of Norfolk Heritage Park; and High Hazels Park as well as Firth Park has obtained some revenue funding for regeneration teams from SRB 4; and Parsons Cross Park and Longley Park are partly supported by SRB 5 (Neild-Banks, 2000).

3.4.2 European Regional Development Fund

Created in 1975, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is one of the European

Union's Structural Funds which aims at reducing regional disparities in the Union and encouraging the development and conversion of regions (European Commission, 2000a). The resources of the ERDF are primarily used to co-finance productive investment which would lead to the creation or maintenance of jobs, infrastructure, local development initiatives, and business activities of small and medium-sized enterprises (European Commission, 2000b).

ERDF is targeted at certain disadvantaged regions designated into various Priority Objectives. In the programming period between 1994 and 1999, there were four priority objectives: Objective 1 (regions whose development is lagging behind), Objective 2 (industrial regions in decline), Objective 5b (rural areas) and Objective 6 (areas with a very low population density) (EC, 2000b). The 2000-2006 programming period, eligible regions are divided into only two categories: Objective 1 for regions whose development is lagging behind and Objective 2 for regions facing structural difficulties (European Commission, 2000b). In the United Kingdom, the Merseyside region remains eligible for Objective 1 funding for the 2000-2006 period and, in addition, South Yorkshire, West Wales and the Valleys, Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly have also become fitted for this category (European Commission, 2000c).

Although historic parks and gardens may not seem to be an explicit subject in this funding regime, there have been a number of cases where funds from ERDF were successfully secured as partnership funding for the regeneration of or improvements to historic parks and gardens. For instance, in Hereford and Worcester where it was designated as Objective 5b region, the Gardens Trust and the city council have obtained ERDF grants at around 50% for seven projects, of which three related to registered historic gardens (Dingwall and Lambert, 1997; Whitehead, 1999). The result of a postal questionnaire survey to local authorities undertaken by the author regarding the partnership funding in the UPP funded urban parks restoration projects also shows that ERDF has contributed to several projects (to be discussed in Chapter Six).

3.4.3 Landfill Tax Credit Scheme

The Landfill Tax was introduced by the British Government in October 1996 with an explicit environmental objective of reducing the country's reliance on landfill and thus facilitating a more sustainable way of waste management (DETR, 2000d; ILAM, 2000a). Since then, companies, organisations or, in some parts of the United Kingdom, local authorities who run landfill sites, known as landfill operators, have been paying a tax on the weight of waste disposed of at their sites. The Landfill Tax Credit Scheme was set up at the same time to channel a proportion of funds from the Landfill Tax towards bodies with environmental objectives (ENTRUST, 1999). In addition to promote sustainable waste management, the scheme also aims at helping projects which would benefit communities in the vicinity of

landfill sites (that's usually within 10 miles), thus helping to compensate for the disamenity effects and environmental impact of landfill (DETR, 2000d).

Sheffield City Council (1999a) comments that, for the opportunities it has provided for public parks, this so called Britain's first 'green tax' (Sills, 2000; Shell Better Britain Campaign, 2000) is to be welcomed. There are six categories of 'environmental objects' approved by the scheme (ENTRUST, 1999). The one most concerning historic parks and gardens is Object D which covers the provision and maintenance of public amenities and parks. According to ENTRUST (1999), the regulator of the scheme, this category of projects accounted for almost half (48%) of the money spent in 1999 (£90 million pound). A detailed breakdown of Object D projects further indicates that 16% of them are public parks and amenities, 13.5% are playgrounds, and 9% are greens, gardens and grasslands (ibid.)

Up to date, through various environment bodies enrolled with ENTRUST the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme has enabled a rich variety of park projects across the United Kingdom, including improvements to public parks and open spaces, creation of new public park on derelict or council-owned land, improvements to and/or creation of park facilities such as play equipment, park furniture, directional and interpretive signage and skateboard or BMX equipment, improvements to public access to parks, planting and so on (ENTRUST, 2001). As Sills (2000) comments, the success of the scheme is unexpected and 'overwhelming'.

In addition to the capital investment, the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme is significant in two ways. First, its private voluntary nature has entitled the contributions to match funds from other sources such as the lottery money or European funding (Sills, 2000; Menzies. 2000). Second, the scheme has enabled the establishment of a variety of partnerships between landfill operators, environmental bodies, local communities and local authorities (ibid.).

3.4.4 New Opportunities Fund

The establishment of the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) was enabled by the Notional Lottery Act 1998 as a new Lottery Distributor to allocate grants to health, education and environment projects across the United Kingdom. As stated at the beginning of their Strategic Plan (NOF, 1999a), the NOF places a particular focus on "the needs of those who are most disadvantaged in society". By working in partnership with national, regional and local organisations from the public, private, voluntary and community sectors, and other Lottery Distributors, the NOF supports projects addressing following themes: (1) improve the quality of life for individuals and communities; (2) promote social inclusion; (3) encourage community involvement; and (4) complement and enhance relevant national, regional and local strategies and programmes (ibid.).

Green Spaces and Sustainable Communities is the NOF's first environmental initiative which aims to help "urban and rural communities to understand, improve and care for their natural and living environment" (NOF, 2000b). By 2002, this particular funding programme will distribute £125 million of lottery money UK-wide to support two types of projects: green spaces schemes which will account for at least 75% of the funding and sustainable communities schemes which will make up the remaining 25% (NOF, 2000a). The first category of projects are those creating, preserving, improving or promoting access to green spaces of educational, recreational or environmental value to the community; this may include acquisition of land for new green spaces, greening gray areas, parks improvements, promotion of biodiversity and outdoor space for children's play (Moore, 1999; NOF, 1999b).

Projects falling in the second category are small, community-based projects which involve local people in improving and caring for their environment and promoting sustainable development; it may include projects for safe routes to school, green technologies and waste re-cycling (ibid.). In November 2000, the DCMS published a consultation paper for a new round of the NOF. There will be £150m allocated for environmental renewal and community regeneration, which according to the DCMS (2000), will supplement the Green Spaces and Substantial Communities Initiative.

However, none of the money delegated to the Green Spaces and Substantial Communities Initiative has yet been spent (Barber, 2000c and 2000d). While the Award Partners, organisations or a group of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors that are going to operate grants programmes, have been chosen, it may not seem to be a good news for parks and green spaces because most of the money is to be distributed by Government sponsored quangos such as Sport England and Countryside Agency, and there is no such a quango covering parks and green spaces (Barber, 2000d). Similarly, some organisations, for example the ILAM (1999) and Urban Parks Forum (UPFOR) (1999c) have expressed their concern over the amount of money that will actually be made available to parks and other greenspaces. As the UPFOR (1999c) have argued, many of the projects that will be eligible for the NOF as already described above are "not connected to parks or green spaces.

Another concern that has been raised regards the fact that other Lottery Distribution bodies have had their expected revenues severely reduced because of the introduction of the NOF (ibid.). Barber (2000c) likewise indicates that the creation of the NOF has resulted in the reduction of funding for HLF. Moreover, the Environment Sub-committee points out in the TCP report (ETRASC, 1999b) that there may be a temptation for the NOF to go for large projects as this would make administration easy and keep the cost for administration low; thus the committee suggest that the funds should go not only to major parks but also to small local

parks which are in many cases the most important locally, particularly to disadvantaged local communities.

3.5 Urban Parks Programme

Undoubtedly, among all the funding opportunities that have become available to urban parks in recent years, the Urban Parks Programme (UPP) launched by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) in 1996 was the most significant one. Jenkins (1999) argues that the UPP is the most innovative and popular initiatives taken by the HLF to date. Askwith (2000) describes the funding as "the greatest expenditure on historic parks and gardens in recent years". According to the HLF (1999b), the incentive to the creation of the UPP came form the professional and public concern over the deterioration of Britain's most public urban parks articulated in reports such as *Public Prospects - Historic urban parks under threat*.(Conway and Lambert, 1993) and *Park Life* (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996). It is the HLF's belief that through investment in urban parks "a triple dividend of conservation, regeneration and improved quality of life for much of the United Kingdom's population" could be achieved (HLF, 1999b; Askwith, 2000).

The UPP provides grants to the refurbishment of urban parks of national or local historic significance. In addition to highlighting the importance of safeguarding the heritage interest of such spaces, it also emphasises the necessity to meet the needs of today's users (HLF, 1999b). As indicated in the guidance note to applicants, the programme supports projects which aim at preserving, enhancing and widening public access and enjoyment of historic urban parks and gardens and other type of urban open spaces of historic importance such as town squares, town moors, seaside promenade gardens, memorial gardens, historic cemeteries (HLF, 1996).

The popularity of the UPP is well illustrated by the following figures. At first, the programme was set for an estimation of £50m over three years (1996-1999) (HLF, 1999b). In the financial year of 1996 alone when the programme first opened for application, there were 180 projects seeking £227m in grants (Harding, 1997). Following the three announcements made in 1997, the HLF had grant-aided 122 urban park projects across the different countries and regions of the United Kingdom, adding up to £77.6m to be spent on the regeneration of declining historic public parks. By April 1999, the programme had awarded £1.6 million for 128 restoration plans and £115m for the implementation of 93 projects (HLF, 1999b). Despite some threats of budget cutting to this popular programme, the same level of funding for at least another three years was eventually secured in the HLF's *Strategic Plan 1999-2002* (Fieldhouse, 1999a; HLF, 1999a; UPFOR, 1999a). As at November 1999, there had been 486 applications seeking £478m of grant aid for capital and revenue funds to restore historic parks (Askwith, 2000). At the time of writing (January 2001), the UPP has contributed around £255m to 280 historic parks, including 150 or so major restoration projects and other landscape restoration studies

(Barber, 2000c).

While interest in the UPP is 'encouragingly high' (Barber 1996b), several commentators, for instance, Barber (1996b), Lambert (1997) and Conway (2000) are concerned that the amount of money that the UPP has distributed may well give out a wrong impression that the wide spread decline of urban parks have been reversed. Nevertheless, Barber (1996b) points out that the long-term inattention to public parks cannot be so easily remedied. In his estimation, it would need at least £1.5bn of investment just for those parks likely to qualified as 'heritage' (ibid.). Conway (2000) indicates that the number of parks that have been grant aided by the UPP represents only 'a small fraction' of the local and historic parks across the whole United Kingdom in need of funds and attention. Another issue is raised by the LGA (1999), who argues that prospective applicants may re-direct their limited resources to meet the guidelines and partnership funding requirements, leading to one or two 'flagship parks' obtaining whatever resources available and exacerbating the damage and further deterioration of the parks in the area not eligible for the programme.

Despite such concerns, the UPP has made invaluable contributions to the regeneration of many of Britain's historic urban parks not only through the vast investment of money for substantial improvements to the physical environment but also through the interest and awareness it has aroused. Lambert (1997) argues that the exercise of examining a park and its use and future in depth may offer an opportunity to change people's attitudes towards these spaces, in particular those of the local authorities, from seeing them as a maintenance burden to "an asset of immeasurable value to an urban population". According to the HLF (1999b), the programme has also brought along more detailed information on the condition of urban parks. In making an application, the applicants are required to prepare an historic landscape survey and restoration plan. The production of these plans usually involves thorough historic research into the park, detailed analysis of its evolution and proposals for the repair, restoration and new development of the park, thus revealing the extend of the decline (ibid.).

In a way, the formation of the Urban Parks Forum (UPFOR) in 1999, a non-for-profit organisation aiming to promote and support the better stewardship of urban parks (UPFOR, 1999b), may be seen as a byproduct of the UPP. Many of the UPFOR's members in the early days were local authority officers in charge of the UPP grant-aided restoration project, and the forum acted as a network for sharing and exchanging information, ideas and experiences on the development and implementation of park regeneration schemes. Nowadays, its membership has grown to include more than 25% of local authorities throughout the United Kingdom (as Corporate Members) as well as friends/users groups and specialist consultancies (UPFOR, 2002).

The increasing influence of the Forum on government policy relating to urban parks is demonstrated by it being invited to response to a range of important policy documents (UPFOR, 2002) and by it being one of a few organisations being involved in discussions with the then DETR in completing the UWP (Barber, 2000b). In addition, in the published UWP, the Government indicated that they would be in partnership with the UPFOR to "develop a programme for identifying and spreading good practice on the management and care of parks, play areas and open spaces to park staff, professionals and user groups" (DETR, 2000e, p.76). The UPFOR has secured funding from the Government for a three-year period. The first major research project undertaken by the UPFOR, the Public Park Assessment study, jointly commissioned by the DTLR, HLF, EH and the Countryside Agency, is clearly the first step towards that objective stated in the UWP. The report of this study was published in May 2001 (UPFOR, 2001a). In addition, a Community Networking Project, supported by the HLF, has been initiated by the UPFOR to develop a national register of community groups and their relationship to parks and to disseminate best practice information through a Park Groups network, so to provide support for activities being undertaken by existing or new community groups (UPFOR, 2001b).

3.6 The House of Commons Environment Sub-committee Inquiry into Town and Country Parks

In 1999, the House of Commons Environment Sub-Committee held a Public Inquiry into parks (TCP Inquiry), a subject emerging from the committee's earlier inquiries regarding sustainability and urban regeneration (ETRASC, 1999b). It was intended that the Inquiry would encompass both urban and country parks so that the relationship between the decline of urban parks and the rise of country parks could be examined (ibid.). Nevertheless, both the evidence submitted to the Inquiry and the final report noticeably concentrates on urban parks (UPFOR, 1999b; Askwith, 2000). The Inquiry looked at the following key themes:

- the social, economic and environmental benefits of public parks;
- the condition of public parks;
- the roles and responsibilities of the former DETR and other Government Departments, of local authorities and of other bodies in the maintenance and protection of public parks and public policy on parks; and
- the funding of public parks, including funding from National Lottery distributing bodies (ETRASC, 1999b, para. 3).

Overall, the committee received 76 items of written evidence from a wide variety of organisations and individuals (ETRASC, 1999b). In addition, organisations (e.g. the LGA, ILAM and UPFOR), governmental bodies (e.g. EH and the Countryside Agency), local

authorities (e.g. Sheffield City Council, Manchester City Council and Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council) and the former DETR and DCMS, who were believed to have responsibilities on public parks, were invited to give oral evidence. Moreover, the committee visited twelve urban parks, five children's play areas and a country park in four local authority areas in the North West of England. The Inquiry was aided by two specialist advisors: Alan Barber of the ILAM and David Lambert of the GHS (ibid.; Conway, 2000) and the report *Town and Country Parks* (TCP Report) was published in November 1999.

Unquestionably, the extensive public interest in the subject is demonstrated by the substantial amount of evidence submitted to the Sub-committee and by the "most passionate terms" (Barber, 2000a) that have been used to express the concern for the appalling state of many urban parks in the evidence. As Conway (2000) comments, the TCP Report is "the most comprehensive and incisive" inspection of the state of urban parks and open spaces by a parliament select committee to date. In addition to the emphasis on the wide range of value of urban parks and green spaces and the rapid decline of many public urban parks in the recent three decades, both have already been discussed in the previous chapter, three particular themes emerge strongly from the Inquiry.

First, the report begins by recognising the deficiency of accurate information on public parks and open spaces such as the number of parks and visitor figures. It thus calls for adequate research to be undertaken and accurate records to be kept, recommending that "the Government to come up with an effective research programme for parks as part of its Urban White Paper" (ETRASC, 1999b, para. 30). The Sub-committee also considered that all local authorities should know the extent of their parks in terms of their number, size, attributes and facilities (ibid.). In its response to the report, the Government concurred with the committee on the necessity of improving the quality of information and data on urban parks and open spaces, and indicated that the Committee's recommendation for research would be considered further by the Government as they developed the urban environment aspect of the UWP (DETR, 2000a).

Jointly funded by the HLF, DETR and EH, the ILAM was commissioned to undertake a survey of town and country parks and open spaces in local authority ownership regarding their historic significance, current condition, management, user numbers and profiles and how parks are financed (ILAM, 2000b). This was the first phase of the Public Park Assessment study and the second phase was undertaken by UPFOR, as discussed in Section 3.4. The result of the ILAM's survey was published in a report, *the Local Authority Owned Parks Needs Assessment: Phase 1* (ILAM, 2000b). This research may be seen as an initial effort to tackle the problem of 'information deficit' noted by the TCP Report. In fact, it was indicated in the

UWP, *Our Towns and Cities: The Future Delivering an Urban Renaissance*, published in November 2000, that the Government would improve the comprehensiveness of the database of local authority parks that have been development by the ILAM study (DETR, 2000e). The Government promises in the UWP to commission a programme of research to examine:

- ways in which parks and open spaces are used and by whom, what the users want from them, what they currently provide, and their wider benefits to the quality of urban environment;

- roles and responsibilities in relation to managing and improving the public realm (DETR, 2000e, p.76).

Second, the report looks at the problems or potentials of various ways in which the wide-spread decline of urban parks may be halted and even reversed. It recognises that public parks tend to be under-represented on registers or inventories of historic parks and gardens at the national level (ILAM, 2000b) and urges EH, in the case of England, to tackle this issue seriously. In terms of funding opportunities for parks, the committee's concerns regarding the HLF's UPP and the NOF have been mentioned earlier in this chapter. In addition, particular concerns are raised over the establishment of stand alone trusts for the maintenance and management of parks and the likelihood of current funding pressures being excessively put upon 'Friends of Parks' groups (ETRASC, 1999b). The Sub-committee also notes that in implementing Best Value, all local authorities should have a 'Master Plan' i.e. strategy, for parks and open spaces with regards to how these spaces are going to be managed and developed (ibid.).

Lastly, in recognition that the deterioration of urban parks is partly due to the lack of a national agency with a remit for parks, the report recommends the establishment of such an agency, to be known as the Urban Parks and Green Spaces Agency and urges the Government to commit itself to set up the Agency in the then expected UPW (ETRASC, 1999b). A proposal for the roles, objectives, tasks and budget of this proposed agency was put together by the two advisors of the Inquiry, Alan Barber and David Lambert, in an appendix to the report (ibid.). However, the Government did not seem to be sympathetic toward such an idea, indicating in their response to the Environment Sub-committee's report that they did not believe that a national agency for urban parks and green spaces "would necessary be the only or the best way forward to tackle the concerns raised in the Committee's report" (DETR, 2000a).

The GHS (2000) regards the then DETR's dismissing of the Sub-committee's call for setting up a national agency for urban parks and green spaces as "a huge disappointment". Barber (2000a) likewise considers the Government's response to the report as "very disappointing" and "non-committal" (Barber, 2000b), arguing that the DETR offers no convincing

alternatives for reversing the deterioration of Britain's public parks. While the Government claims in the UWP that the Government shares the concerns raised in the TCP Report about the state of urban parks and open spaces and agrees that improvements to some aspects of the way in which these spaces are managed and maintained are necessary (DETR, 2000e), the call for establishing a dedicated national agency for urban parks and green spaces is still disregarded.

Overall, the DETR agreed to most of the recommendations and conclusions made by the Environment Sub-committee regarding the information deficit, the importance of urban parks and open spaces, the ways these spaces should be managed and maintained, the contribution of the Green Flag Awards Scheme, the setting up of stand alone trusts by 'Friends of Parks' groups, the role local authorities should play in providing and protecting urban parks, and the need to ensure that park services are adequately covered by Best Value (DETR, 2000a). The Government's intention to publish a White Paper on urban policy (i.e the UWP as it was published later) and to revise the PPG 17 (discussed in Section 3.2.2.5) was also noted in the response (Ibid.).

Some of the links between the TCP Inquiry and the published UWP have already been mentioned earlier. The white paper refers directly to the TCP Report (in page 74) and indicates that some action has already been taken to resolve the concern raised by the Environment Sub-committee, including the provision of new sources of funding (such as the NOF and UPP), the prevention of the loss of school playing fields, the raising of local services standard through the Best Value regime, and the encouragement of local environmental action (DETR, 2000e). Further action to improve the quality of urban parks, play areas and open spaces is also suggested in three key areas, including: (1) the development of a shared vision for the future of these spaces; (2) the improvement of information on both the quality and quantity of parks and open spaces, and the way in which these spaces are used and maintained; and (3) the improvement of the way new parks, play areas and public spaces are planned and designed and the way existing ones are managed and maintained (Ibid.).

With regards to developing a vision for better urban parks and green spaces in the future, it was indicated in the UWP that there should be a DETR (now DTLR) minister directly responsible for overseeing the development and delivery of such a vision and an 'Advisory Committee' (DETR, 2000e, p. 75) would be appointed, to be chaired by the Minister, to advise and assist the proceeding of this work. In January 2001, as a direct result of the white paper, Beverley Hughes, the then Regeneration Minister, launched the Government's vision for the future use of urban parks and green spaces and announced the formation of the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce to help delivering the "wide ranging and essential improvements" to these spaces (DTLR, 2001). At the time of writing, the Taskforce, chaired by Sally Keeble MP who became

the Regeneration Minister in June 2001, have published an Interim report about their work (Barber, 2002; Urban Green Spaces Taskforce, 2001) and the final report has been published as this thesis is submitted.

As for improving information on the usage, management and maintenance of urban parks and open spaces, the Government, as discussed earlier, is supporting the UPFOR to carry out research on parks. In addition, other research projects have also been commissioned. For instance, the Department of Landscape in the University of Sheffield was commissioned by the DETR (now DTLR) to undertake a study to look at the ways of improving urban parks, play areas and green spaces. The final report of this study has also been published at the same time as this thesis is submitted.

Chapter Four
Community Involvement in Improvements to Urban Parks and Open Spaces

"... the best safeguard of the quality of life is to have caring, informed and involved local

citizens."

King, T., Minister for Local Government and Environmental Services (1979 -1983)

and the chair of the UK National Committee for the European Campaign for

Urban Renaissance (1982, p. 11)

Nowadays, community involvement has become an integral element of almost all aspects of public services which concern people's daily lives. From health programmes to educational schemes, from local economic development to urban regeneration, local communities have been asked to take an active part in them. At the beginning of the year 2001, in announcing £300m funding over the next three years to support and expand the voluntary sector and to boost volunteering, the United Kingdom Chancellor Gordon Brown proclaimed that "a new era – the age of active citizenship and the enabling state – is within our grasp and at its core is a renewal of civic society" (Toynbee, 2001). The Prime Minister Tony Blair also told local people that "if you want a better community you'll have to work for it" when he announced £130m funding to the Government's neighbourhood management initiatives (BBC News, 2001).

This chapter commences with an overview of the development of community involvement with a focus on urban regeneration. Attention then shifts to the key elements of community involvement. Finally, the chapter looks at how local communities have been involved in bringing improvements to public urban parks and open spaces.

4.1 Community Involvement and Urban Regeneration: An Overview

The statutory requirement of involving local people in planning and development processes was first introduced into the British planning system by the Town and Country Planning Act, 1968. A range of basic principles for incorporating public participation into the planning process was subsequently established in a report compiled by the Committee on Public Participation in Planning (i.e. the Skeffington Report) in the following year. Thenceforth, the concept of involving local people in improving the physical environment has been brought into practice in a wide range of planning and development process, most notably being those

related to urban regeneration. This section summaries the development of incorporating community involvement in a number of urban regeneration programmes initiated by successive governments since the late 1960s, divided into five stages: (1) 1968 – 1977; (2) 1977 – 1980; (3) 1980 – 1991; (4) 1991 – 1998; and (5) 1998 to date. A more detailed review of these programmes can be found in Appendix B-1.

(1) 1968 – 1977

In 1968, the Urban Programme was initiated by the Government in order to rebuild confidence and encourage investment in deprived urban areas. With community-based projects that were initiated by local voluntary organisations being one of the areas supported by funding under this programme, the growth in the voluntary sector was boosted up considerably, in particular over the first decade of the programme (National Council of Social Services, 1978).

As the Government's "neighbourhood-based experiment" (CDP Information and Intelligence Unit, 1974, p.1), twelve Community Development Projects were established in small inner city areas between 1969 and 1972. One of the aims of the CDPs was to foster the involvement of local communities in the provision of local services and a great deal of the work supported by the CDPs related to community capacity building (Ibid.). Both the Urban Programme and the CDPs, as Haughton (1998) observes, represented a community-based approach to urban regeneration.

(2) 1977 – 1980

The publication of the Government White Paper, *Policy for the Inner Cities* (Cmnd. 6845) in 1977 brought forward the essential nature of involving local communities and voluntary organisations in the process of inner city regeneration and establishing partnerships between the public, private and voluntary sector and the local community to tackle the decline of inner cities in the long term (DoE, 1977). These two ideas, community involvement and partnerships, have indeed gradually become two important themes integrated into successive Governments' policies and initiatives targeting urban regeneration.

The Inner Cities Programme, in essence the restructured and extended Urban Programme, was the first direct result of the 1977 White Paper (National Council of Social Services, 1978; DoE, 1981). Under this new programme, fourteen 'Partnership Authorities' and fifteen 'Programme Authorities' were designated and required to draw up Inner Area Programmes (IAPs) which contained policies and programmes for tacking inner areas problems (National Council of Social Services, 1978). These authorities were required not only to consult with local communities and voluntary groups in the formation of the IAPs, but also to involve them in implementing the IAP of their own areas (National Council of Social Services, 1979).

In late 1980, the European Campaign for Urban Renaissance was launched by the Council of Europe to promote the involvement of local communities in the process of urban regeneration (Council of Europe, 1980). In the United Kingdom, 58 Demonstration Projects for the campaign were undertaken and the key lesson learned from these projects was that relatively modest local schemes can make considerable improvements to the urban environment and working together to pursue local initiatives can help to develop a sense of community pride (King, 1982).

(3) 1980 – 1991

The establishment of the Urban Development Corporations (UDCs), beginning in 1981, represented a shift in the Government's urban policy, with the private sector being favoured as the key player in urban regeneration and the role of local authorities and local communities being marginalised (Atkinson and Cope, 1997; Imrie and Thomas, 1999). Between 1981 and 1993, thirteen UDCs (twelve in England and one in Wales) were formed in three generations (Taylor, 1995; DETR, 1998b; Imrie and Thomas, 1999). Although more attention was given to community-based projects in the second and third generation UDCs than in the first generation UDCs, Robinson and Shaw (1991) argue that the UDCs' commitments to involve local communities in urban regeneration paid only "lip service" to the concept and the consultation and liaisons with local communities were a "tokenism", as no real community empowerment occurred.

In 1986, the Department of Trade and Industry launched the Inner City Task Forces to improve local employment opportunities, encourage local businesses development and strengthen the capacity of local organisations (Matthews, 1991; Taylor, 1995). Unlike the UDCs which operated in large urban areas, the Inner City Task Forces were established in small inner city areas and adopted a more local-level approach. A small number of Task Forces, such as those at Moss and Hulme (Manchester) and Wolverhampton, employed community development as the approach to create jobs, provide training opportunities and support local business (Department of Trade and Industry, 1990).

In order to tackle the continued decline of inner cities, Action for Cities was consequently initiated in 1986. In addition to provide continuous financial support to the UDCs, Inner City Task Forces and other established urban regeneration programmes, a number of new interventions such as Safer Cities were initiated and the proposal of setting up the Housing Action Trusts (HATs) was also introduced (Action for Cities, 1988). Both the Safer Cities initiative and HATs addressed the importance of involving local communities in achieving the aims of the initiative (i.e. reducing crime and the fear of crime for the former, and improving environmental conditions and providing community facilities and services for the latter) (Ibid.;

DETR, 1998c; Department of Social Security, 2000).

(4) 1991 – 1998

The failure of the top-down, property-led approaches to urban regeneration commonly adopted in the 1980s in benefiting disadvantaged inner-city habitants evenly and directly, exemplified especially by the UDCs, resulted in the launch of City Challenge in 1991 (Robinson and Shaw, 1991; Atkinson and Cope, 1997; Haughton, 1998), which explicitly required the direct involvement of local communities in local partnerships for developing and implementing urban regeneration schemes (Armstrong, 1993; MacFarlane, 1993). Russell *et al.* (1996) point out that the most notable benefit of community involvement in City Challenge partnerships was that community representatives could bring in expertise based on their direct experience of urban problems and local services and hence legitimise the programme locally.

In 1994, the Government established the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) to provide a single source of funding for urban regeneration in England (see Section 3.3.1). Similar to the City Challenge initiative, SRB also advocates the direct involvement of local communities in the regeneration of their areas and encourages the formation of partnerships between the public, private and voluntary sectors and the local community (Atkinson and Cope, 1997; Duffy and Hutchinson, 1997; Haughton, 1998). SRB has not only provided substantial financial support to community-based regeneration activities (DETR, 1998c), but also given great emphasis to community capacity building (Prescott, 1998). Regarding capacity building as the key to sustainable regeneration, Duncan and Thomas (2000) observe that the direct funding from SRB has resulted in a dramatic increase of community capacity building projects during the lifetime of successful bids.

(5) 1998 to date

Established in 1998, the Urban Task Force (UTF) was the first attempt of the Labour government, who came to power in May 1997, to tackle the persistent problems of multiple deprivation in many urban areas (UTF, 1998). The UTF recommended in its final report a number of measures to encourage stronger community involvement in the design and planning process of the urban environment, the decision-making process of neighbourhood management, and the regeneration process of deprived urban areas (UTF, 1999; DETR, 2000e). These measures included the establishment of Local Architecture Centres in England's major cities, the production of detailed planning policy guidance, the development of different neighbourhood management models, and the development of a network of Regional Resource Centres for Urban Development (Ibid.).

Based primarily on the work undertaken by the UTF, the Government published the Urban White Paper (UWP), *Our Towns and Cities: The Future – Delivering an Urban Renaissance*

(Cm 4911), in November 2000 (DETR, 2000e). The White Paper acknowledges that local people have a right to be involved in deciding how their towns and cities develop and that nobody should be excluded from such a process. It also addresses the importance for the Government to work in partnership with local people as well as with local authorities, regional bodies, businesses, and voluntary and community organisations to deliver urban renaissance. It also highlights the need to engage local communities in the development and implementation of local strategies to meet local needs (Ibid.)

In addition to the New Opportunities Fund (see Section 3.3.4), a number of new initiatives aiming to equip and support local people to participate in developing their communities were proposed in the UWP, including the New Deal for Communities (NDC), Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) (DETR, 2000e). These three new measures are in fact also the key elements of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal which has been developed by the Government since September 1998 (Social Exclusion Unit, 1998).

Focusing its financial resources on the intensive regeneration of small deprived areas, the NDC, launched in September 1998, requires the formation of local partnerships consisting of local residents, community and voluntary groups, the local authority, other public agencies and local businesses to identify local issues and priorities and to develop and implement regeneration schemes (DETR, 1999e). In addition to addressing the need to involve local communities in the local partnership from the outset, the NDC highlights the importance of harnessing the active and sustainable involvement of local communities after the programme is complete (Ibid.).

Promoted by the Government as "the key local vehicle for implementing and leading neighbourhood renewal" (Social Security Unit, 2001a, p. 43), the LSP is a single body which brings together local authorities and other public services as well as residents and the private, voluntary and community sector organisations. The LSP is a prerequisite for the 88 most deprived local authorities who will start to obtain funding from the NRF in 2002. In addition, new resources, including the Community Empowerment Fund and Community Chest, will also be allocated especially to encourage the involvement of local communities in LSPs (Ibid.). Moreover, both the UWP (DETR, 2000e) and the action plan for the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal (Social Security Unit, 2001a) consider that LSPs should be responsible in developing Community Strategies to promote or improve "economic, social and environmental well-being" (DETR, 2000f) of their local areas.

In summary, after the evolution over the past three decades, partnership and community

involvement have nowadays become two of the most essential elements of sustainable urban regeneration. Local communities are playing increasingly important roles in tackling the multiple deprivation of urban areas and in improving their own living environments.

4.2 Key elements of Community Involvement

With the necessity of engaging local communities in urban regeneration activities (as suggested in Section 4.1) and indeed in almost all kinds of environmental planning, development and management processes (Bishop *et al.*, 1994; Margerum and Born, 1995; Abbott, 1996; Jones, 1999; Roe, 2000a) now being widely acknowledged, a great deal of attention has also been drawn to the mechanisms through which community involvement is conducted. In Britain, this can be demonstrated by the publication of several reports which set out the guidance on how to involve local communities in environmentally related projects in recent years, including Bishop *et al.* (1994), Wilcox (1994), Taylor (1995) and DETR (1997, first published by DoE, 1995). Based primarily on these four reports, this section explores the six, often interrelated, key elements of community involvement that need to be considered comprehensively before any action is taken to involve the local community. These issues are discussed in terms of the following six questions:

- Why involve the local community? (Section 4.2.1)
- Who should be involved? (Section 4.2.2)
- When should the local community be involved? (Section 4.2.3)
- What level of involvement is to be achieved? (Section 4.2.4)
- What resources are needed for community involvement? (Section 4.2.5)
- How should the local community be involved? (Section 4.2.6)

4.2.1 Why involve the local community?

One of the most important issues to be dealt with when community involvement is incorporated into an environmental planning, development or regeneration process is the question of why the local community should be involved. While some researchers (e.g. Taylor, 1995; Wild and Marshall, 1997) have looked directly at the reasons for getting local communities involved, others such as Bishop *et al.* (1994) have approached the question by examining the objectives which different participants intend to achieve through the involvement of local communities. Other literature, for instance, Wilcox (1994) and DETR (1997), has considered the benefits of community involvement.

Regardless that community involvement is nowadays often a requirement of many funding opportunities, it is commonly recognised that the local community has a right to be involved in environmental planning, development, management and regeneration processes (Davies, 1981;

Towers, 1995; DETR, 1997; Shand and Plunkett, 1997; Rydin and Pennington, 2000).

Nevertheless, as Towers (1995) has argued, such democratic right is not the sole reason for getting local people involved. In the context of estate regeneration, Taylor (1995) identifies four other reasons for involving residents:

- local residents experience local problems at first hand and as a whole and can reach the people whom the outside agencies cannot;

- it is important to start with the priorities of local residents which are usually different from those of outside agencies;

- the regeneration initiatives can be more effective if local residents have a sense of ownership of the initiative;

- the regeneration initiatives can be more lasting through building up local organisations' capacity to continue the process outside agencies may start.

In terms of clarifying why it is necessary to involve the local communities, Wilcox (1994) suggests that the first thing to do is to consider what you – presumably someone who is in charge of initiating and managing participation processes or who is in control of funds and other resources – intend to achieve, i.e. your aims and objectives (which may also be considered as the mission or purpose) of community involvement. This step is important for reaching a common view among those who are involved in participation processes about what result or outcome they want (Wilcox, 1994). Bishop *et al.* (1994) likewise argue the importance of articulating different objectives of various main participants, indicating that this "enables all involved to be clear about the areas of shared agreement and outstanding differences" (p. 6). In their study on the effectiveness of community involvement in the preparation and implementation of both public and private development proposals, Bishop *et al.* (1994) identify two main clusters of shared objectives. They are shown in Table 4.2.1.

As noted by Bishop *et al.* (1994), there was no clear distinction between objectives, benefits, outcomes and principles in literature advocating community involvement. Statements of the objectives to involve local communities could easily be rephrased into the benefits of community involvement and vice versa. Wilcox (1994) indicates that participation may have the following benefits:

- people with a feeling of having a say are more likely to support the proposals;

- new ideas are permitted to come forth;

- there is the possibility of getting help in kind or other resources;

- it is far more possible for people to become part of a long-term solution if they have a sense of ownership of the early ideas; and

- the understanding, trust and confidence built up through the involvement in one project may be important on other occasions.

Table 4.2.1 The objectives of community involvement according to Bishop *et al.* (1994)

Cluster	I	II
View of Community Involvement	narrow	broader
Type of Participants	■ developers with shorter-term perspectives ■ some of the developers' consultants ■ planners with a prime concern for system efficiency	■ most community groups ■ non-governmental organisations ■ developers with a longer term view ■ enabling consultants
Shared Objectives	■ speed and administrative efficiency ■ a focus on planning and development concerns and avoidance of marginal issues ■ involving people only where it assists in securing professional or industrial objectives ■ retaining the clear and traditional roles of developer, professional and planning authority ■ an emphasis on lower levels of the ladder of participation	■ introduce local knowledge and skills to improvement ■ inform and educate people to take on an increasingly greater role in development ■ clear away unnecessary conflict and concentrate on the real issues that remain ■ develop new professional approaches and methods ■ shift the balance of social power ■ contribute to longer term community development

Source: Bishop *et al.*, 1994, p. 11.

Similarly, the manual which was first published by the former DoE in 1995 and republished by the then DETR in 1997 to provide advice to people involved in planning and organising regeneration activities at the local level on how to embark on community involvement identify three broad categories of benefits of community involvement: (1) better decision making; (2) more effective programme delivery; and (3) sustainability of regeneration programmes. Table 4.2.2 below summarises these benefits.

Table 4.2.2 Benefits of community involvement according to DETR (1997)

Category	Description of Benefits
Better decision making	Local people or particular interest groups can contribute to: ■ a better understanding of local problems and needs ■ the generation of ideas for tackling problems which would otherwise not have been thought of ■ the decision on the priorities for expenditure to maximise the benefit
More effective programme delivery	Local community groups or organisations can help to : ■ release additional resources (including money and help in kind) not available to statutory bodies ■ deliver innovative new approaches to service delivery ■ deliver regeneration programmes to certain sections of the population with greater success than statutory organisations
Sustainability of regeneration programmes	The benefits of regeneration programmes are more likely to be sustained if: ■ local communities have a sense of ownership of the improvements made ■ there is a strong network of effective community organisations ■ community-based organisations can be established to continue and maintain the work of regeneration

Source: DETR, 1997, pp. 13-17.

Roe and Rowe (2000) indicate that, in addition to the provision of an improved physical

environment, public participation in landscape projects has the other two objectives: to inject realism into projects and allow professionals and policy-makers to have a better understanding of popular opinion; and to help create a sense of 'ownership' of the project. The second objective is of particular importance because such a sense is beneficial to the creation of sustainable landscapes in a number of ways. First, it encourages the feeling that the local community has control over decisions which may be made. Second, it promotes the feeling that the local community can make real improvements through being involved. Third, it strengthens individual commitment. Fourth, it provides individuals with opportunities of understanding differing views and developing consensus (Ibid.). They also point out that local people can be a key source of local information and knowledge which might be difficult or expensive to gain in other ways (Ibid.).

As far as public urban parks and open spaces are concerned, several writers, for instance, Warburton and Lutley (1991), Stamp (1996), and Richardson and Baggott (1998) have suggested that involving local communities can have a number of benefits, including:

- increasing the use of parks and open spaces;
- raising awareness about the park and open space as a common interest within the community and about the environment;
- engendering a sense of ownership among local people and park/open space users;
- resolving conflicts between different local interests and views;
- generating and developing a design or service which is appropriate to local needs and sustainable;
- reducing vandalism and other anti-social behaviours;
- achieving cost-effective improvement and maintenance;
- building up the confidence and skills of individuals and local communities;
- generating more funding and resources;
- encouraging environmental education for both children and adults; and
- meeting the challenge of Best Value.

4.2.2 Who should be involved?

As the definition of the COMMUNITY has been discussed in Chapter One, this section looks at two important ideas that are closely related to the issue of who is part of the community to be involved in environmental planning, development and regeneration processes. These are the notions of (1) stakeholders and (2) community groups and voluntary organisations.

4.2.2.1 Stakeholders

In recognition that there are actually many different communities in one single area or estate and that the term 'community' can be confusing and obstructive, many writers, for example,

Wilcox (1994), Carley (1995), Freeman *et al.* (1996), the DETR manual (1997), introduce the term 'stakeholder' to help clarify the question of who should be involved. Based on a study carried out to examine public involvement processes in British Columbia, Canada, Jackson (2001) suggests that the identification and analysis of stakeholders is the first step to institute any kind of involvement process.

Stakeholders are in general defined as individuals or groups who have a significant interest in the process being addressed (e.g. Margerum and Born, 1995; Roe and Rowe, 2000; Jackson, 2001). In the DETR manual (1997), stakeholders are first defined as "those sections of the community that will have a particular interest – or stake – in the project or initiative under consideration" (p. 9) but noted later in the report to include "other statutory organisations, politicians, local traders and other local businesses" (p. 23).

Wilcox (1994) argues that stakeholders mean not only those who will be affected by a project, but those who may have some influence as well. He suggests that the following six groups of people can be considered as stakeholders:

- people who will benefit from a project;
- people who will be adversely affected;
- people who may provide support or help;
- people who may hinder;
- people who control the information, skills, money and other resources; and
- people who make decisions (Wilcox, 1994).

In a study of community involvement in the Local Agenda 21 process, Freeman *et al.* (1996) argue that, as far as good participation is concerned, it is essential for local authorities to have a clear understanding of who they can identify as specific stakeholders in the participatory process. Furthermore, they identify a wide range of stakeholders who should or could take part in the process, classifying them into four broad categories: community, business, public authorities and utilities, and cross-sectoral (shown in Table 4.2.3) (Ibid.).

Given the diversity of stakeholders, it is thus important to identify who the key stakeholders are so that appropriate techniques can be adopted to involve them. Shand and Plunkett (1997), both Canadian public participation practitioners, classify stakeholders into three main categories: directly impacted parties, indirectly impacted parties, and non-impacted but involved parties. According to the degree of positive support and negative opposition, seven kinds of key stakeholders are further identified, including: committed ally, potential committed ally, conceptual ally, neutrals, conceptual foe, perceptual foe, and committed foe. The distinct characteristics of each kind of stakeholder is summarised in Table 4.2.4.

Table 4.2.3 Classification of stakeholders by Freeman *et al.* (1994)

Community	Business	Public Authorities and Utilities	Cross-sectoral
▪ resident associations ▪ community centres/groups ▪ councils for voluntary services/ voluntary support organisations ▪ urban wildlife/ environment groups ▪ religious groups ▪ arts and recreation ▪ minority groups (women, ethnic minorities etc.)	▪ chambers of commerce ▪ chambers of trade ▪ industrial organisations ▪ individual industries ▪ business-environment clubs	▪ local authorities ▪ parish councils ▪ health authorities ▪ energy utilities ▪ training and enterprise councils ▪ transport interests	▪ schools/colleges/ universities ▪ community health councils ▪ political parties ▪ trade unions ▪ housing associations ▪ campaigning organisations ▪ health for all ▪ transport consultative committee ▪ development agencies

Source: Freeman *et al.*, 1996.

Indubitably, local residents and workers are often regarded as major stakeholders to be involved (Taylor, 1995; Carley, 1997), either as individuals or through community groups. With regards to parks and open spaces, Richardson and Baggott (1998) suggest that the full range of communities of interest should be taken into account, which may include playgroups, residents' associations, youth groups, pensioners, ethnic groups, dog walkers, sports groups, local conservation groups and adjacent landowners. They also address the importance for park and open space managers to be aware of the involvement of people who may currently be excluded from the use and enjoyment of these spaces due to some barriers such as lack of transportation, age, disability, concern about personal safety, and cultural differences.

4.2.2.2 Community groups and voluntary organisations

As Connor (1998) notes, in many public consultation processes, only a relatively small proportion (e.g. 5 – 10%) of people affected by a proposal become involved with it, either positively or negatively. Roe (2000a) argues that the local community needs to give itself a voice through an organised group such as a tenants' or residents' association or a focus group in order to take up many of the new opportunities to participate in regeneration projects affecting their localities. Although by no means are all the individuals in an area engaged in any local group formed by people with similar interests or background, the identification of existing groups is usually considered one of the first things to do in finding out who might be involved in regeneration and development processes (Taylor, 1995; DETR, 1997).

Local groups, as shown in one of Carley's (1995) case studies on estate regeneration, can be the main organisational means for local residents to start exercising control over their surroundings and building up confidence in their ability in self-management and negotiating with institutional stakeholders. Based on his study and other research evidence, he asserts that

Table 4.2.4 Stakeholder Profile suggested by Shand and Plunkett (1997)

Degree of Positive Support	+3	**Committed Ally**	■ Has already expended energy/resources on this issue. ■ Has the same values and perceptions as the issue manager. ■ Sees success as imperative.
	+2	**Potential Committed Ally**	■ Espouses same values and perceptions of the issue. ■ Has not yet publicly expended energy/resources on this issue. ■ Sees success as being relatively important but not imperative. ■ Has committed to some issue at the same time.
	+1	**Conceptual Ally**	■ Espouses similar values and perceptions of the issue. ■ Is willing and keen to discuss and debate issue. ■ Has not publicly expended energy/resources on this issue. ■ Claims empathy with the issue. ■ Is a passive member to many organizations which address different issues.
Degree of Negative Opposition	0	**Neutral**	■ Frequently claims a lack of information about the issue. ■ Can be persuaded if a link can be made to the impact the issue will have on them. ■ Some Neutrals are professional neutrals. They are not ambivalent, they work at holding no view. ■ Neutrals can be ignored as a strategy for some issue managers. This can be dangerous.
	-1	**Conceptual Foe**	■ Declares themselves in opposition and usually indicates the basis of that opposition. ■ Sees the failure of the issue as relatively important but not imperative to their survival. ■ Usually organized as a group rather than individual.
	-2	**Perceptual Foe**	■ Espouses strong views about the issue; however their perceptions about this issue are different from the issue manager. ■ Tends to act precipitously and publicly. ■ Success is seen as total win or lose. ■ Loss in a conflict is not seen as critical to their survival. New issue are constant for this group.
	-3	**Committed Foe**	■ Is willing to go to a lose/lose scenario. ■ They do their homework and do not lose interest. ■ Success and failure is imperative to their survival. ■ Usually has demonstrated a previous experience of position to another issue. ■ Well trained and organized. ■ Understands the process and can be used to improve the process.

Source: Shand and Plunkett, 1997.

well-organised local groups are "the basic building blocks" (Carley, 1995, p. 65) of community involvement. The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (2002) also suggests that a community stakeholder group can be particularly useful in "guiding, facilitating, promoting and building support" for sustainable development planning processes with local communities.

Nevertheless, in terms of involving the community through local groups, both Taylor (1995) and the DETR manual (1997) have pointed out the importance to distinguish community groups from voluntary organisations. Table 4.2.5 below sets out the difference between the two terms according to the definitions given by the Community Development Foundation.

Table 4.2.5 The distinction between community groups and voluntary organisations by the Community Development Foundation

Characteristics	Community Groups	Voluntary Organisations
Territory/locality	locally based	not necessarily locally based
Main characteristics	groups which include a substantial element of activity and control by local residents or workers	groups which carry out not-for-profit activities but are not public or local authorities
Voluntary help	operate in voluntary capacity	may or may not use voluntary help
Paid staff	may or may not have	may or may not have
Formality	not necessarily be formally constituted	normally be formally constituted (e.g. a charity or a company limited by guarantee)

Source: Guidelines to the Community Involvement Aspect of the SRB Challenge Fund/CDF, Community Development Foundation, 1995 adopted in DETR, 1997, p. 6.

The main argument is that not all voluntary organisations are locally based (Taylor, 1995). While voluntary organisations are of assistance in identifying community groups within an area and where there are no such groups, they may be able to help establish contact with local people, Taylor (1995) argues that voluntary organisations cannot speak for local communities, nor can they be used as a substitute. A similar view is expressed by Wilcox (1994), who states that voluntary organisations are not the community but "essential allies" who may have staff and resources to contribute to the participation process. He also suggests that voluntary organisations are not neutral bodies because they usually have their own agendas and thus should be treated as "another important sectoral interest in the community" (Wilcox, 1994, p. 6).

Since community interests can be very divergent, while on the other hand there are usually only a minority of people within an area likely to be actively involved in local groups (DETR, 1997), concerns over issues such as how representative these groups are or whether the interest of a particular section of the community is represented by any local group are inevitably raised. The issue regarding representativeness is, however, two-leveled. At a general level, the issue of representativeness relates to the relationship between a particular community group and its wider community. Smith and Pearse (1977) suggest that community groups can increase their representativeness by frequently communicating with local residents, including both getting feedback from and giving out information to them. Another level of representativeness occurs when the local community is involved in the decision-making body of partnerships. With regards to City Challenge partnerships, MacFarlane (1993) reports that other partners, and

sometimes local communities themselves, often expect that community representatives are someone selected by the community. In a study on estate regeneration partnerships, McArthur *et al.* (1996) disclose a number of strategies employed by community partners to improve their representativeness, including the adoption of a membership structure, regular publications, conducting surveys, undertaking community development work, etc.

4.2.3 When should the local community be involved?

In comparison with other elements of community involvement, the question of when to involve local communities in an environmental planning, development or regeneration process seems to attract less attention. It is indicated in the guidance published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation for SRB bidders that local communities should be involved as early as possible and SRB partnerships should make sure that adequate resources are allocated for such a purpose (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 1999). Abbott (1996) argues that the point of community input into the decision-making process is one of the essential elements to be accounted for in the community participation structure and indicates that ideally this should take place from the beginning. Similarly, Young (1996) addresses the importance of the timing at which participation comes in policy-making process because it has influence on what can be achieved and the scope of participation.

Apart from such comments, the issue regarding when community involvement takes place is seldom explored in greater details. Based on a study on the theory and practice of Integrated Environmental Management, Margerum and Born (1995) note that interaction between a wide variety of stakeholders throughout a process of planned change is the key component to the achievement of integration, and such interaction should occur at every stage: from the scooping process, to the development of strategy or plan, through to the implementation of the plan. They indicate that both the general public and the more directly affected stakeholders should be involved throughout the planning process which is divided into four stages: inclusive view, examination of interconnections, goal identification and reduction process (Ibid.).

In the DETR manual (1997), the regeneration programme is divided into four main stages: (1) establishing the partnership; (2) developing the bid; (3) identifications, design and management of projects; and (4) programme management, monitoring and forward strategies. The manual addressed that the stage of regeneration programmes is one of the key factors in determining the appropriate level of community involvement (DETR, 1997). Different sets of principles and techniques are then suggested for involving local communities at different stages.

Hamdi and Goether (1997) consider that the different stages of a project or programme will impact upon how local communities are involved. They developed a matrix to assist examining the appropriateness of tools and techniques employed for community involvement, with the stages of a project – including initiation, planning, design, implementation and maintenance – on the horizontal axis and the levels of participation (discussed in next sub-section) on the vertical axis. Bishop *et al.* (1994) also suggest a link between stages of development process and the use of various involvement methods, although no specific division of the development process is made. Similarly, while Roe and Rowe (2000) point out that local communities can participate at all stages of landscape projects subject to the aim of the participation being initiating a project or commenting on a completed design, there is no detailed classification of the stages of landscape projects. Nevertheless, the information-gathering or survey stage is specifically mentioned. Involving local communities at this stage of work, as Finney and Polk (1995, in Roe and Rowe, 2000) argue, facilitates the co-operation between local communities and public agencies in decision making.

4.2.4 What level of community involvement is to be achieved?
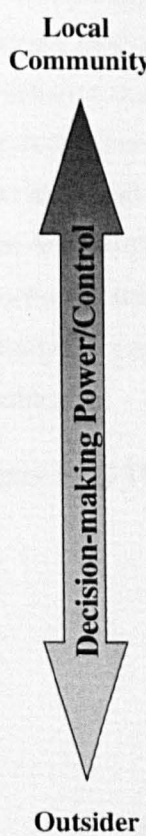
It is nowadays commonly recognised that there are different levels of community involvement, distinguished according to the degree of decision-making power being devolved to the local community. The first to come up with such a concept was Arnstein (1969), who proposed the famous 'Ladder of Citizen Participation' as a typology of participation. This conceptual model is highly praised by many commentators, for instance, Carley (1995), Towers (1995) and Wild and Marshall (1997), and has become the prototype of several other typologies of participation/involvement developed in later days as shown in Figure 4.2.1.

Although these models may seem different at first glance with various numbers of gradations and the rather diverse terms used to described the typology in each of them, they share in essence an underlying concept: which is, as Arnstein (1969) has noted, that participation is the redistribution of power to make decisions. The degree or extent to which such power is held by local people may vary between none and full control. Some authors, for example, Wandersman (1979) and Taylor (1995) distinguish different types or forms of participation according to the different degree of citizen control over decision-making; while some others such as Carley (1995) see that difference as a set of steps through which participation progress.

With regards to which level of community involvement a project should aim to achieve, there are broadly two different views. First, as Bishop *et al.* (1994) has observed, there seem to be a general assumption that higher levels of participation, as illustrated in Arnetien's ladder, are better than lower ones. Arnstein's (1969) very own words convey such a view: "participation without redistribution of power is empty and frustrating process for the powerless". Agreeing

Figure 4.2.1 Typologies of community involvement/public participation

Local Community

↑ Decision-making Power/Control ↓

		Arnstein (1969)	Wandersman (1979)	Wilcox (1994)	Carley (1995)	Taylor (1995)	Hamdi & Goethert (1997)
		Levels of citizen participation	*Types of participation*	*Levels/ stances of participation*	*Progress in community involvement*	*Processes/ forms for participation*	*Levels of participation*
Degree of citizen power	citizen control	creation of parameter and objects	supporting	taking local control	control	neighbour-hood decisions
							taking local control
	delegated power	self-planning	acting together	real involvement	choice	real involvement
	partnership			bring some people in	joint management	bring some people in
Degree of tokenism	placation	choice	deciding together	telling and listening	dialogue	telling and listening
	consultation	feedback	consultation		consulting	
	informing		information	telling	listening	telling
Non-participation	therapy	no participation		expert non-participation	seeking information	expert non-participation
	manipulation			non-participation	providing information	non-participation

Outsider

with Arnstein's statement, Towers (1995) likewise argues that meaningful participation only takes place on the top rungs in the ladder where some degree of power is transferred. The second view point is represented by Wilcox, whose five-stance model of levels of participation (see Figure 4.2.1), a modification of Arnstein's eight-rung ladder, is frequently referred to in other papers and reports (e.g. Taylor, 1995; Freeman *et al.*, 1996; GFA Consulting, 1996; DETR, 1997; Wild and Marshall, 1997). Wilcox (1994) states that:

> "I do not suggest any one stance is better than any other – it is rather a matter of 'horses for courses'. Different levels are appropriate at different times to meet the expectations of different interests" (Wilcox, 1994, p. 4).

This view is supported by several other commentators such as Dorcey et al. (1994, in Jackson, 2001), Carley (1997), Roe (2000a) and Jackson (2001). For instance, Carley (1997) argues that what is important is that local people are given the opportunity to participate at a level that would satisfy their needs and generate a sense of having adequate control over their surroundings. Jackson (2001) likewise indicates that all levels of public involvement may be appropriate under certain circumstances and for specific stakeholders.

It can easily be noticed that all the models listed in Figure 4.2.1 are based on a hierarchical structure which tends to suggest that the aim is to reach the top of the hierarchy, most notably

exemplified by Arnstein's ladder. In recognition that such hierarchical models often resulted in the use of inappropriate techniques and unclear objectives, South Lanarkshire Council in Scotland developed a 'Wheel of Participation' (see Figure 4.2.2) as the model for public consultation and participation to overcome the problem of aiming for inappropriate levels of community involvement (Davidson, 1998). In the wheel, four broad categories of objectives were identified: information, consultation, participation and empowerment, each including three objectives. As Davidson (1998) explained, the wheel provided a theoretical ground for an open and democratic planning system which would encourage the use of appropriate techniques to achieve the identified objective, and, hence, the appropriate level of community involvement.

Figure 4.2.2 The 'Wheel of Participation' developed by South Lanarkshire, Scotland
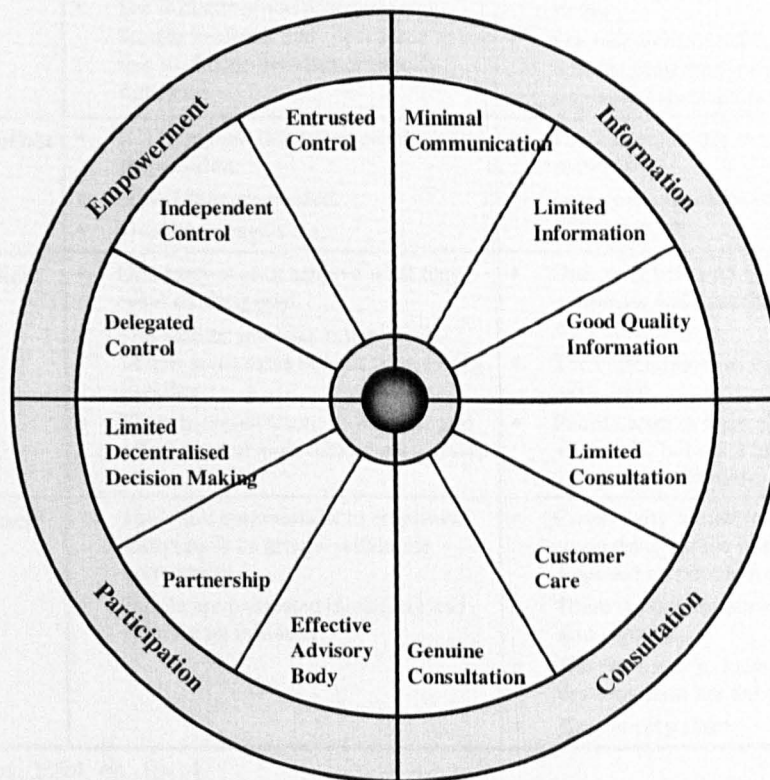
Source: Davidson, 1998

The importance of choosing an appropriate level of community involvement is also highlighted in the DETR manual (1997), in which it is argued that regeneration partnerships should discuss with local communities and seek their agreement to the level of involvement. In considering how to make a choice, Wilcox (1994) has identified the various situations where each level of participation may be appropriate and inappropriate. His suggestions are summarised in Table 4.2.6.

Similarly, as summarised in Table 4.2.7, Jackson (2001) suggests that different levels of public involvement are appropriate for different types of stakeholders and different circumstances.

Table 4.2.6 Levels of participation and where they are appropriate and inappropriate suggested by Wilcox

Stance/Level of Participation	Appropriate Circumstances	Inappropriate Circumstances
Information giving	▪ There is no room for manoeuvre and one course of action must be followed. ▪ An authority is reporting an essentially internal course of action which doesn't affect others. ▪ It is used at the beginning of a consultation and other process, with the promise of more opportunities for participation later.	▪ The objective is to empower community interest ▪ There are alternatives and others have a legitimate interest in developing them.
Consultation	▪ The intention is to improve a service. ▪ There is a clear vision and plans to implement a project or programme, and there appear to be a limited range of options. ▪ The initiator of the proposals can handle feedback and is prepared to use this to choose between or modify options.	▪ There is no intention for taking any notice of what people say. ▪ The objective is to empower community interests. ▪ There is no clear vision regarding what to do. ▪ The resources or skills to carry out the options presented, or other means of implementation are not available.
Deciding together	▪ It is important that other people 'own' the solution. ▪ Fresh ideas are needed. ▪ There is enough time.	▪ There is only little room for manoeuvre. ▪ Decisions cannot be implemented without others.
Acting together	▪ One party cannot achieve what they want on their own. ▪ The various interests involved all obtain some extra benefit from acting together. ▪ There is commitment to the time and effort needed to develop a partnership.	▪ One party holds all the power and resources and uses this to impose its own solutions. ▪ The commitment to partnership is only skin deep. ▪ People want to have a say in making decisions, but not a long term stake in carrying out solution.
Supporting local initiatives	▪ There is a commitment to empower individuals or groups within the community. ▪ People are interested in starting and running an initiative.	▪ Community initiatives are seen as 'a good thing' in the abstract and imposed on people from the top down. ▪ There is no commitment to training and support. ▪ The resources to maintain initiatives in the long term are not available. ▪ Time is very short.

Source: Wilcox, 1994, pp. 10-14.

Recognising that inappropriate level of involvement may have a negative effect on not only the programme but also the community itself, the DETR manual (1997) suggests a number of factors for consideration in deciding appropriate levels of community involvement, including:

▪ the level of the community's commitment and willingness to invest time and effort;

▪ the possible restriction caused by the fact that some partners in a partnership (e.g. the local authority) are required to be accountable for expenditure;

▪ the freedom of taking alternative actions;

▪ the generation of a sense of ownership of ideas;

▪ the investment in community capacity building;

Table 4.2.7 Levels of public involvement and appropriate types of stakeholder and circumstances suggested by Jackson

Level of Public Involvement	Type of Stakeholder	Appropriate Circumstances	Inappropriate Circumstances
Informing	- General public - Specific stakeholder group who is not aware of the issue or project	- Introducing a new idea, initiative or project - As a first stage in further public involvement - Keeping the wider public informed of progress of higher-level stakeholder processes	An already informed groups who believes their input is desired, or necessary fro success
Public education	- General public - Stakeholder group who is aware of the issue or project, but requires background information to create an informed opinion or to make an informed choice	- To raise level of awareness of an issue - To provide background information - To prepare a stakeholder group for a higher level of involvement	(Nearly always appropriate, on an ongoing basis, and when combined with higher-level processes)
Testing reactions	- Stakeholder group who must already be aware of the issue - Stakeholder group who must have background knowledge - Stakeholder group who should be representative of some wider group	- When the organisation has options to evaluate - When input is sought on existing ideas 'Trial balloon' to test public reaction to an idea	Stakeholders lacking knowledge or misinformed about the issue of project – return to public education stage
Seeking ideas or alternative solutions	- An 'expert panel' - Stakeholder who should be well informed and have expertise or special knowledge - Stakeholder who should the commitment for this level of involvement	- When the organisation desires creative solutions - When local or specialised knowledge can supplement in-house experts' options	Stakeholders lacking knowledge or misinformed about the issue of project – return to public education stage
Shared decision making	- Well informed and knowledgeable - High level of commitment - Belief in the process - Willingness to share information - Trust in the organisation and other stakeholders (or willing to build)	- When the organisation desires or needs consensus of stakeholders - When ongoing conflict prevents implementation of organisation-driven solutions	- Stakeholders who are unwilling to take responsibility for decisions - Those who lack commitment to work within such a process - Organisations which are unwilling to implement decisions of the group - Organisations which lack commitment to supplying necessary time and resources

Source: Jackson, 2001, p. 145

- the degree to which the community wishes to be involved; and

- the time and stage in the regeneration process.

4.2.5 What resources are needed for community involvement?

Involving local communities in decision-making process is often considered to be a resources-intensive activity (e.g. Carley, 1995; Wild and Marshall, 1997). Thus, it is vital to take into account the issue regarding what resources are needed and available for stimulating and supporting community involvement when there is an intention to engage local communities in environmental planning, development and regeneration processes. In addition, resources are of particular importance to community capacity building, which is nowadays widely recognised as the key to successful and substantial community involvement in urban regeneration (DETR, 1997; Duncan and Thomas, 2000). Bishop *et al.* (1994) define the term 'resources' as "the raw material used to exchange information, to communicate ideas and support involvement" (p. 13). Literature on the resources needed for community involvement (e.g. Davies, 1982; Armstrong, 1993; Bishop, *et al.*, 1994; Parkes, 1995; DETR, 1997) suggests that there are four major forms of resources: money, staff, time and technical support.

Financial resources are the first for consideration, simply because most of the other resources may ultimately depend on the money available. Davies (1982) argues that systematic provision of funding with simple and speedy application processes for community groups is one of the essential elements needed to be incorporated into the development of policies to support increased community involvement in decision-making process and self-help action by local authorities. Based on a series of interviews with a wide range of people from public, private and community/voluntary sector, Bishop *et al.* (1994) claim that money must be made available if community involvement is to become a widespread practice and suggest that funding should be provided by central and/or local government through grants. As the central government-supported area-based urban regeneration programmes have given community capacity building a high priority, most notably the SRB, New Deal for Communities and the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, direct financial resources have become available for supporting community involvement and strengthening local communities' capacity to get involved in resolving local problems. In addition to central government funding, while identifying a wide range of national, regional and local organisations which play a direct role in resourcing community capacity building, Duncan and Thomas (2000) argue that overall support is still patchy and suggest that new and diverse funding opportunities need to be made available to local communities.

The second type of resources is staff, particularly in terms of their time contributed to community involvement activities. It is noted in the DETR manual (1997) that involving local communities takes effort and thus requires a commitment of substantial staff time. Wild and Marshall (1997) also report that staff resources, time in particular, is needed especially for engaging people that are traditionally under-represented in decision-making processes in areas

of weak community capacity. Three concerns regarding staff resources are raised in Bishop *et al.*'s (1994) study, in which it is found that:

- a number of public sector interviewees suggested that it will be increasingly difficult for project managers to find money and staff time for non-statutory activity such as community involvement;

- quite considerable amounts of time allocated by local authority staff and consultants to community involvement activities are seldom formally recognised and costed; and

- the value of the time contributed by local communities and voluntary groups is rarely taken into account by themselves (Bishop *et al.*, 1994).

As involving local communities takes time (Bishop *et al.*, 1994; Atkinson and Cope, 1997; DETR, 1997), time itself, referred to here as the overall period of time needed for the whole process, should be recognised as another form of resources that is of great importance to community involvement. Generally speaking, the higher the level of community involvement pursued, the longer the period of time is required (DETR, 1997) because it takes time for local communities to become organised and develop the strength, confidence and skills for being involved. As Atkinson and Cope (1997) note, the investment of time as well as other resources from central and local government to support existing community groups and encourage the development and growth of new ones is particularly important for deprived communities who feel powerless and abandoned. Such a concern has been reflected in the latest round of SRB. As indicated in the SRB Round 6 Bidding Guidance (DETR, 1999f), regeneration partnerships can choose to have a "year zero" in which no project spending takes place. One of the purposes for so doing is to allow more time to ensure that local communities are properly involved in the partnership and in the development and implementation of individual schemes (Ibid.).

Technical advice and support is the forth form of resources required for involving local communities in environmental projects. Armstrong (1993) argues that for successful community involvement in development, there is a need to bring together a wide range of expertise and skills such as community development, planning, architecture, education, organisational change, etc. to address various aspects of complex local issues. He states that "local communities need to have access to the right help at the right time" and suggests that a multi-professional team approach should be employed to enable local communities' active involvement (Ibid.). However, as Bishop *et al.* (1994) point out, access to professional help is a significant resourcing problem for community groups, especially in disadvantaged areas. In the United Kingdom, there have been a few professional organisations offering a variety of technical advice and support to local communities. For example, the Royal Town Planning Institute has run a free, voluntary Planning Aid service for many years to provide advice and assistance on issues regarding town planning to individuals, community groups or other

voluntary groups (Davies, 1982; Bishop *et al.*, 1994). The Association of Community Technical Aid Centres (ACTAC) used to offer support to community groups for their participation in designing and developing their neighbourhoods (Bishop *et al.*, 1994). However, this organisation ceased to operate in 1999 due to lack of funding (Berridge, 2000). In addition, schools of architecture, planning and landscape design can also be a source for such professional help (Bishop *et al.*, 1994).

4.2.6 How to involve the local community?

As Bishop *et al.* (1994) indicate in the *Community Involvement in Planning and Development Processes* report, the issue regarding how local communities may be involved in environmental planning, development and regeneration processes is an overwhelming theme in literature on community involvement. Their study also suggests that the selection of involvement methods may sometime be regarded as the key to community involvement and the only question to ask (Ibid.).

Before entreing into any further discussion on this issue, it is helpful to look at a number of terms that have been used within the literature to describe the way of involving local communities, including techniques, tools, methods, structures, longer-term programmes and overall processes. These terms may be differentiated according to the broadness each term implies. Hamdi and Goethert (1997) argue that, in contrast to 'tools', 'techniques' has a more narrow development perspective for project work and relates to the achievement of a specific task. 'Tools' on the other hand is considered as a comprehensive approach to work with the local community and consists of a package of techniques (Ibid.). This definition is rather similar to the term 'methods' used by Bishop *et al.* (1994), who indicate that methods range from "the very specific aspects of particular techniques to the assembly of a variety of techniques into a broad approach". Nevertheless, Wilcox (1994) sees 'techniques' as one category of participation methods and defines the term as any short-term device which has separate pieces of work with clear preparation and results. Techniques are frequently employed by consultants, facilitators and trainers to help make progress in participation process. The other two categories of methods for participation suggested by Wilcox (1994) are 'structures' and 'longer-term programmes'. The former includes various kinds of interim and longer-term organisational structures setting up in participation process; the latter involves the use of techniques and structures (Ibid.). Another term that focuses on broader and longer-term effect is 'overall processes', used by Bishop *et al.* (1994) to describe the combination of resources and methods for the delivery of coherent community involvement practice over time.

Among these terms, 'methods' and 'techniques' are the two most frequently used by other

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writers (e.g. Towers, 1995; DETR, 1997; Wild and Mashall, 1997) and are often used interchangeably. Thus, in this thesis, unless where specific references are noted and, in that case, the term used should be referred back to its original context, 'methods' is used to encompass all ways of involving local communities. Nowadays, there is a fairly wide range of methods, not to mention the countless possible adoptions, variations and combinations of them, available for getting local communities involved. A detailed description of each involvement method is inevitably beyond the scope of this thesis. The following discussion focuses on three publications on community involvement published in the 1990s.

In the report *Community Involvement in Planning and Development Processes* Bishop *et al.* (1994) identify 27 involvement methods and classify them into two basic categories: one-way methods and interactive methods, each with secondary groups. The classification of involvement methods alongside the main features of each category are shown in Table 4.2.8.

Table 4.2.8 The classification of involvement methods by Bishop *et al.*

	One-way Methods		Interactive Methods	
Main features	▪ involving one group of people preparing information, questions or arguments and presenting them to, or testing them on others ▪ with no, or very little, debate between different groups of people about the information or questions		▪ employed specially to encourage constructive debate, design development, discussion, negotiation, and active participation ▪ may vary noticeably in terms of how different groups use them in different circumstances and what the outcomes are	
Subcategories	*Information Giving*	▪ exhibitions ▪ public meetings ▪ leaflets ▪ reports ▪ newsletters ▪ slides shows ▪ videos ▪ computer aided design ▪ mock-ups	*Participation*	▪ design workshops ▪ small groups ▪ focus groups ▪ forums ▪ Planning for Real ▪ role-play and trails ▪ visits
	Fact Finding	▪ questionnaires ▪ street surveys ▪ interviews	*Preparation*	▪ environmental education ▪ participation training ▪ management development
	Campaigning	▪ letter writing ▪ lobbying ▪ giving evidence ▪ publicity ▪ action groups		

Source: Bishop et al., 1994, pp. 15-16 & 62-68.

Furthermore, Bishop *et al.* (1994) employ twelve practice-based criteria to evaluate various aspects of the usage and applicability of eighteen methods in greater detail. Through this analysis, they indicate that there are some significant differences between the two main categories (see Table 4.2.9).

Table 4.2.9 Differences between one-way methods and interactive methods according to Bishop *et al.*

Characteristics	One-way Methods	Interactive Methods
Familiarity	more familiar to participants	less familiar to participants
Expertise required	anybody can tackle	introduced by consultants and experienced voluntary groups
Time, skills and resources required	require less time, skills and resources	require more time, skills and resources
People targeted	individuals and small, select groups	groups
Pattern	more one-off or occasional	as part of a planned programme
Focus	direct, product-related concerns	indirect and longer-term concerns
Outcomes	quantitative	qualitative

Source: Bishop *et al.*, 1994, pp. 15-16.

While suggesting that both categories of methods have their place, Bishop *et al.* (1994) stress particularly the benefits of interactive methods with which more effective practice and added value are associated. In their study, two-way methods are considered by most of their interviewees of important value in establishing a high quality of relationships, trust and openness, and are regarded as of great importance to the ultimate effectiveness of community involvement (Ibid.)

Designed to provide practical guidelines for public participation to practitioners (people in charge of initiating and managing participation processes), Wilcox's (1994) *The Guide to Effective Participation* contains a wealth of information on involvement methods. Based on his five-stance model of levels of participation (see Section 4.2.4), Wilcox (1994) suggests for each stance the type of processes it typically associated with and a number of feasible methods. These are summarised in Table 4.2.10. As Wilcox (1994) has noted, lower levels of participation such as information giving usually underpin higher levels, thus it is likely for higher stances to incorporate some elements of lower stances (as demonstrated in the 4th column in Table 4.2.10).

The British central government's guidance on community involvement in regeneration activities is contained in *Involving Local communities in Urban and Rural Regeneration: A Guide for Practitioners* (DETR, 1997). Atkinson (1999) comments that the advice given in the manual on how, at what stage and in what forms local communities may be engaged in regeneration partnerships is relatively straightforward and the information provided is extremely useful and practical. As far as methods for involving local communities are concerned, the manual devotes considerable discussion to the issue, dealt with directly in two of the five main parts of the manual. First, recognising that there are different concerns for community involvement at different stages of regeneration programmes, Part 2 of the manual provides some suggestions, as summarised in Table 4.2.11, about the use of specific methods

Table 4.2.10 The typical process and participation methods for each level of participation according to Wilcox

Stance/Level of Participation	Typical Process	Typical Methods	Methods
Information giving	Presentation and promotion	■ Leaflets ■ Media ■ Video	■ Print (leaflets, newsletters, etc.) ■ Presentations at meetings ■ Press release and press conferences (briefing the media) ■ Advertising (posters, radio, press) ■ Film and Video
Consultation	Communication and feedback	■ Surveys ■ Meetings	■ Surveys and market research ■ Consultative meetings ■ Consultative committees ■ Simulations
Deciding together	Consensus building	■ Workshops ■ Planning for Real ■ Strategic Choice	■ Information-giving methods ■ Stakeholder analysis ■ SWOT analysis ■ Brainstorming ■ Nominal group technique ■ Surveys ■ Cost/benefit analysis ■ Planning for Real ■ Simulations ■ SAST ■ Action Planning
Acting together	Partnership building	■ Partnership bodies	■ Information-giving methods ■ Methods to create a shared vision ■ Team building exercises ■ Design exercises ■ Business planning exercises ■ Interim structures ■ Long-term structures
Supporting local initiatives	Community development	■ Advice ■ Support ■ Funding	■ Offer of grants, advice and support ■ Workshops ■ Team building exercises ■ Commitment planning ■ Business planning exercises ■ Design workshops ■ Fund raising and publicity ■ Visits ■ Interim structures ■ Long-term structure

Source: Wilcox, 1994, pp. 10-14

for some of the stages.

Arguing that the selection of appropriate involvement methods is closely related to the level of involvement and objectives intended to achieve, the manual then focuses its third part on what techniques can be adopted to investigate, inform and involve the local community (see Table 4.2.12). In addition to some general principles, the manual provides relatively detailed and practical advice on points to consider in selecting a particular method and, for a number of involvement methods, on the executive procedures. The above discussion not only shows

Table 4.2.11 Techniques for community involvement at different stages of the regeneration process according to the DETR manual

Stages of the Regeneration Process	Techniques for Community Involvement
Bidding process	■ proving information ■ establishing a baseline of community activity ■ networking ■ workshops ■ community planning weekends
Project identification	■ networking ■ providing information ■ community profiling ■ workshops ■ Planning for Real
Design and planning	■ surveys ■ group discussions ■ networking ■ design days ■ Planning for Real ■ layout models ■ house plan models ■ exhibitions and written literatures

Source: DETR, 1997, pp. 31-72.

what a wide range of involvement methods are nowadays available to practitioners, as well as voluntary and community groups, to engage local communities in planning, development or regeneration processes, it also reveals that the selection of appropriate methods depends on a number of factors. Supplemented with other researchers' comments on this issue, these factors are summarised as below:

- the level of community involvement (Wilcox, 1994; DETR, 1997; Hamdi and Goethert, 1997; Wild and Marshall, 1997);

- the objectives/aims (DETR, 1997; Hamdi and Goethert, 1997; Davidson, 1998);

- the stage of a programme or project (DETR, 1997; Hamdi and Goethert, 1997); and

- the resources (including cost, time, staff, etc.) and skills required for operating a specific method/technique (Bishop et al., 1994; DETR, 1997).

While there is such a wide range of involvement methods to choose and use, Bishop et al. (1994) have found that people tend to rely on one single method rather than consider the overall processes, i.e. the combination of methods and resources for long term effects. Unquestionably, each involvement method has its strengths as well as constraints, especially in terms of whose concerns and views can be heard. It is thus asserted both by Towers (1995) and in the DETR manual (1997) that a mixture of methods is necessary to involve as wide a cross-section of local communities as possible.

All the involvement methods mentioned above undoubtedly can be employed in park and open

Table 4.2.12 Techniques of community involvement for different levels of involvement according to the DETR manual

Levels of Involvement	Objectives	Techniques of Community Involvement
Information gathering	To investigate community needs and opinion	▪ community profiling ▪ questionnaire surveys ▪ group discussions
Information giving	To keep the community informed and to consult people on decision making	▪ letters, leaflets, newsletters posters, signboards ▪ media publicity ▪ exhibitions and videos ▪ public meetings
Acting together and deciding together	To involve the community in decision making	▪ networking ▪ block or street meetings ▪ workshops ▪ Planning for Real ▪ design days ▪ community planning weekends

Source: DETR, 1997, pp. 85-126

spaces projects. In addition, Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996) report another four methods of achieving successful community involvement in parks. These are:

▪ the employment of someone with a role of community development or the like;

▪ the establishment of friends groups;

▪ arrangements which encourage clubs and societies to manage parts of the park; and

▪ the introduction of community facilities.

4.3 Community Involvement in Public Urban Parks and Green Spaces

While some of Britain's first public urban parks, for example, Philip Park and Queen's Park in Manchester and Victoria Park and Battersea Park in London in part owed their birth to the efforts of local people (see Section 2.1), the idea of involving local communities in the planning, design, management, protection and improvement of public urban parks and green spaces has not been extensively put into practice until the last two decades or so. Many writers such as Warburton and Lutley (1991), Carr et al. (1995), Greenhapgh and Worpole (1996), Richardson and Baggott (1998) and DeVita (2001) all stress that community involvement is essential for successful public urban parks and green spaces. Although the practice of involving local communities in parks and green spaces is still relatively limited in comparison with community involvement in other urban regeneration activities, experiences have started being accumulated.

In Britain, prior to the launch of the HLF's UPP, public urban park projects have seldom taken place for the park's own sake; rather, they have mostly occurred within the realm of urban regeneration, greening and urban nature conservation, or, as Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996)

have observed, under the remits of creating 'safer cities', carrying out environmental education, 'urban forestry', arts projects, youth projects and even health related activities. Consequently, the already little research on the involvement of local communities in urban park projects has been scattered. The literature reviewed below more or less reflects this situation. Nevertheless, there may well be some lessons or good practice which are applicable to urban parks and green spaces. The involvement of local communities in a selection of UPP park restoration projects are examined in Chapters Six to Nine.

In order to broaden the insight into this subject, a brief discussion of the experience of community involvement in improving public urban parks and open spaces established in other countries such as the United Sates of America, Canada and Australia is presented at the end of the last part of this section. A more detailed examination of the American experience can be found in Appendix B-2.

4.3.1 Community Involvement in Greening (Bradley, 1986)

A study on the involvement of voluntary organisations and communities groups in urban greening projects was undertaken by Christine Bradley in 1986. She visited fourteen organisations, with a strong bias towards the voluntary sector, and examined 41 sites, including small green spaces, housing estate landscapes and urban farms in inner city areas, encapsulated countryside in urban areas and urban fringes and woodlands in urban, urban fringe and rural areas. Three strategies are identified for ensuring successful community involvement: (1) the controlled-accessed strategy, by which access to a site is restricted to members of the community with keys; (2) the key-person strategy, by which a key-person (e.g. a warden, ranger, conservation officer or project manager) is employed to co-ordinate efforts and to enable the community or volunteers to gain the maximum benefit from a project; and (3) the rules-and-rewards strategy, which is used to ensure full active involvement by all members that are enjoying the benefits of a project.

Based on a philosophy that local communities should be encouraged to get involved in caring for their local environment, Bradley (1986) proposes an ideal model for community involvement, in which the key-person strategy is considered as the main mechanism for co-ordinating the inputs from various sources. This key-person is ideally to be appointed by the community group and an important part of a partnership between the local authority, private sector and local communities for the creation and aftercare of green spaces (Bradley, 1986).

4.3.2 Greening City Sites: Good Practice in Urban Regeneration (JURUE, 1987)

Environmental improvements, including the refurbishment of existing parks, creation of new

parks, walkways and open spaces, and other types of environmental improvement projects, was one of the main areas supported by the Urban Programme, one of the Government's major urban regeneration initiatives in the 1970s and 1980s (JURUE, 1986). Commissioned by the then Inner Cities Directorate of the then DoE, a study was undertaken to assess various aspects of 'good practice' in the development and management of projects funded under the Urban Programme to improve sites in urban areas (JURUE, 1987). In this study, 21 projects were examined, including three sites (two parks and a coastal open space) categorised as 'public open space for passive leisure use and walkways' and another four parks in the category of 'active and organised recreation projects'. Overall, the case studies demonstrated the importance of involving local communities in bringing about successful environmental improvements. It is found that the pressure and complaints from, or expressions of interest by, the local communities is one of the key factors leading to the initiation of an environmental improvement project. In cases where local communities have been engaged in the initiation and development of the project, there have been some benefits such as a better response to local needs and lower levels of vandalism as a result of the commitment and pride generated from being involved.

A number of mechanisms which can be adopted to encourage community involvement in the development of environmental improvement projects are identified in this study. These include:

- through voluntary sector and technical aid agencies to provide advice to local residents and interest groups who would like to become involved;

- public or private sector support for voluntary organisations such as the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and Groundwork Trusts that have been successful in promoting community involvement in environmental improvements;

- setting up a voluntary organisations or groups forum to discuss urban environmental issues with local authority officers and councillors;

- direct financial support to voluntary organisations for the design and implementation of schemes; and

- private sector support for innovative approaches to environmental improvements (JURUE, 1987).

In addition to involving local communities in initiating, planning, designing and even implementing environmental improvement projects, the study suggests that, through several mechanisms, local communities can be encouraged to become involved in the management and aftercare of such improvements. First, it is important to recognise the role local people are capable of playing in caring for green areas in towns and cities. For projects requiring a high labour input during implementation and for the aftercare, there is the opportunity for local

participation and involvement. Second, there should be an individual, be it an environmental warden, a community landscape architect or a ranger, who is responsible for liaison with the local community to generate local commitment to the management and maintenance of the improvements made. And finally, clear information such as signs and boards which explain the objectives of the improvements and the future aims of the area can help to raise the local community's awareness about the improvements and increase their interest in the works (JURUE, 1987).

4.3.3 Greening the City: A Guide to Good Practice (GFA Consulting, 1996)

Another research programme looking at the importance and benefits of greening activities in urban areas and the lessons for good practice in developing urban greening strategies and in the design, implementation and management of greening projects was undertaken by GFA Consulting in 1995, also commissioned by the former DoE as part of the Government's Greening the City initiative launched at the same year (GFA Consulting, 1996). Although a broad interpretation of the notion of greening was adopted in the study to cover a wide range of urban green spaces, only one site out of the 22 case studies was a public urban park; most sites were green corridors/greenways along rivers or railways or naturalistic areas. Despite this low representation of parks in its case studies, many of the lessons of good practice identified in the research, especially those regarding community involvement, are indisputably valuable and valid for urban park projects.

It is indicated in the report *Greening the City: A Guide to Good Practice* (GFA Consulting, 1996) that, like many other contemporary public funded regeneration activities, partnership working arrangements, especially those involving local communities, are fundamental to urban greening. Indeed, as their case studies have observed, partnership working is a common feature to most of the greening projects. There are at least two benefits if local communities are involved: firstly, to ensure that a development is acceptable to local people and will be used; and secondly, to generate local people's sense of ownership and pride as a way of assuring continuous protection and maintenance. To secure the involvement of local communities, the guide identifies the following lessons of good practice:

- consultation with local residents should be embarked upon as early as possible and embrace the widest possible range of issues;
- local communities can be involved in all aspects of planning, design, implementation and management;
- the inclusion of a community development professional within the greening team should be considered where possible; otherwise, it is necessary for parks and open spaces and other professionals involved in the greening projects to develop an understanding of the

types and techniques of community involvement;

- it is important for project managers to recognise the distinctive characteristics of local communities and the different needs of key groups such as the elderly, children, women and ethnic minorities, and to adopt a range of involvement methods to reach various groups;

- local communities can be engaged in urban greening through a number of techniques such as involving children in activities to reach their parents, approaching user groups, and employing staff with a specific community development function;

- including community representatives in the partnership for larger or more formally organised projects; nevertheless, this should not replace the involvement of the wider community; and

- it is important to be clear about the objectives of community involvement (GFA Consulting, 1996).

With regards to the last point stated above, the study refers to Wilcox's five-stance model of levels of participation to describe the various objectives. It is found in their case studies that the examples identified to illustrate good practice are generally towards higher levels of community involvement, i.e. deciding together, acting together and supporting independent community initiatives. An important issue raised in the study is that professionals may not always welcome or encourage full and genuine consultations in which the views of local communities are taken seriously. Three reasons are identified from the case studies, including the possibility of requiring extra cost, slowing down the project development process and raising expectations that cannot be met (GFA Consulting, 1996).

4.3.4 People, Parks and Cities: A Guide to Current Good Practice in Urban Parks (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996)

The publication of the report *People, Parks and Cities: A Guide to Current Good Practice in Urban Parks* (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996) by the former DoE in 1996 was very much seen as a response to a renewed interest on urban parks generated by *Park Life: Urban Parks and Social Renewal* (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995), a report published by Comedia/Demos in 1995 (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996; DETR, 1999c; Landscape Institute, 1999). Based on twelve main case-studies and a further 26 supplementary case studies which were primarily funded under various urban regeneration initiatives, this guide pulls together examples of good practice in ten areas of parks provision: planning, managing, competing, delegating, maintaining, building, monitoring, involving, funding and moving on. The area of 'involving' is the one which looks at how local communities are involved in parks and open spaces, with a particular focus on 'community involvement posts' (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996, p. 35).

While arguing community involvement is a major theme for the future of public parks, the authors of the report raise specifically a note of caution for the reason of supporting such a belief. They state:

> "This is not because 'community involvement' is a cheaper alternative to direct municipal management, nor is it the result of a sometimes over-simplified theory that 'local ownership' will reduce vandalism and its associated costs. Rather it is because partnerships with wildlife groups, sports clubs, one o'clock clubs and so on will release much more potential for parks to play a central role in urban life, a theme that is evident in many of the case-studies" (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996, p35).

In recognition of the distinctiveness of each park and each local situation, it is suggested that there is no single model for involving local communities in organising events and activities within parks. Nevertheless, there is a feature common to the three cases examined in the report to illustrate good practice in community involvement, and indeed to several other case studies as well. That is the creation of a specific post – referred here as a 'community involvement post' – to facilitate greater participation of local communities in parks, either for temporary projects or as a full-time post. The roles played by such a post are multiple and diverse, ranging from establishing a network of local contacts, supporting group activities, co-ordinating and arranging events, and creating a sense of openness on the part of councils to respond to park users' views and ideas, to facilitating the establishment of successful friends groups and constructive relationships between local authority parks management and local groups. Regardless of the various titles related to the community involvement post and the different responsibilities each of them may have, this post provides a clear point of contact for individuals or groups wishing to become involved in their local parks.

In addition, the report notes three other issues that are of close relevance to the involvement of local communities in the provision and care of public urban parks. The first issue relates to park-based groups which are broadly classified into two categories: (1) those that are organised for single objectives and (2) those which wish to have a greater general influence over park management decisions. Examples of the former category are wildlife groups, community gardeners and play groups; while the latter include friends groups and residents' groups. These groups may set themselves up and operate independently, but as Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996) observe, facilitating the establishment of park groups and providing needed support to them is a relatively new activity for park managers in local authorities. With regards to the doubt sometimes aired by some local authorities about whether friends groups are representative of their wider communities, the two authors argue that such groups can make positive contributions to their local parks, so long as all concerned are clear about the nature of the group, who the group represents, what the local authority's broader policies are, and where the final responsibility for decision-making lies.

The case studies suggest a number of ingredients for friends groups to be successful. These include:

- efforts and commitment from a mix of local residents;
- openness, honesty and optimism;
- direct contact with one or two key individuals from the local authority;
- early success;
- good relations with other park user groups; and
- a good park to start with (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996).

The second issue concerns the involvement of schools. It is found that involving schoolchildren in events in the park can be a good way of making initial contact with the wider community and this kind of link can gradually develop into greater community involvement in the park. Working with schools may also be helpful in obtaining momentum and public approval. The last issue noted in the report relates to the involvement of volunteers. Greenhalgh and Worpole (1996) indicate that this particular issue requires careful consideration as volunteering in public parks has only begun to develop in recent years. Where volunteers are involved in practical gardening or conservation work, close supervision and training may be needed. Most importantly, such voluntary efforts "should not be considered a form of cheap labour" (Ibid., p. 39). It is suggested that the role of volunteers should be included and clearly defined in a park management plan.

4.3.5 Experience from the United States of America, Canada and Australia

In addition to the United Kingdom, the involvement of local communities in improving public urban parks and open spaces has been widely practiced in a number of western countries, most notably the United States of America, Canada and Australia.

4.3.5.1 The United Sates of America

In the United States of America, the establishment of public-private park partnerships has gradually become a nationwide trend in the last two decades to support the revitalisation of American urban parks. The first of such partnerships was formed in the early 1980s between New York City's parks department and the Central Park Conservancy, a non-for-profit organisation, to restore, manage and protect Central Park (Central Park Conservancy, 2000; Madden et al., 2000). The success of Central Park Conservancy in raising substantial amounts of funding and generating extensive community support to regenerate Central Park has without doubt inspired the formation of many other park-based groups, such as the Friends of Public Garden in Boston, Louisville Olmsted Park Conservancy in Louisville (Carr et al., 1992) and Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy in Pittsburgh (Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, 2002), and encouraged these organisations to establish partnerships with public parks agencies for the

creation, renovation and/or management of their local parks.

As Walker *et al.* (1999) have observed, two factors have contributed to the increasing interest in public-private partnerships for parks across the United States: (1) these partnerships work as they successfully combine the assets of the public and private sectors in innovative ways to create new and restore existing parks and open spaces; and (2) parks themselves are becoming more important elements of urban revitalisation initiatives happening all over the country. The results of their study on a number of park partnerships suggest three major benefits of obtaining the support and collaboration of non-for-profit organisations:

- Nonprofit partners (e.g. foundations, "friends of park" groups, park conservancies, park alliance, and other groups whose remits focus on broader urban initiatives) in general can bring new resources to the park field, as they can access funding sources that are not available to public agencies, including donations from individuals, corporations and private foundations.

- Nonprofits are capable of involving local communities and park users directly in park design, construction, programming and management. Those with memberships in particular are usually able to mobilise volunteers and monitor their work more easily than public park agencies can.

- Most non-for-profit organisations can respond flexibly to park improvement and financing opportunities, thus, their ability to mobilise community residents to support parks is evidently a great strength (Walker *et al.*, 1999).

On the other hand, Walker *et al.* (1999) point out that such public-private park partnerships are likely to be confronted with a variety of challenges. The most two prevailing challenges found in their study are the underperformance of partners on agreed-upon tasks because of inadequate capacity and inadequate commitment from one or more partners to the partnership. Moreover, failing to clarify the responsibility of each partners, in particular those of management and maintenance functions, may cause detrimental effects on community confidence and residents' willingness to take part in partner-sponsored activities (Ibid.).

The roles that nonprofit parks organisations may play and the sorts of activities which these organisations may become engaged in are examined in a study undertaken by Madden *et al.* (2000). It is found that nonprofit parks organisations can act in five ways: assistance providers, catalysts, co-managers, sole managers, and citywide partners (Ibid.). The characteristics and examples of each role are summarised in Table 4.3.1. Madden *et al.* (2000) indicate that the working relationships between the public parks agencies and nonprofit parks organisations tend to be fluid and dynamic; therefore, the roles of the nonprofits may change over time in response to the needs of the park.

Table 4.3.4 The roles of nonprofit parks organisations and their characteristics

Roles	Characteristics	Examples
Assistance providers	- providing assistance and support, e.g. labour, community outreach and organising park programmes - acting as public advocates - acting as public interest groups working on behalf of local residents - with small operating budgets - having no direct responsibility for the park itself	- Friends of Buttonwood Park, New Bedford, Massachusetts - Friends of Garfield Park, Inc. Indianapolis, Indiana
Catalysts	- initiating and facilitating new projects - providing financial support for new parks or greenways - involved in advocacy, design and construction issues	- National AIDS Memorial Grove, San Francisco, California - Knox Greenways Coalition, Knoxville, Tennessee
Co-managers	- working in collaboration with public parks departments - involved in the planning, design and implementation of capital projects - sharing the responsibility for the park	- Central Parks Conservancy, New York, New York - Louisville Olmsted Parks Conservancy, Louisville, Kentucky
Sole Managers	- responsible for the managing and maintaining the park with only limited involvement of the parks department - in charge of developing and changing policies related to the park	- Maymont Foundation, Richmond, Virginia - Yakima Greenway Foundation, Yakima, Washington
Citywide partners	- focusing on all or many parks and open spaces in a city or area - involved in advocating for more city funds and activities for parks, training - smaller friends groups, and initiating citywide greening programmes	- Partnership for Parks, New York, New York - Philadelphia Green, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Source: Madden *et al.*, 2000, pp. 17-22.

Madden *et al.* (2000) identify nine types of activities which nonprofit parks organisation may embark on, inclduing: (1) fundraising; (2) organising volunteers; (3) design, planning and construction of capital improvements; (4) market and outreach; (5) programming; (6) advocacy; (7) remedial maintenance; (8) routine maintenance; and (9) security. Evidently, not every nonprofit parks organisation will undertake all these activities. What a nonprofit parks organisation may do to support the park is closely related to the role it plays, the size of the organisation, and how involved it becomes in the actual management of the park. As Madden *et al.* (2000) have observed, most nonprofit parks organisations engage themselves in fundraising, organising volunteers and outreach; contrarily, many organisations keep away from management oriented activities such as routine maintenance, capital improvements and security because these activities are usually more expensive to run, require more involvement, and are more likely to compromise the organisation's ability to advocacy.

4.3.5.2 Canada

In the City of Ottawa, a series of community workshops, held throughout the city, were organised by the city's Environmental Management Branch of the Department of Engineering

and Works during the spring and fall of 1996 to achieve two aims: (1) to work with local people as well as interested local organisations to examine open spaces issues; and (2) to help identify and assist locally based open spaces initiatives throughout the city (City of Ottawa, 1996). Based on an approach known as Participatory Appraisal and a methodology called Community Mapping, 31 workshops were held in eight different areas of the city which had different open spaces situations and issues. As Greenwood (2002) points out, participatory mapping, such as community mapping, allows local people to affirm and pool their experiences and knowledge about their localities. Such local experience and knowledge can be a valuable resources base for researchers and managers both inside and outside the local community (ibid.).

The work undertaken by the staff of the City of Ottawa demonstrated that community mapping workshops were more effective than other traditional participatory activities such as public meetings and questionnaires, as people of all ages and backgrounds were able to participate equally and work together in the mapping process (City of Ottawa, 1996). In addition to mapping the location of open spaces and listing the reasons why and when they used these spaces and what features they value, participants of the workshops were also asked to identify issues existing in their areas and to discuss and prioritise issues raised by others. Subsequently, action plans for how to resolve the identified issues were developed. A wide range of solutions and recommendations were proposed in most of these action plans. The information generated from the workshops has been used in various ways. For instance, it was integrated in the development of the city's Greenways Corridor Management Plans and Natural Area and Open Space Study. In addition, the information was sent to the city's recreation and urban planners, major greenway and open space owner, other planning agencies functioning in the larger region as well as local communities for the use of planning purposes (City of Ottawa, 1996).

Examples of local communities becoming involved in the regeneration or development of urban parks can also be found at the individual park level. For instance, extensive public consultation exercises were undertaken in 1995 and 1996 for preparing the restoration plan of Hastings Park in the City of Vancouver, including the establishment of a partnership between the Vancouver Park Board and the Hastings Park Working Committee, community conferences, open houses and public meetings (City of Vancouver, 1996). In addition, a project to create a Community Forest in the park was initiated in 1998 as the first step of the regeneration process, asking local residents to donate to the planting of trees (City of Vancouver, 2000).

The development of Downsview Park, previously a military base, in the City of Toronto has also comprised a strong community involvement element, with the initiation of an extensive

public consultation programme in early 1996 to inform and involve local communities in planning the Downsview Park lands (Parc Downsview Park, 2002). The consultation activities have included numerous public meetings, workshops, outreach sessions, community advisory panels meetings, educational programmes and a conference, and the consultation process is still ongoing (Ibid.).

The continuous involvement of Mississauga Garden Council, a community organisation, in transforming a riverside property into a public garden illustrates another Canadian example of community involvement in improving public open spaces. The Mississauga Garden Council has been working closely with the local authority to support development phases of the garden (City of Mississauga, 2002). Moreover, public input and feedback from individuals as well as a number of public and private agencies have also been incorporated into the development of the master plan for the garden.

4.3.5.3 Australia

An early example of local communities being engaged in park-related projects in Australia can be found in the preparation of a landscape development plan for Melbourne's Royal Park. After a design competition which took place in 1984, a master plan was developed by Laceworks Landscape Collaborative who won the competition, with the assistance of a Steering Committee and extensive public consultation, and the plan was consequently adopted by the local authority in 1987 (Munro, 1998). Nevertheless, when the city council initiated a process to revise the 10-year old Royal Park Master Plan in 1997, the involvement of local communities was to a great extent restricted. As Munro (1998) pointed out, the review exercise was officer-driven and skewed, as the process was directed by the State Government and the public consultation activities were tightly controlled. Although a Review Committee was established, the committee was heavily partial towards institutional stakeholders and sporting bodies. Moreover, while there were resident representatives in the committee, they were not nominated by existing groups but selected by the local authority subsequent to advertisement (Ibid.).

Lack of the support of the local authority in providing opportunities for local community to take part in the review process, a more grass-roots form of community involvement consequently emerged by itself. Consisting of citizens and environmental organisations from the metropolitan area, the Royal Park Protection Group battled the Melbourne City Council over several issues relating to the revised master plan, submitted reasoned responses to the council's Issues paper, Draft Master Plan and Final Master Plan, and successfully lobbied for the inclusion of a number of amendments to the plan (Munro, 1998).

The development of Pyrmont Point Park and Giba Park in Sydney illustrated a different approach to involving local communities in park-related projects in Australia. In order to provide local residents with an opportunity to access the design process and to contribute to the final design of the two parks, a series of Community Workshops were incorporated into the initial design stages as a key component of the project (Hunter, 1997).

For Sydney's Centennial Parklands, which includes three heritage-listed parks: Centennial Park, Moore Park and Queens Park, local communities have been involved in the development and management of the parklands mainly through the operation of the Community Consultative Committee (Centennial Parklands, 2000). The committee is an advisory body whose role is to represent a wide range of community interests to the Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust who manages the parklands. Community representatives of the committee meet every six weeks and one of the committee's members is nominated to act as a Trustee each year (Ibid.). In addition, there is a friends group for the parklands (the Friends of Centennial Parklands). Member of the friends group have contributed to the conservation of the parklands' history, culture and environment and participated in a variety of ranger-guided activities (Centennial Parklands, 2000b).

PART TWO:

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter Five
Research Design and Methodology

This chapter describes how the research was developed and carried out. The first section outlines the key research concept underlying this study and the major research questions this study aimed to answer. The second section explains the rationale for selecting the 1997 UPP funded park restoration projects as the focus of the study. How the research was designed to answer the research questions is described in the third section. The other sections in the rest of the chapter give detailed explanations to the research approaches and data-colleting techniques adopted in the two major phases of the study.

5.1 The key research concepts and research questions

As discussed in the previous chapter, partnership and community involvement are nowadays two of the most essential elements of sustainable urban regeneration, and this is no exception for the restoration of historic urban parks, which are gradually being regarded as an integral part of the broad regeneration process in view of the importance of urban parks to city residents' quality of life. This idea forms the key research concepts, presented as Figure 5.1.1, which underlie the current study and help to define the territory for the research. As the diagram shows, the study contains three major components: the park restoration partnership, community involvement process and park restoration project.

(a) Park restoration partnership

The first component is the partnership established specifically for the restoration of an historic urban park. The study focuses on who the funding, technical-support, and community/voluntary sector partners could be and their contributions.

(b) Community Involvement Process

The second component is the process of involving local communities in regenerating an historic urban park. The research examines the six key issues concerning community involvement in planning and development processes:
- Why is the local community involved?
- Who should be involved?
- When should the local community be involved?
- What level of involvement is to be achieved?
- What resources are needed for community involvement?
- How should the local community be involved?

Figure 5.1.1 Conceptual framework of the research
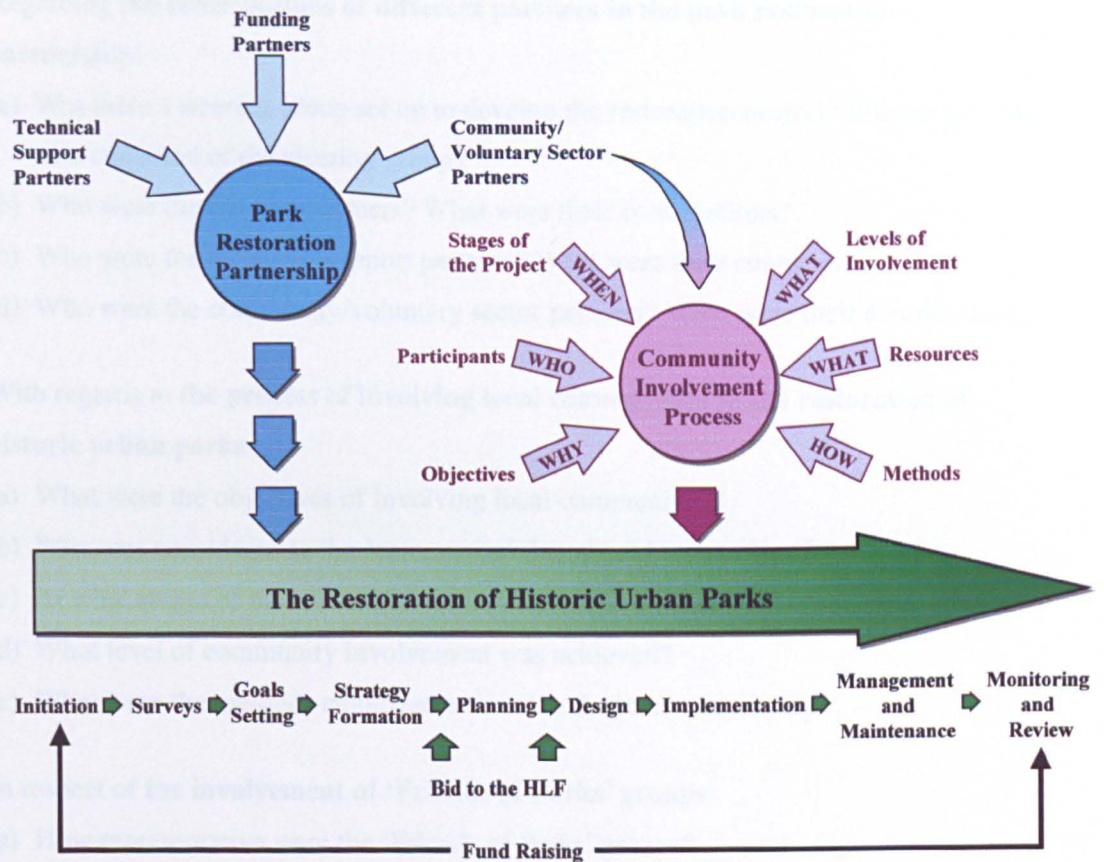
(c) Park restoration project

The third component is the restoration project of an historic urban park. In order to explore the issue of at what stage of a restoration project could local communities be involved, the regeneration process is divided into eleven stages: initiation, surveys, goals and objective setting, strategy formation, planning, bidding to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), design, implementation, management and maintenance, monitoring and review, and fund raising. The stage of bidding to the HLF is specific to restoration projects grant-aided by HLF.

As noted in Chapter One, this doctoral study has three main aims:

- to examine the composition of partnerships formed specifically for the restoration of historic urban parks, with a focus on the funding, technical-support and community/voluntary sector partners;
- to explore the process of community involvement in the regeneration of historic urban parks, focusing in particular on the objectives and methods of involving local communities; and
- to investigate the effectiveness of involving local communities in restoring historic urban parks, focusing on contributory factors of as well as constraints on effective community involvement.

More specifically, the study was designed to answer the following research questions:

1. Regarding **the contributions of different partners in the park restoration partnership**:

   (a) Was there a steering group set up to develop the restoration project? If there was one, who consisted of the steering group?

   (b) Who were the funding partners? What were their contributions?

   (c) Who were the technical-support partners? What were their contributions?

   (d) Who were the community/voluntary sector partners? What were their contributions?

2. With regards to **the process of involving local communities in the restoration of historic urban parks**:

   (a) What were the objectives of involving local communities?

   (b) Who was considered as the 'community' that should be involved?

   (c) At what stages of the restoration project were local communities involved?

   (d) What level of community involvement was achieved?

   (e) What were the methods employed to involve the local community?

3. In respect of **the involvement of 'Friends of Parks' groups**:

   (a) How representative were the 'Friends of Parks' groups?

   (b) Why did individuals become involved with 'Friends of Parks' groups?

   (c) Why did 'Friends of Parks' groups become involved with park restoration projects?

   (d) What kind of roles did 'Friends of Parks' groups play in the process of regenerating historic urban parks?

4. Regarding **community involvement in the long-term management of restored historic urban parks**:

   (a) Would local communities or 'Friends of Parks' groups be involved in the long-term management of historic urban parks once they have been restored?

   (b) What kind of roles could local communities or 'Friends of Parks' groups play in the ongoing management of restored historic urban parks?

5. With regards to **the effectiveness of community involvement**:

   (a) How effective was the involvement of local communities in the restoration of historic urban parks?

   (b) What were the factors contributing to effective community involvement?

   (c) What were the constraints to the effectiveness of community involvement?

   (d) What were the problems encountered in involving the local community?

   (e) What were the skills required for effective community involvement?

5.2 Why the 1997 UPP grant-aided park restoration projects as a focus for the research

In order to complete the research within the permitted time frame (approximately four years), it is necessary to focus the study on a limited number of park restoration projects. Figure 5.1.2 summaries the process of identifying park restoration projects which were awarded grants by the HLF under the Urban Parks Programme (UPP) in 1997 as the focus for this study.

Figure 5.2.1 Identification process of the research focus

> **Restoration Projects of**
> **Historic Parks and Gardens in Britain**

⬇

> **Heritage Lottery Fund Grant-aided**
> **Parks and Gardens Projects**
>
> *Between April 1995 and March 1998:*
> *around 200 projects*

⬇

> **Urban Park Programme Funded Projects**
>
> *Launched in January 1996, including*
> *restoration projects and feasibility studies*

⬇

> **1997 UPP Awarded**
> **Urban Parks Projects**
>
> *1st announcement (15th May): 48 projects*
> *2nd announcement (14th July): 31 projects*
> *3rd announcement (2nd December): 43 projects*

⬇

> **1997 UPP Awarded**
> **Restoration Projects**
>
> *1st announcement (15th May): 38 projects*
> *2nd announcement (14th July): 10 projects*
> *3rd announcement (2nd December): 10 projects*

Projects receiving grant-aid from the HLF were first targeted for two reasons. First, due to the lack of official statistics, it was difficult to know how many and where historic parks and gardens restoration projects were undertaken across the United Kingdom. Approaching a particular funding body thus became one of the possible ways of finding out such information. Second, while historic parks and gardens may be eligible for grant aid from a number of funding resources, either conventional or new opportunities (see Section 3.3), the sum of grants made available by the HLF has been indubitably the most significant. Therefore, it was

decided that the HLF would be approached to acquire a list of historic parks and gardens projects. A list containing all HLF grants announcing between April 1995 and March 1998 was consequently obtained, of which around 200 grants were awarded to historic parks and gardens (including cemeteries) (HLF, 1998). These included projects which were funded before the launch of the UPP in 1996 and those which were funded under the UPP.

The attention of the research was then drawn to the Urban Parks Programme (UPP), a funding scheme initiated by the HLF in January 1996, dedicating to the regeneration of historic urban parks, gardens and other types of urban open spaces (more discussion regarding the UPP can be found in Section 3.4). This was because the programme has explicitly required partnership and community involvement as part of the restoration of historic urban parks and gardens. The former is to be demonstrated by "partnership funding" (HLF, 1996, para. 3.6) and "organisational strengths" (para. 3.12), while the latter is to be demonstrated by "evidence of community support" (para. 3.9), evidence of "consultation with the local community in drawing up plans for the capital projects (para. 3.10), and "proposals for involving local people, where appropriate, in planning the longer term management of the park" (para. 3.12).

The focus of the study was further narrowed down to restoration projects awarded grants under the UPP in 1997 because of the following consideration. Applications for the UPP grants were initially assessed based on a timetable set up for the programme; i.e. applications had to be submitted before a certain deadline and awards were announced in tranches. In 1997, three announcements were made on 15th May, 15th July, and 2nd December respectively, making up in total 122 grants. However, this approach was not employed subsequently and no more major award announcements were made after 1997. Thus, the year of 1997 was considered as an appropriate cut-off point for deciding which projects to be included in the study.

Finally, of the 122 grants awarded under the UPP in 1997, 58 were for projects which would undertake substantial restoration work, and the other 64 were for projects developing feasibility studies or restoration plans. Since projects in the latter group could only be seen as at the initiation stage of the restoration process, it was unlikely that they could provide much information on partnership and community involvement in the regeneration process of historic urban parks. It was therefore decided that the research would focus on the 58 restoration projects and not include projects engaged in either feasibility studies or restoration plans.

5.3 Research design

Given the diversity of the information required to answer the research questions laid down in Section 5.1, it became clear that it was necessary to employ more than one method in the data-collecting process of the study. Such a multi-method approach, often known as

triangulation, has two advantages. First, it can help to enhance the validity of the information being collected, as different methods of data collection can complement each other (Blaxter *et al.*, 1996; Livesey, 2000). In addition, a combination of various methods can allow the researcher to obtain a more rounded picture of the subject under study (Livesey, 2000).

As shown in Figure 5.3.1, the data-collecting process of the current study comprised two phases of work. The first phase was a postal questionnaire survey to the 58 park restoration projects awarded the UPP grants in 1997. This survey was designed to answer research questions 1, 2 (a) – (c), 3 (d) and 5(a) – (c). It aimed at drawing up a cross-section of the UPP to provide breadth to the study and a basis for the selection of a number of projects for the second phase, which consisted of a limited number of in-depth case studies. Details of case-study projects selection are discussed later in Section 5.5.

Figure 5.3.1 Research design
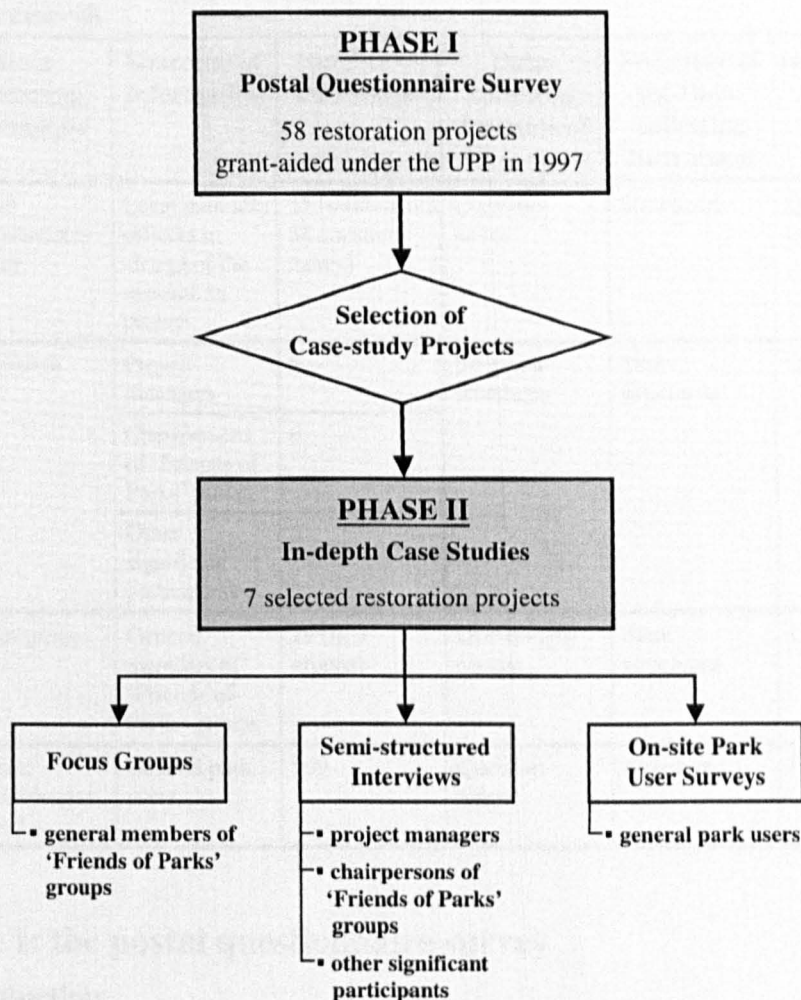
Phase II of the study was designed to answer research questions 2 to 5, focusing on a selection of park restoration projects. A case-study approach was adopted at this phase in order to gather rich, detailed and in-depth information concerning community involvement in the restoration

process of historic urban parks. Three data-collecting techniques were employed for the work of this phase, including: (1) semi-structured interviews with project managers, chairpersons of 'Friends of Parks' groups and other significant participants; (2) focus groups with general members of 'Friend of Parks' groups; and (3) on-site questionnaire surveys with general park users. Documentary information relevant to each case-study restoration project, such as the bid document submitting to the HLF, press releases, newsletters, and publications produced by friends groups, was also collected and used as supplementary sources of evidence.

The following sections give detailed descriptions of each data-collecting technique used in this study, in terms of how the technique was developed, the design of the data-collecting instrument, the process of conducting the data-collection work, and how the data gathered was analysed. Tale 5.3.1 summarises some features of these data-collecting techniques.

Table 5.3.1 Summary of characteristics of data-collecting techniques employed in this research

Phase	Data-collecting Technique	Source(s) of Information	Number of Informants	Data-collecting Instrument	Structure of the Data-collecting Instrument	Nature of the Data
I	Postal questionnaire survey	Local authority officers in charge of the restoration project	35 (sending out 58 question-naires)	Question-naires	Structured	Quantitative & qualitative
II	Interviews	Project managers	8	Interview schedules	Semi-structured	Qualitative
		Chairpersons of 'Friends of Parks' groups	6			
		Other significant participants	5			
	Focus groups	General members of 'Friends of Parks' groups	29 (in 5 groups)	Questioning routes	Semi-structured	Qualitative
	On-site questionnaire survey	General park users	509	Question-naires	Structured	Quantitative

5.4 Phase I: the postal questionnaire survey

5.4.1 Introduction

Survey research, characterised by structured and systematic methods of data collection (De Vaus, 2002), is one of the most basic and widely adopted approaches in social research. With the strength in obtaining empirical data which provides a breadth of view of the topic(s) being studied in a relatively less time-consuming and less expensive way than other research

approaches (May, 1997; Denscombe, 1998), surveys are popular choices not only for large scale market research but also for small scale social research projects. Survey research may be employed for various purposes, e.g. describing the attributes of a population, comparing the attributes of different groups, explaining the relationships among some attributes, and extracting the patterns of some social events or issues (Bell, 1993; Jones, 1996). For the current study, the primary purposes were to give descriptions and to extract patterns of park restoration partnerships and the process of community involvement in the regeneration of historic urban parks.

The conduction of surveys is often associated with the use of questionnaires. Questionnaires may be administered in three major ways: face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews, and postal questionnaires (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1981; Miller, 1991; De Vaus, 2002). In addition, Internet surveys have also become a popular means of administering questionnaires since the mid-1990s (De Vaus, 2002). Each method of administration has its strength and weaknesses and is particularly appropriate for a particular context. The postal questionnaire was selected as the data-collecting technique for the first phase of the research considering specifically the following advantages of this method. First, postal surveys generally cost less than face-to-face interviews because they do not require trained interviewers (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1981; De Vaus, 2002). This advantage is particularly important when the population under investigation is widely spread geographically, and therefore relates to the second strength of this method. That is, the postal questionnaire allows wider geographic contact with minimum expense, in terms of money as well as time and effort (Ibid.; Miller, 1991). Finally, postal questionnaires permit respondents to give considered answers and allow them to consult relevant documents or other people if necessary (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1981; Miller, 1991).

On the other hand, the researcher was aware of the possible weaknesses of the postal questionnaire survey, most notably being the low response rate generally generated by this type of surveys (Miller, 1991; Denscombe, 1998; De Vaus, 2002). Nachmias and Nachmias (1981) point out that the typical response rate for a postal survey is between 20% and 40%. Miller (1991) notes that respond rates to postal questionnaires usually do not surpass 50% when conducted by private and relatively unskilled people. Thus, it is necessary to adopt a number of strategies in order to raise the response rate, including: the use of follow-ups by either mail or telephone; the inclusion of a stamped, self-addressed envelope; and the inclusion of an introductory letter with an altruistic appeal (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1981; Miller, 1991).

5.4.2 Survey Design

Due to the numbers of projects as well as the wide-spread locations of these restoration projects, for example the Sandy-Winsch Park in Norwich, Parc Ty Mawr in Penmarnmawr, Mount Wise Park in Plymouth, and Spa Gardens in Strathpeffer, it would have been rather time-consuming and expensive to carry out the survey by face-to-face or telephone interviews. Therefore, a postal questionnaire survey was selected as the technique for data collection. A highly structured questionnaire was composed to obtain information in three aspects of the 1997 UPP awarded restoration projects: (1) the background information of each project; (2) the composition of the partnership within each restoration scheme; and (3) the information concerning community involvement in each project. A more detailed description of the questionnaire will be given later.

At the time when the research started to be developed, only a few studies on the UPP grant-aided projects had been undertaken (e.g. Fieldhouse, 1999b & 2000) and very little was publicly known about these projects. Therefore, most questions in the questionnaire were designed to find out factual information which required the respondents to report some information about the projects themselves. Nonetheless, a few 'opinion' questions were also asked which required the respondents to express their own ideas or to make evaluations.

Given the exploratory nature of this study and also because of the diversity of information relating to partnerships, objectives of community involvement, and factors contributing to effective community involvement, a high proportion of open-ended questions were included in order to generate information which would be reported by the respondents in their own words. As Denscombe (1998) points out, the full richness and complexity of a view held by a respondent can more likely be reflected by open questions. On the other hand, in order to ease the effort required from the respondents, to make the processing of data easier and the analysis of the data quicker, closed questions were employed wherever the answers could appropriately be structured into categories.

A list of the UPP grant-aided projects which were announced in 1997 was acquired in September 1998 from the HLF. The 58 restoration projects were then identified as the target survey population to be studied. Due to the relatively small size of this target survey population, it was decided that all the elements within this population would be investigated. The sampling strategy adopted in this study could be referred to as voluntary sampling, meaning that the sample was self-selected (Blaxter et al., 1996). Questionnaires completed and returned were then considered as the sample of this survey.

As explained in the introductory letter of the questionnaire, it was expected that the

questionnaire would be completed by those who were responsible for developing the park restoration projects. Thus, the majority of the survey respondents were officers in local authorities. A stamped, self-addressed envelope was enclosed along with each questionnaire to encourage the respondent to return the completed questionnaire.

5.4.3 The questionnaire

The questionnaire (see Appendix C-1) was developed following a careful review of the UPP Additional Guidance Note 1: Urban Parks (HLF, 1996) and other award announcement documents and a significant literature review about community involvement in other fields of environmental development such as urban nature conservation (Millward, 1983), greening (Bradley, 1986; GFA Consulting, 1996) and urban regeneration (MacFarlane, 1993; DETR, 1997 and 1998f).

The content of the questionnaire was structured to cover three aspects of information of the 1997 UPP grant-aided restoration projects: (1) the background information of each restoration scheme was investigated to outline the context of the study; (2) information regarding the partnership was surveyed to answered research questions 1 and 3(d); and (3) information on community involvement in each project was sought to answer research questions 2 (a) – (c) and 5(a) – (c). The questionnaire was therefore organised into the following three sections.

Section A: Background Information

Issues investiaged in this section include the name of the project, the amount of total project cost and the grant awarded, the date of award announcement, the type of area in which the site was located, the general characteristics of surrounding communities, the type of site, the number of other public open spaces within the vicinity, the main user groups of the site, the initiation of the project, and the linkage with other wider environmental strategies.

Section B: The Partnership

This section examined the existence and composition of a steering group, the compsition and contribution of different funding and technical support partners, and the existence and contribution of friends groups and other local organisations.

Section C: The Process of Community Involvement

The focus of the final section was on the involvement of the local community. It looked at which group of people was included in the COMMUNITY, at what stage of a restoration process the local community was involved, which groups were involved at any particular stage, the goals/objectives of involving the local community, the effectiveness of the local community's involvement, the factors contributing to the effectiveness, and the factors

restricting the effectiveness of community involvement.

5.4.4 Conduction of the survey

5.4.4.1 The pilot survey

In order to test the questionnaire, to make sure that it was in a user-friendly format and could generate the required information, a pilot survey was carried out in October 1998. Four questionnaires were sent out, of which three were returned and fully completed. The respondents were asked not only to complete the questionnaire but also to give their comments on the wording of questions and the structure of the questionnaire itself. A copy of the questionnaire was also sent to Dr Stewart Harding, Policy Advisor on Historic Parks and Gardens, who at the time headed the Urban Parks Programme of the Heritage Lottery Fund, seeking his comments and advice.

Minor revisions to the wording of a few questions were then made. Since there were no significant differences between the contents and formats of the pilot questionnaire and the final version, it would seem reasonable to consider that the information gathered in both pilot and formal surveys are consistent with each other.

5.4.4.2 The main survey

The formal survey was initiated in mid-November 1998 and the respondents were asked to return the questionnaire by mid-December. Apart from the three projects which had already participated in the pilot survey, another 55 questionnaires were dispatched to the 1997 UPP grant recipients listed in the identified survey population. In addition to including a stamped, self-addressed envelop with each of the questionnaire sending off, several other measures were taken in order to increase the response rate. These included the inclusion of a formal introductory letter, the use of up to five follow-up contacts to some respondents by telephone and sending out replacement questionnaires to ten respondents who either did not receive or could not find the original one.

As only slight changes in the wording of a few questions were made following the responses from the pilot survey respondents, the three questionnaires sent back in the pilot survey were therefore considered valid responses together with those returned in the formal survey. Fifteen questionnaires were received by the deadline stated in the questionnaire. The survey was continued until March 1999, with another 21 questionnaires being returned after the follow-ups. Of the 36 questionnaires received, 35 were fully completed. Therefore, the final response rate for this survey was 60.34%.

The prolonged process of the survey resulted mainly from the following two causes. First and foremost, the questionnaire was designed to be answered by people who were in charge of or

who have sufficient knowledge about the development of the restoration project. However, more than half of the contacts given in the list acquired from the HLF were not the target would-be respondents. Some of the contacts were the head of the local-authority department submitting the HLF bid; some were officers who participated in putting together the bid and who had already handed over the responsibility of developing the restoration project to a subsequently appointed project manager; and some just simply left their posts. While some of the questionnaires were consequently forwarded to the anticipated respondents, some were not. Thus, considerable time and effort was taken to reach the right people.

Second, although careful consideration was given to balance the length of the questionnaire with the amount of information required to answer the research questions, the eleven-page questionnaire inevitably demanded quite some time and effort by the respondent to complete it. A number of respondents indicated in the follow-up phone calls that they were very busy with their work and thus required longer time to fill out and return the questionnaire.

With regards to those that did not return the questionnaire, nine respondents indicated in the follow-up phone calls that they did not have time to participate in the survey; five respondents said they would telephone back the researcher but no phone call was received; and four respondents expressed that they would return the questionnaire but did not. In addition, there were another five respondents who could not be reached even though five follow-up phone calls were made and messages left in these respondents' answering machines.

5.4.5 Data analysis

All the analyses carried out were based on the data collected in the 35 completed questionnaires. Quantitative data obtained from closed questions were coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, for Windows version 8.0). Since the purposes of this survey were to give descriptions and extract patterns of the 1997 UPP grant-aided restoration projects, the statistical analyses involved at this phase of the research were primarily univariate and descriptive. The results of the analyses were mainly presented by frequency tables and on a few occasions by bar charts.

For qualitative information generated by open-ended questions, answers were transferred to a word processor before being carefully examined to develop categories and identify themes running through the responses. Most of the analysing results of the qualitative information were presented in bullet points; while where appropriate, frequency tables were made to illustrate the distribution of the categories being identified.

5.5 Selection of case-study restoration projects

The adoption of case studies as a research approach for the second phase of the current study is discussed later in Section 5.6. This section mainly focuses on the process of selecting a limited number of restoration projects for the follow-up study. As Stake (1994) points out, the 'opportunity to learn' which a case can provide is of primary importance in the selection of cases. By this he means that researchers should choose the case which they feel they can learn the most. Tellis (1997b) likewise argues that selecting cases should be done in order to maximise what can be learned within the timescale of the study. In addition, Berg (1995) argues that selected cases should allow better understanding or possibly a strengthened ability to theorise about some larger collection of cases. Based on these principles, it was decided that those projects to be selected for the second phase of the research should be as diverse as possible; while at the same time, the time and resources available for the research should be taken into consideration.

The information gathered by the postal questionnaire survey was used as a base to develop a set of criteria for the selection of cases, including the type of the site, the size of the UPP grant, the number of project stages with community involvement, the region/country where the site is located, and the willingness of the respondent to participate in follow-up research. The procedure of selecting the case-study restoration projects was as summarised in Figure 5.5.1.

The first criterion, type of the site, was employed to eliminate sites that were not public urban parks. While this criterion may seem contradictory to the basic principle of case selection, which is to increase the diversity of the projects chosen, this was done in order to focus the research further by restricting the selection to a specific type of sites. Public urban parks were chosen because they accounted for two thirds of the sites for the returned questionnaires, offering more choices for later selections.

The 25 projects were first classified into three categories according to their grant sizes: large (£1m ~ £7m), medium (£500,000 ~ £999,999) and small (under £500,000). At least one project should be selected from every category. Projects in each of the grant size categories were then divided into sub-groups based on the number of project stages with community involvement (see Figure 5.5.1). Projects which had between eight and eleven stages with the involvement of local communities were regarded as 'many', between five and seven stages as 'moderate', and between one and four stages as 'a few'. In the large grant category, because there were more projects than the other two categories, it was considered worth picking one project from each of the stage sub-groups.

In addition to the above two criteria, the region/country where a restoration project was

Figure 5.5.1 The procedure of case-study projects selection

Grouping of Projects	Criteria of Case Selection

```
                                                              ┌──────────────────────┐
                                                              │   Type of the Site   │
                                                              └──────────────────────┘
        ┌─────────────────────┐   ┌─────────────────────┐
        │ Gardens and other   │   │  Public urban parks │
        │ types of open spaces│   │                     │
        │    10 projects      │   │    25 projects      │
        └─────────────────────┘   └─────────────────────┘
                                                              ┌──────────────────────┐
                                                              │   Size of the Grant  │
                                                              └──────────────────────┘
   ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────┐
   │  Small   │   │  Medium  │   │  Large   │
   │ (under   │   │(£500,000~│   │(£1,000,000~│
   │ £500,000)│   │£999,999) │   │£7,000,000)│
   │6 projects│   │4 projects│   │15 projects│
   └──────────┘   └──────────┘   └──────────┘
                                                              ┌──────────────────────┐
                                                              │    Stages with       │
                                                              │ Community Involvement│
                                                              └──────────────────────┘
   ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────┐
   │  A few   │   │ Moderate │   │   Many   │
   │(1 ~ 4    │   │(5 ~ 7    │   │(8 ~ 11   │
   │ stages)  │   │ stages)  │   │ stages)  │
   │4 projects│   │7 projects│   │14 projects│
   └──────────┘   └──────────┘   └──────────┘
                                                              ┌──────────────────────┐
                                                              │  Regions/Countries   │
                                                              └──────────────────────┘
┌─────────┐ ┌─────────┐ ┌─────────┐ ┌─────────┐
│Northern │ │  Wales  │ │Scotland │ │ England │
│Ireland  │ │         │ │         │ │         │
│0 projects│ │1 projects│ │2 projects│ │22 projects│
└─────────┘ └─────────┘ └─────────┘ └─────────┘
                                                              ┌──────────────────────┐
                                                              │    Willingness of    │
                                                              │Participating in Follow-up│
                                                              │       Study          │
                                                              └──────────────────────┘
   ┌──────────┐   ┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────┐
   │    No    │   │ Did not answer│   │   Yes    │
   │5 projects│   │  2 projects  │   │15 projects│
   └──────────┘   └──────────────┘   └──────────┘
                                                              ┌──────────────────────┐
                                                              │ Decision on the Final List│
                                                              │   of Case-study      │
                                                              │ Restoration Projects │
                                                              │  7 projects selected │
                                                              └──────────────────────┘
```

located would also be taken into consideration in order to obtain as wide a geographical spread as possible. However, it was decided that projects not in England would be abandoned at this stage in view of available time and resources for the research. Finally, the respondents of the postal survey were asked to indicate at the end of the questionnaire if they would like the project to be selected for in-depth study. The respondent's willingness was therefore the last

criterion in deciding whether the project could be selected or not.

Dr. Stewart Harding was subsequently consulted about the selection of case-study projects at a seminar of the Urban Parks Forum in York in March 1999 and two projects were suggested as worthy of follow-up study. Together with the criteria describing above, five projects were selected for in-depth case studies. The original list included: Ward Jackson Park in Hartlepool (large grant, many stages with community involvement), Well Hall Pleasaunce in London Borough of Greenwich (large grant, moderate stages with community involvement), Lister Park in Bradford (large grant, a few stages with community involvement), Hammond's Pond in Carlisle (medium grant, many stages with community involvement), and Clarence Park in St Albans (small grant, a few stages with community involvement).

When contacts were made with those respondents for the selected projects to confirm their willingness of being involved in the follow-up case study, a negative answer was eventually obtained from the officer who was in charge of the Well Hall Pleasaunce project. This officer was in fact a successor of the one who filled out the questionnaire and, although initially expressing interest in participating in the research, had to turn down the researcher because her line manager did not approve of the idea. Therefore, another project which was also located in the Greater London Area had to be selected as an alternate. New River Loop in London Borough of Enfiled was first approached. But because the officer filling in the questionnaire was in maternity leave and the officer who replaced her expressed no interest for the project to be selected for case study, the attempt failed. Manor House Gardens in the London Borough of Lewisham was the last project located in the Greater London Area left in the list available for selection. The officer in charge of the project was happy to be involved with the research after initial contact wase made. Thus, the Well Hall Pleasaunce project was finally replaced by the Manor House Gardens project (medium grant, many stages with community involvement).

Sheffield Botanical Gardens and Norfolk Heritage Park, both in Sheffield, were initially excluded from being selected as case-study projects because there were already two projects (Ward Jackson Park and Lister Park) in the Yorkshire and Humberside region. The former two projects were eventually included in the follow-up case studies not only because of the convenience of their location, but also because of two other main reasons. First, the restoration project of the Sheffield Botanical Gardens was selected because this project was awarded the largest grant in the first announcement of the UPP. It would be worth looking at how the partnership operated and how local communities were involved in such a large-scale project. Second, the Norfolk Heritage Park project was chosen so as to provide an opportunity to compare this project with the Sheffield Botanical Gardens project. On the one hand these two projects were similar in terms of grant size and the number of stages with community

involvement, and on the other hand they were located in two rather different areas of Sheffield. Therefore, the case studies of the two projects may be able to provide some insight into the involvement of local communities with different characteristics (e.g. social-economic status).

5.6 Phase II: in-depth case studies

5.6.1 Introduction

Instead of being a data-collecting technique in itself, case study investigations are more a research approach or strategy which incorporates a range of data-colleting techniques such as life histories, documentation, interviews and participatory observations (Yin, 1994; Berg, 1995). Both Bell (1993) and Blaxter *et al.* (1996) consider that the case study approach is preferably appropriate for small-scale researchers as it offers an opportunity for one aspect of an issue to be examined in some depth within a limited time frame.

As Berg (1995) points out, the information gathered in a case study is characterised by being "extremely rich, detailed, and in-depth". Apart from drawing on the view of Feagin *et al.* (1991, in Tellis, 1997b) to regard case study research as an ideal methodology for undertaking holistic, in-depth investigations, Tellis (1997b) argues that, by using multiple sources of data, case studies are intended for eliciting the details from the viewpoints of the participants. Using the type of research questions, the extent of control over behavioural events, and the degree of focus on contemporary events to distinguish among five major social research strategies, including experiments, surveys, archival analysis, histories and case studies, Yin (1994) suggests that case studies are the preferred strategy when 'how' and 'why' questions are posed about a set of contemporary events within real-life context over which the investigator has only little or no control.

Case studies can be employed for various purposes. Yin (1994) suggests that there are at least five applications:

- to explain complex casual relationships in real-life interventions;
- to describe an intervention and the real-life context in which the intervention occurred;
- to describe certain topics within an evaluation of an intervention;
- to explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes; and
- to evaluate an evaluation study.

The current research involves all but the last application of the case study approach. The community involvement process is the intervention to be studied and the restoration project can be regarded as the real-life context in which the intervention occurred.

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Many writers (for example, Bryman, 1988; Yin, 1994; Berg, 1995; and Tellis, 1997b) have noted that the most frequent concern about case study research is the issue of generalisation. Case studies, especially with single-case designs, are often queried about the extent to which the results of such research can be generalised. Nevertheless, Bell (1993) draws on the view of Bassey (1981, in Bell, 1993), arguing that the relatability of a case study is a more important criterion for judging the merit of case study research than its generalisability. By relatability, this means the extent to which the details given in a case study are sufficient and appropriate for other researchers working in similar situations to relate their decision making to that described in the study (Ibid.). Yin (1994) distinguishes the difference between analytic generalisation (i.e. to expand and generalise theories) and statistical generalisation (i.e. to enumerate frequencies), indicating that case studies are generalisable to theoretical propositions rather than to populations or universe.

5.6.2 Design of the case study

Case study research may focus on just one individual case or it may involve a number of cases. The latter situation is known as a multiple-case design (Yin, 1994; Tellis, 1997a). As Miles and Huberman (1994) note, a multiple-case design has a number of advantages, including allowing the researcher to understand the processes and outcomes of cases in more depth, providing the researcher with the opportunity to develop as well as test hypotheses, and enabling the researcher to have a good picture of locally grounded casual relationship. In addition, Bryman (1988) suggests that the study of more than one case helps to solve the problem about generalisation in case study research. Therefore, the second phase of the present research has adopted a multiple-case design and, as discussed earlier, seven UPP grant-aided park restoration projects were selected as the cases to be studied.

The design and conduction of the seven case studies was based primarily on the methodology devised by Yin (1994). The first step involved the development of a case study protocol, which usually consists of four main tasks: an overview of the case study project, field procedures, case study questions and a guide for the case study report. Yin (1994) suggests that the case study protocol is of particular importance to a multiple-case study, as the rules and procedures developed in the protocol could enhance the reliability of case study research. The overview of the case study project included the examination of the research background, objectives and case study issues, and relevant reading about the topic being investigated. The field procedures involved obtaining access to data sources, identifying general resources available for fieldwork, a clear schedule of data collection activities, and procedural reminders. Apart form specifying the case study questions, the possible sources of information for answering each question were also identified wherever possible. Finally, outlines for individual-case reports

and the cross-case analysis were set out in the guide for the case study report.

The second step related to the conduction of the case study, involving mainly the preparation for data collection and the actual execution of data-collecting work. The third step was the analysis of the case study evidence. These two parts are discussed later in greater detail in accordance with each of the data-collecting techniques employed in the case studies (see Sections 5.7 to 5.10). Before that, it is worth noting two general issues relating to data collection in case studies. First, Yin (1994) suggests that case study inquiry should rely on multiple sources of evidence and identifies six primary sources, including documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observation, participant observation and physical artefacts. Since each source of evidence has it strengths and weaknesses, using a mixture of different sources which are complementary may help to enhance the validity and reliability of the study (Tellis, 1997b). Second, as Yin (1994) stresses explicitly, the case study strategy should not be confused with 'qualitative research' and a case study can include any mix of quantitative and qualitative evidence or be limited to only one type of evidence. Stake (1994) likewise notes that some case studies are dominant with qualitative inquiry while some are not.

As illustrated in Figure 5.3.1, there were three data-collecting techniques employed in the case studies for the current research. They fell into only one sources of evidence according to Yin's (1994) classification: interviews. Yin (1994) indicates that interviews may take several forms, including those of open-ended nature, focused, and those with more structured questions. The last category is similar to formal surveys, and, as Yin (1994) suggests, a survey can be included as part of a case study. In addition, as focus groups are basically a form of group interviews (Morgan, 1988; Fontana and Frey, 1994), the information gathered by this technique is thus regarded as the same source of evidence as interviews. As summaried in Table 5.3.1, the semi-structured interviews and focus groups generate primarily qualitative data and the on-site park user surveys generated mainly quantitative data.

5.7 The semi-structured interviews

5.7.1 Introduction

As a data-collecting technique, the interview is regarded as one of the most important sources of evidence for case study research (Yin, 1994). Jones (1996) defines the research-oriented interview as a social interaction between the interviewer who initiates and controls in varying degrees the exchange with the person being interviewed (i.e. the respondent) for the purpose of obtaining information relating to predetermined objectives. As Berg (1995) has noted, the interview is a particularly effective data-collecting technique for researchers who are interested in understanding the perception of participants or learning how participants come to associate certain meanings to events or phenomena.

While it is commonly recognised that there are many variations on the form of interview, the terms that have been used to describe the various types of interview are rather diverse. For instance, Nachmias & Nachmias (1981) suggest three forms of personal interview: the schedule-structured interview, the nonschedule-structured interview and the non-scheduled interview. Furthermore, Berg (1995) sums up some literature on social research methodology and identifies three major categories of interviews, namely the standardised (formal or structured) interview, the unstandardised (informal or non-directive) interview, and the semistandardised (guided, semi-structured or focused) interview.

Although the terminology for the types of interviews are tremendously diversified, there seems to be more consensus on the underlying criteria using to differentiate one form of interview from the other. All the various types of interviews can basically be arranged on 'a continuum of formality' (Grebenik and Moser, 1962 in Bell, 1993) or 'a structural continuum' (Jones, 1996). At one end of this continuum is the very informal, unstructured interview and at the other end is the completely formalised, highly structured interview. As Bell (1993) points out, most research-oriented interviews fall somewhere between the two extremes. The advantage of an interview that is with some degree of structure, i.e. a guided, focused or semi-structured interview, is that there is not only the freedom to allow the respondent to talk about things that are most significant to him/her, but also some loose structure to ensure all topics which are regarded as central to the study are included (Bell, 1993).

In addition to the degree of structure, whether the interview is conducted face to face or over the telephone and how many interviewers and respondents are involved in the process of interviewing are also commonly used to distinguish different forms of interviews (e.g. Fatana and Fery, 1994; Blaxter et al., 1996).

The interviews carried out in this study were face-to-face, semi-structured. Each involved only the researcher, as the interviewer, and one respondent. The aim of the interview was to seek the key participant's viewpoints on the partnership and community involvement process in the restoration of a specific historic urban park.

5.7.2 Selection of respondents for interviewing

For each of the case-study restoration projects, the local authority officer who filled out the postal questionnaire for the first stage of the research, referred to as the project manager in this study, was naturally identified as the respondent to be interviewed. Regardless of the various differences among the UPP grant-aided restoration projects, project managers are undoubtedly one of the most important participants in developing and implementing the restoration scheme. They usually had the overall responsibility of overseeing the progress of the restoration project

and thus were supposed to have the most comprehensive knowledge about the project.

The project manager was considered as the key informant for each case-study project. As Yin (1994) points out, an informant is a respondent who not only gives the facts of a matter and opinions about events but also offers their own insights into certain occurrences. He indicates further that key informants are critical to the success of a case study, as such respondents can often suggest and initiate the access to corroboratory sources of evidence. Therefore, the identification of other key participants relating to the partnership and community involvement process in each case-study restoration project was undertaken through communication with the project manager. For projects where there were friends groups, the project manager was asked to provide the researcher with the contact information of the chairperson or other executive members of the friends group, who should be very familiar with the involvement of the group in the regeneration process of the case-study park. In addition, each project manager was also asked to suggest one or two key participants who were engaged to a considerable extent with the process of involving local communities in regenerating the case-study park.

All together, there were nineteen respondents interviewed for the seven case-study restoration projects. A breakdown list and codes of the interviewees for each project are presented in Appendix C-2. Every respondent was given a code which would be used in the analysis of the information gathered and in the writing of the case-study results later in the thesis.

5.7.3 The interview schedule

The data-collecting instrument used in an interview is known as an interview schedule (Dixon and Leach, 1980; Bell, 1993; Berg, 1995) or interview guide (Bell, 1993; Jones, 1996). Depending on the form of the interview, the format of the interview schedule may vary significantly. For interviews of qualitative nature, the schedule could be as simple as a reminder of the topics and sub-topics which should be covered in the interview, or it could be as detailed as a list of specific questions (Jones, 1996).

With regards to semi-structured interviews, the interview schedule usually consists of a set or several sets of open-ended questions and relevant probes. Probes, or probing questions, are used by the interviewer to elicit more information from the respondent when it is felt that the respondent does not give a full, detailed response (Berg, 1995; Jones, 1996). Yin (1994) suggests that, for focused interviews which involve a respondent being interviewed for a short period of time (such as an hour or so), the set of open-ended questions should be derived from the case study protocol. Overall, the scheduled questions and probes can provide some structure for note-taking during the interview and help the researcher to record responses under pre-established headings and sub-headings (Bell, 1993).

Three versions of interview schedules were developed in accordance with the three categories of interviewees. Copies of the three interview schedules are provided in Appendices C-3 to C-5. For **project managers**, the major interview issues were:

- the development of the restoration project in general;
- the relationship between the project manager and other partners in the restoration partnership;
- the method employed to involve local communities in the restoration process of the case-study park;
- the problems/difficulties encountered in terms of community involvement;
- the skills required by project managers to conduct effective community involvement exercises;
- the involvement of local communities in the long-term management of the park once it has been restored; and
- the project manager's attitudes towards community involvement in the restoration of historic urban parks.

For the **chairpersons or executive members of the 'Friends of Parks' groups**, the key issues for the interview include:

- the specific involvement of the friends group in the restoration process of the case-study park;
- the representativeness of the friends group to the wider community;
- the problems/difficulties encountered during the group's involvement in the restoration process of the case-study park;
- the skills required by executive members of the friends group to ensure that the group's involvement would be effective;
- the involvement of the friends group in the long-term management of the case-study park once it has been restored; and
- the interviewee's attitudes towards community involvement in the restoration of historic urban parks.

For the interview with **other significant participants**, the interview schedule focused on the following issues:

- the specific involvement of the interviewee in the case-study restoration project;
- the benefits and problems of involving local communities in the restoration process of the case-study park;
- the skills required by the project managers, friends groups and others engaged in the process of involving local communities in park regeneration to ensure effective community involvement;

- the involvement of local communities in the long-term management of restored historic urban parks; and

- the interviewee's attitudes towards community involvement in the restoration of historic urban parks.

5.7.4 Preparation and conduction of the interview

Initial contacts via telephone with selected case-study project managers were made at the later stage of case selection (see Section 5.5) to confirm that they still agreed to the project being chosen for in-depth case study and that they would like to be engaged further in the study. The seven case studies were commenced at different time, with the first one being initiated in early May and the last one starting at the beginning of August. Each case study was carried out following the procedures described below.

The formal contacts for arranging the interview began with a letter dispatched to the project manager, stating the necessity of an interview with him/her and outlining the major issues that would be discussed in the interview. A request for information relevant to the restoration project, such as contact information for the chairperson of the friends group and other significant participants if there were any, the restoration plan submitting to the HLF, any publications relating to the involvement of local communities in the restoration process, etc. was also made in this first letter.

Telephone calls, ranging from one to nine in numbers for different case studies, were consequently made to the project manager a few days after the first letter was sent out in order to arrange the time and venue for the interview. Three or four days ahead of the interview, a letter was posted or faxed to the project manager, to remind him/her about the time and place of the interview along with a list of the major issues to be discussed. The interviews with project managers for the seven case-study projects were conducted between 17 May (for the first case study) and 2 September 1999 (for the last case study). All but one of these interviews took place at the interviewee's offices. The other one was carried out in the café within the case-study park. Overall, the eight interviews took between an hour to 100 minutes to complete.

For the interviews with the chairpersons of the case-study friends groups, similar procedures described above were followed. However, because these respondents did not fill out the postal questionnaire before and therefore were not familiar with the research project, a brief introduction of the study and short explanation about the selection of the restoration project as a case study and the reasons for involving the friends group in the case study were included in the first letter to the chairperson or secretary of the selected friends group. Enclosed along with

the letter was a reply note and a stamped addressed envelope, asking the respondent to indicate their willingness to be engaged with the research and to specify three most convenient dates and time for an interview and the most convenient time to telephone them.

Subsequent to the return of the reply note, the time and place for the interview was arranged via telephone contacts, and the reminder letter and interview agenda were mailed to the interviewee a few days prior to the interview. Five chairpersons and a secretary of the case-study friends groups were interviewed between 14 July (for the first case study) and 7 October 1999. The shortest interview took around an hour to complete and the longest approximately two hours. Four of the six interviews took place at the interviewees' homes, one at the interviewee's office and the other one at a building within the case-study park.

With regards to the interviews with other significant participants, the initial contacts with the respondents were made via the telephone. After a brief introduction to the research project and the researcher's intention, the respondent was asked for their willingness to be interviewed and, if they agreed, the time and venue for the interview was subsequently arranged. Similarly, a eminder letter along with the interview agenda were sent to the interviewee three or four days in advance of the interview. Five interviews with other significant participants took place between 13 August and 10 November 1999. On average, the interviews took around 50 minutes to complete. One interview was carried out in a café nearby the interviewee's office and the other four interviews were conducted at the interviewees' workplace.

All the interviews were conducted following the questions listing in the interview schedule. Nevertheless, minor variations in the wording and order of the questions sometimes occurred according to the characteristics of the interviewees and whether the issues were relevant or not.

Although tape-recording the interview may have some disadvantages, including making the respondent anxious and less likely to reveal confidential information, and taking longer to transcribe and analyse the tape (Blaxter et al., 1996), it was decided eventually that a tape recorder would be used for the follwing two reasons. First, if note-taking is used as the method to record the interview, it would inevitably slow down the process of interviewing and consequently prolong the time required for the interview, causing an unnecessary burden on both the interviewee and the investigator. Second, it is less likely to obtain a complete verbatim record of the whole interview by note-taking, in particular when English is not the researcher's first language. Thus, tape-recording the interview would not only allow the researcher to concentrate on asking questions, listening to the responses and probing for more information, but would also generate a record of the interview word for word.

Before the commencement of each interview, the interviewee was asked for their permission for the interview to be tape-recorded, with an assurance that the information revealed would be kept strictly confidential and only used for academic purposes. In addition, interviewees were reassured that their names would not be mentioned in any way. No interviewee disagreed to the use of the tape recorder. The first few interviews were tape-recorded using a Sansui AM/FM Stereo Cassette Recorder HS 700 and one of them was failed. After that, all other interviews were recorded using a professional Sony WM-D6C Stereo Cassette Recorder, including a second interview to replace the one that was not recorded successfully.

5.7.5 Data analysis

Using a Sanyo TRC-8080 Compact Cassette Transcribing System, the transcription of the 20 interviews was undertaken between November 1999 and the beginning of March 2000. Depending on the length of the interview, which took between 50 minutes to two hours, the time needed to transcribe each tape varied, ranging from around ten hours to approximately 25 hours. At this stage, each interview, as Berg (1995) described, was "ready for a thorough reading and annotating of codable topics, themes, and issues" (p. 92).

Berg (1995) suggests that the data collected from the in-depth interviews should first be organised in some ordered format through the development of a systematic filing system. This would help to order the data and create access to various aspects of the data easily, flexibly and efficiently (Ibid.). For the current study, the interview data were initially organised based on the framework established by the interview schedule. Major thematic topics were then set up by referring back to the conceptual framework of the research and the research questions (see Section 5.1). These themes formed the basic filing system of the data. The interview transcripts were subsequently examined thoroughly and subdivided into meaningful segments which were then filed under relevant themes. This work was carried out manually. It was anticipated that sub-themes would likely to emerge during this filing process. Finally, patterns, including similarities and dissimilarities, within and between those segments in each theme and sub-theme were sought out, and conclusions were subsequently drawn.

5.8 The focus groups

5.8.1 Introduction

Focus groups are nowadays widely adopted in marketing research as a major data-collecting technique (Krueger, 1988; Frey and Fontana, 1993; Bold, 2000) and have increasingly become popular among other areas of social research for their capacity in gathering qualitative data (Krueger, 1988; Knodel, 1993). Krueger (1988) defines a focus group as "a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive,

nonthreatening environment" (p.20) and suggests that the use of focus groups is particularly appropriate when the objective is to explain how people regard an experience, idea or event.

The interaction among the participants of a focus group is one of the most important features of this data-collecting technique. Discussions may be stimulated by group members responding to each other's comments, and this kind of group dynamism can have synergetic effects on the amount of ideas and insights generated (Berg, 1995). A focus group is typically composed of a small number of participants (Berg, 1995); however, the size of the group is diversely recommended by different writers as six to ten (Morgan, 1988), seven to ten (Krueger, 1988), or eight to ten (Frey and Fontana, 1993). The commonly accepted broadest range of the group size is four to twelve (Krueger, 1988; Morgan, 1988; Bold, 2000). As Krueger (1988) points out, a small number of participants would have more opportunity to share their insights, but, on the other hand, more participants can bring about a larger pool of total ideas.

In this research, focus groups were employed to explore why some people would like to become involved with 'Friends of Parks' groups and how these people regarded the involvement of their groups in the restoration process of their local parks.

5.8.2 Recruiting strategy

In recruiting participants for a focus group, two principles are generally suggested: zero-history groups, i.e. people who are complete strangers to each other; and homogeneous groups, i.e. people who share some common characteristics (Krueger, 1988; Bold, 2000). Nevertheless, as Morgan and Krueger (1993) have noted, the first rule is extremely difficult to conform to when focus groups are conducted in organisations, communities and other ongoing social settings. This is certainly the case in this study, as the focus groups were carried out with general member of the case-study friends groups. Generally speaking, the smaller the friends group is, the more likely members of the group are to be familiar with each other.

On the contrary, the homogeneity of focus group participants is much easier to achieve. Groups are defined by particular characteristics which should be specified according to the objectives of the focus group. Bold (2000) indicates that the more similar participants are in terms of the specified characteristics, the more group interaction can be anticipated. Members of a friends group can be regarded as homogeneous in terms of their willingness to voluntarily become involved with the group.

Krueger (1988) suggests a number of most commonly adopted strategies for recruiting participants for a focus group, including the use of existing lists, contacts with existing groups,

referrals from current participants and random telephone screening. For the present study, the strategy of contacting existing groups was employed given the time and resources available to the researcher. Among the seven case-study parks, five have formally constituted friends groups. The organisation of focus groups with general members of each of these five friends groups was accomplished largely through the assistance of the friends-group chairperson who was interviewed earlier.

Overall, three different ways of recruiting focus group participants can be observed. First, for the focus group with the Friends of Sheffield Botanical Gardens (FOBS), a number of the group's members who represented a good cross section were asked by the chairperson to attend the session. Second, with the Friends of Hammond's Pond (FOHP) and the Manor House Gardens User Group (MHGUG), the researcher's intention of conducting a focus group was made known to members of the friends group in one of their regular meetings and volunteers for participating in the focus group session were required. Third, with the Friends of Norfolk Heritage Park (FONHP) and the Friends of Ward Jackson Park (FOWJP), the researcher was asked to attend one of the friends group's regular meeting and the focus group was conducted after the meeting finished, with members who were willing to stay and join the discussion. Three of the five focus groups (FOHP, MHGUG and FONHP) each had four participants. The sessions with FOBS and FOWJP were participated in by six and eleven members of the two groups respectively. Appendix C-6 lists the date each focus group session was undertaken and the codes assigned to participants for data analysis and results reporting.

5.8.3 The questioning route

The questioning route is the instrument used by the moderator, the equivalent of an interviewer in a one-on-one, face-to-face interview, to guide the discussion of a focus group session (Krueger, 1988). As Krueger (1988) notes, a questioning route is usually composed of less than ten pre-established, open-ended questions that are arranged in a natural and logical sequence. A healthy warning is asserted by Knodel (1993), who indicates that if too many questions are included, there may not be sufficient time to cover all the issues before the participants become fatigued.

A copy of the questioning route developed for the current study can be found in Appendix C-7. The major topics discussed in each focus group session include:

- the participant's personal involvement in the restoration project of the case-study park;
- the role of the friends group in the regeneration process of the park;
- any difficulty/problem the participant encountered during his/her involvement with the park's restoration process;
- any skills learned during the participant's involvement;

■ the friends group's involvement in the long term management of the case-study park
after it has been restored.

5.8.4 Preparation and conduction of the focus group

The feasibility of conducting a focus group with members of each of the five formally
constituted case-study friends groups was initially evaluated through a discussion with the
chairperson of the group when they were interviewed. With the approval of the chairperson,
assistance in arranging the time and venue for the focus group session was subsequently
requested. Four of the focus groups were conducted between late July and mid-September in
1999, and the last session in early February of 2000. All the focus groups took place at the
friends groups' usual meeting places and on average took around 50 minutes to complete.

A list of the major issues to be discussed in the focus group session and a short questionnaire
were handed to each participant before the session began. The questionnaire was designed to
acquire some background information about the participant, including gender, age, the
distance from the participant's home to the case-study park and employment status. Each
participant was asked to fill out the questionnaire while waiting for others to arrive and return
it to the researcher at the end of the session before leaving the venue.

All the focus groups were tape-recorded based on the same considerations discussed in
Section 5.7.4. Permission for tape-recording was sought and assurance of confidentiality was
given at the beginning of each session. The equipment used to record these focus groups was a
Sony WM-D6C Stereo Cassette Recorder.

5.8.5 Data analysis

The transcription of the five focus group sessions was carried out between late November
1999 and early March 2000, using a Sanyo TRC-8080 Compact Cassette Transcribing System.
On average, the transcription of each tape took around fifteen hours. The data gathered from
the five sessions were analysed in the same way as that used to analyse the data collected by
the twenty semi-structured interviews, described in Section 5.7.5. Briefly speaking, the
transcripts were carefully examined and meaningful segments of the data were systematically
organised into themes and sub-themes, following by the search for patterns and the drawing of
conclusions.

5.9 The on-site park user surveys
5.9.1 Introduction

Some general notions about survey research have already been discussed in Section 5.4.1. This

section focuses on the use of interviewer-based, on-site surveys of park users. For this type of survey, highly structured questionnaires are often adopted as the major data-collecting instrument and administered via face-to-face interviews, with the respondents' answers being recorded and coded by the interviewer on the questionnaire as the interview proceeds. In comparison with postal surveys, interviewer-based surveys have the following major advantages: a higher response rate, greater control over the way the questionnaire is answered (e.g. in appropriate sequence, by the target respondent, etc.), and more accurate information (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1981; Miller, 1991). The last strength is generated primarily by the interviewer being able to explain the questions to the respondent and clarify any misunderstanding (Miller, 1991; De Vaus, 2002). However, interviewer-based surveys may involve higher costs than other forms of surveys, resulting mainly from the need to select, train and supervise interviewers and other expenses relating to carry out the surveys such as travel costs.

On-site surveys have increasingly been adopted as a major means to elicit information about park users and uses. The extensive surveys undertaken for the *Park Life* study (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995) and the surveys conducted by the Centre for Leisure and Tourism Studies at the University of North London for the Royal Parks Agency are just some of the most well-known examples. In addition, many local authorities have been encouraged to carry out user surveys to their urban parks in order to bid for the HLF's UPP or to compete for the Green Flag Park Awards (Dunnett *et al.*, 2002). With Best Value taking effect from April 2000, it can be anticipated that surveys of park users are likely to become one of the key ingredients of local authorities' Best Value Reviews toward their park services, as local authorities are expected to quantify the links between the services provided and the needs and aspirations of users as well as non-users, and to base the review on a thorough knowledge of users and non-users' needs and expectations (Porter, 2001).

The main purpose of undertaking on-site park user surveys in the current research was to look at general park users' participation in the regeneration process of their local parks and their attitudes towards community involvement in park restoration. While information about park users and uses of the seven case-study sites were also collected, this was used primarily to explore the impact of various demographic characteristics and park usage variables on park users' attitudes towards the involvement of local communities in the restoration of historic urban parks.

5.9.2 Survey design

5.9.2.1 Sampling procedure

As several researchers (e.g. Jones, 1996; Trochim, 2001b; De Vaus, 2002) have suggested, the

proper procedures for identifying a sample for a survey are as follows: defining firstly the population of interest; followed by the construction of a sampling frame, i.e. a list of all the elements in the population; and finally drawing a sample from the list by adopting one of the many sampling strategies available for use. Torchim (2001b) noted further the necessity to distinguish between the theoretical population and the accessible population. The former is the population the researcher may wish to generalise to; while the latter refers to the population that is accessible to the researcher and it is from this that the sampling frame should be developed.

For the present study, the theoretical population of interest was all users of historic urban parks and the accessible population was confined to users of the seven case-study parks. With regards to the establishment of a sampling frame from this target population, it appeared to be not possible to draw a list of all the individuals visiting these parks. In this kind of circumstances where sampling frames are not available, Blaxter et al. (1996) and De Vaus (2002) both suggest the use of nonprobability sampling strategies to draw a sample. Inevitably, nonprobability samples easily come under the criticism of being less representative of the population, because, unlike probability sampling, there is no equal or a known chance of each element in the population to be selected (Taylor-Powell, 1998).

At the piloting stage of the survey (discussed later), convenience sampling, one of the most common nonprobability sampling strategies, was initially adopted to select survey respondents. In other words, the researcher randomly approached those park users who seemed to be free at that time. This sampling procedure was subsequently modified after consulting a statistic expert at the Corporate Information and Computing Services in the University of Sheffield. The expert suggested the researcher to select one visitor every ten or fifteen minutes who passed a specified survey point. The new sampling strategy helped to draw more meaningful samples, as it did not rely completely on the interviewer's subjective judgement on who would be willing to answer the questionnaire. Rather, this way of sampling allowed every user a more equal chance to be surveyed, even if they just took a through route across the park, and thus increased the representativeness of the sample. A survey point was either a main entrance or nodal point of the park being surveyed. For sites with less than three main entrances, the researcher would conduct the survey for an hour at each location in rotation, with one respondent selected every fifteen minutes. For those sites with three or more main entrances, attempts were made to identify one or two nodal points where most users would pass through and sampling would take place at these locations. In the situation of refusal, the next visitor passing the survey point would be selected for interviewing.

5.9.2.2 Sample size

The determination of an appropriate sample size for a survey is influenced by many factors. Technically, the sample size is decided by three criteria, namely the accepted sampling error, the required confidence level for generalisation, and the degree of variability in the population regarding the key variables of interest (Israel, 1992; De Vaus, 2002). In addition, the purpose of the study, the type of statistical analysis planned to perform, the need to ensure sufficient numbers for meaningful subgroup analysis, the cost needed and the time available to complete the survey are also important factors which need to be considered in determining the size of the survey sample (Israel, 1992).

With regards to the three criteria, some literature on survey sampling (e.g. Israel, 1992; Taylor-Powell, 1998; De Vaus, 2002) has suggested the use of published tables which provide the required sample size for a given combination of the three criteria. For instance, with a population size larger than 100,000 and based on an assumption of a heterogeneous population (i.e. a 50/50 variation on the key study variables), a sample of 400 cases is required for a sampling error of ±5% at 95% confidence level. When the sampling error increases to 10%, the sample size reduces to 100 cases.

Having taken into account the above factors and following consultation with the statistical expert mentioned earlier, it was decided that the minimum sample size for this study was 400 responses. Initially, five parks were selected for case studies; thus 80 responses were required for each site. Consequently, with the inclusion of another two parks in the case studies and in consideration of the time and resources available for the research, the number of responses needed for each case-study site was decreased to 60, which would still bring the total sample size to the required 400.

5.9.3 The questionnaire

Designed primarily to elicit information on general park users' involvement in the regeneration process of their local parks and their attitudes towards community involvement in park restoration, the questionnaire, presented in Appendix C-8, was organised into three sections. The first section investigated the respondent's demographic characteristics, including gender, age, ethnicity, employment status and the distance from the respondent's home to the park. The second section contained questions relating to the respondent's use of the park, including frequency of use, means of travel, favourite aspects of the park, and the activities they most likely to do when visiting the park.

As the focus of the questionnaire, the third section included questions regarding the respondent's awareness of the restoration project, their current experience of participating in

any community involvement exercise relating to the regeneration of the park, and their intention of becoming involved with the development of the restoration project in the future. Most importantly, this section included a multiple-item attitude scale, which was designed to measure park users' attitudes towards community involvement in the restoration of historic urban parks. The development of the attitude scale is discussed separately in the following section. The questions regarding the respondent's overall willingness to be involved with the park's restoration process and the reasons for not wanting to become involved were added in to the last section in the revised version of the questionnaire as a result of piloting.

The questionnaire was piloted in Sheffield Botanical Gardens, with 50 respondents being interviewed. An initial analysis of the 50 questionnaires showed that most of those surveyed seemed to have little interest in becoming involved with the restoration of the site. Therefore, it was decided that a question to directly ask the respondent about their willingness to become involved in the regeneration process of their local park should be included in the questionnaire, along with a question to identify why people did not want to be involved.

All the questions in the questionnaire except the last one were in closed format. This helped to shorten the time required to complete the questionnaire and lessen the effort needed to code the data gathered. The alternative responses of questions in the first two sections were developed based primarily on the questionnaire developed by the Department of Landscape at the University of Sheffield for the user surveys carried out in Sheffield Botanical Gardens as part of the bid for the UPP funding. As for questions in the third section, the alternative responses were established based on the literature review discussed in Chapter Four. To reduce the possible bias, caused mostly by the range of alternative responses provided being insufficient, the category of 'other (please specify)' was included in a number of questions where necessary. The only open-ended question included in the questionnaire was the final question which asked for the respondents' general comments about the restoration project and the involvement of local communities in regenerating historic urban park.

5.9.4 The attitude scale

As Bryman and Crammer (2001) point out, multiple-item measures, such as Likert scales, are commonly adopted by social researchers when questionnaires are employed to measure concepts. By using more than one indicator to measure a concept, it helps to tap the complexity of the concept being studied, develop more valid and reliable measures, enable greater precision, and simplify the analysis of the measurement (De Vaus, 2002).

The attitude scale included in this questionnaire (see Appendix C-8) was developed to assess general park users' attitudes towards community involvement in the restoration process of

historic urban parks. It was composed of ten statements generated from the literature review discussed in Chapter Four. A statement in a scale is often referred to as an item (e.g. Bryman and Cramer, 2001; Trochim, 2001a; De Vaus, 2002). The respondent was asked to rate the degree of disagreement or agreement to every item on a 1-to-5 Likert-type scale. Each respondent's responses to the ten scale items were then converted into scores based on the following rules. For positively worded statements (i.e. Items 1,2, 4, 6, 7, 9, & 10), strongly disagree would score for 1, disagree for 2, neither for 3, agree for 4, and strongly agree for 5. As for negatively worded statements (i.e. Items 3, 5, & 8), the response value would need to be reversed. Finally, individual scores for each item were added up to form each respondent's overall scale score, which was what would be used in follow-up analyses of the attitude scale.

5.9.5 Conduction of the surveys

The pilot survey was conducted in Sheffield Botanical Gardens in late May and early June 1999, with 50 questionnaires completed on three survey days. The questionnaire was administered by face-to-face interviewing and the respondents were selected by convenience sampling, with the researcher walking around the site and approaching visitors randomly. On average, it took around ten minutes to complete the questionnaire. Two major modifications, one to the sampling procedure of the survey and the other to the content of the questionnaire, both already discussed earlier, were made consequently.

The main surveys were carried out on one more day in Sheffield Botanical Gardens and either two or three days in each of the other case-study parks during the summer of 1999. The surveys were conducted at either the main entrances or nodal points within the surveyed site and a respondent was selected every fifteen minutes. A detailed record of the numbers of questionnaires completed and refusals on each survey day for each site is presented in Appendix C-9. In total, 509 questionnaires were completed and the overall response rate was 87%. The highest response rate for individual surveys was 94%, recorded in Ward Jackson Park, and the lowest figure was 78% for Manor House Gardens.

The most common reasons given for refusal to the survey were no time, not interested in the survey, first time visit and inadequate ability in English (see Appendix C-10). The first and last reasons were also identified by Curson et al. (1995) as the major reasons for refusal in their surveys to Royal Parks visitors.

5.9.6 Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for Windows Release 10.7 was employed to analyse the survey data. Except the open-ended question, all the questions included in the questionnaire, referred to as variables in the following discussion, can be

classified into three categories according to the level of measurement: nominal, ordinal and interval variables. A detailed list of variables in each category and the type of statistical analysis to be performed can be found in Appendix C-11.

The nominal and ordinal variables were analysed using frequency distributions. A number of variables were recoded to reduce the number of categories in the variable before they were analysed. The results of the analyses were presented in two ways. For each of those variables with no more than six categories (e.g. age and employment status), a bar chart which had the percentage of each category labelled was employed to examine the way in which the cases were distributed across the categories of the variable and to illustrate the patterns in the data. For each of those variables with a larger number of categories (e.g. activities and favourite features), a table which listed the categories of the three highest frequencies was used to outline the most significant patterns presented in the data.

The individual items on the attitude scale were regarded as interval variables as they were scored with values from 1 to 5. In addition to frequency distributions, the mean and standard deviation of each variable were calculated to measure the central tendency and the variation of the variable respectively. The scores of the ten items for each respondent were added up to form a new variable, the overall scale score, which was also an interval variable. The following sub sections discuss briefly the statistical techniques that were used to analyse this variable, including mainly the examination of the reliability of the attitude scale and the comparisons of the mean scale scores.

5.9.6.1 Reliability test

Before any further analyses were performed, it was important to ensure that the attitude scale developed in this study was reliable and valid. The validity of a measurement device relates to the extent to which the device actually measures the concept it is designed to measure (Bryman and Cramer, 2001). There are several different types of validity and the approaches to assess them vary (Novak, 1997; Bryman and Cramer, 2001; De Vaus, 2002). As De Vaus (2002) has pointed out, there is no ideal way of determining the validity of a measure. Having consulted with the statistical expert mentioned in Section 5.9.2.1, it was found that the conduction of a validity test was very difficult in the case of this research, as no other device established in other research measuring the same concept was available to allow a comparison with the scale developed in this study. Therefore, only the face validity of the attitude scale could be established. This was achieved by the researcher subjectively considering the items on the scale fairly reflected the content of the concept being studied.

With regards to the reliability of a measurement device, which relates to the consistency of a

measure obtained on repeated occasions, the methods that can be used to assess it are more well-established than those for testing the validity (De Vaus, 2002). For a multiple-item scale, the internal reliability of the scale is of particular importance to the researcher, as it concerns whether the items making up the scale are measuring the same underlying concept (Bryman and Cramer, 2001). The two most commonly used methods for estimating the internal reliability of a multiple-item scale are the Cronbach's alpha coefficient and factor analysis.

The Cronbach's alpha coefficient is a statistic which ranges from 0 to 1; and the higher the value the more reliable is the scale (Bryman and Cramer, 2001; De Vaus, 2002). The minimum value for determining the scale to be reliable is diversely recommended by various writers as 0.6 (Novak, 1997), 0.7 (De Vaus, 2002), or 0.8 (Bryman and Cramer, 2001). The scale alpha can be increased by dropping unreliable items, which are identified through calculating what the alpha would be if a particular item was deleted. Those items which once dropped would make a substantial increase on the alpha are considered as unreliable items (De Vaus, 2002).

Regardless of its other applications, factor analysis can be used to assess the factorial validity of the items making up a scale by indicating the extent to which these items are measuring the same concept (Bryman and Cramer, 2001). If a factor analysis shows that a measure comprises a number of dimensions, this means that the internal reliability of the overall scale is low (ibid.). Before a factor analysis is carried out, a number of tests should be conducted to evaluate the appropriateness for proceeding with such an analysis. These include the correlation matrix, the Keiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) and the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Field, 2001b).

5.9.6.2 Comparisons of means

In order to understand whether users of different subgroups (e.g. age, gender, employment status, travelling distance, frequency of use and case-study site) differ in their attitudes towards community involvement in historic urban park restoration, a number of statistical techniques were employed to compare the mean scale scores of subgroups included in the variable being examined. The selection of which statistical analysis to use depended upon whether the variances of the independent variable (i.e. the variable used to form the comparison groups) and dependent variable (i.e. the mean scare score) were equal or not and the number of subgroups being compared.

The Lavene's test for equality of variances is a statistical test that can be used to determine if three or more unrelated samples have equal variances (Bryman and Cramer, 2001). If the significance level for Levene's test is above 0.05, it indicates that the variances are equal and, thus, it is appropriate to use a parametric test such as one-way ANOVA. On the other hand, if

the significance level for Levene's test is below 0.05, then the variances are unequal and a non-parametric test such as Kruskal-Wallis H test should be used instead (Ibid.). The Levene's test is also employed to decide which t value in a t-test output should be used. If the result of Levene's test is not significant ($p > 0.05$), the t value with equality of variance being assumed would be the right choice. If the result of Levene's test is significant ($p < 0.05$), then the t value with equality of variance not being assumed should be used.

Three statistical tests that can be used to compare the means of different groups were employed in this study. They are the independent samples t-test, one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Kruskal-Wallis H test. The first two are parametric tests and the last one a non-parametric test. For the variable which formed only two subgroups (e.g. gender), the independent samples t-test was used to compare the mean scale scores (Bryman and Cramer, 2001). In situations where the independent variable had more than two subgroups, one-way ANOVA, which is essentially an F test (Bryman and Cramer, 2001; De Vaus, 2002), was used to test the difference of the groups' means. The Kruskal-Wallis H test was also used to compare means of more than two groups (Bryman and Cramer, 2001).

The way to interpret the result of the above three tests is quite similar. If the significance level for the value of the test (i.e. t value for t-test, F-ratio for one-way ANOVA, and Chi-square for Kruskal-Wallis H test) is greater than 0.05, this means there is no significant difference in the means of the subgroups. If the significance level for the value of the test is less than 0.05, it indicates that the differences between the means of the subgroups are statistically significant (Bryman and Cramer, 2001; De Vaus, 2002).

Both one-way ANOVA and Kruskal-Wallis H test only determine whether there is a significant difference between three or more subgroups but cannot identify where the difference lies. In order to detect which particular subgroups have significantly different mean, a post hoc comparison would need to be performed. The Scheffé test, one of the many post hoc tests available for use in SPSS, was selected because the number of respondents in different subgroups were unequal (Bryman and Cramer, 2001).

PART THREE:

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Chapter Six
Research Results of the Postal Questionnaire Survey

This chapter presents the results of the postal questionnaire survey to 58 park restoration projects awarded grants by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) under the Urban Parks Programme (UPP) in 1997. It is organised into three sections in accordance with the structure of the questionnaire. The first section describes the distribution of investigated variables regarding some background information of the survey sample. The following section looks at how partnerships in park regeneration projects were formed by the combination of different funding partners, technical-support partners and the local organisations/friends groups. The final section focuses on who in the local community was involved, when and why the local community was involved, and the effectiveness of their involvement in the regeneration of historic urban parks.

6.1 The Background Information

An analysis of the distribution regarding the date of announcement, size of the grant, and country/region in which the park restoration projects awarded in 1997 UPP is shown in Table 6.1.1. Differences between the 58 restoration projects, described as 'the survey population' in this chapter, and the 35 returned questionnaires, referred to as 'the survey sample', are first discussed for two purposes: (1) to outline the context of this survey; and (2) to show how the survey sample differs from the survey population. This is then followed by a profile of the survey sample based on the analysis of background information of the 35 projects to include aspects such as the location and type of the site, the characteristics of surrounding communities, and linkage with other environmental strategies, etc.

6.1.1 The survey population (1997 UPP restoration projects) and the survey respondents

6.1.1.1 Date of Announcement

During 1997, three UPP announcements were made by the HLF with a total of 122 grants awarded: 48 on 15 May, 31 on 14 July and 43 on 2 December respectively. Among them, only 58 projects, of which 38 were in the first announcement, ten in the second announcement and another ten in the third announcement, were grant-aided for substantial restoration work.

About two thirds of the 35 projects in the survey sample were awarded their grants in the first announcement, while the remaining one third came from the second and third announcements

(Table 6.1.1). This distribution of two thirds and one third of the survey sample in the three announcements seems to reflect the distribution of the overall survey population.

Table 6.1.1 Comparisons between 1997 UPP restoration projects and survey projects

Variables	Categories	1997 UPP Restoration projects		Survey Projects	
		Frequency	*%*	*Frequency*	*%*
Date of grant announcement	*15 May 1997*	38	66	22	63
	14 July 1997	10	17	7	20
	2 December 1997	10	17	6	17
	Total	58	100	35	100
Grant size	*£1,000,000 - £7,000,000*	26	45	18	51
	£500,000 - £999,999	13	22	8	23
	Under £500,000	19	33	9	26
	Total	58	100	35	100
Region/ country	*East Midlands*	3	5	3	9
	Eastern	5	9	1	3
	Greater London	16	28	6	17
	Merseyside	0	0	0	0
	North East	1	2	1	3
	North West	6	10	4	11
	South East	5	9	2	6
	South West	3	5	3	9
	West Midlands	4	7	4	11
	Yorkshire and Humberside	6	10	6	17
	Northern Ireland	0	0	0	0
	Scotland	3	5	2	6
	Wales	6	10	3	9
	Total	58	100	35	100

6.1.1.2 Grant size

The amount of money allocated to each restoration project varied greatly from over £5 million pounds for the regeneration of Glasgow Green in Glasgow City and Sheffield Botanical Gardens in Sheffield to around £67,000 for Talbot Square in the London Borough of Westminster. Of the 58 restoration projects 26 were granted more than £1 million, which were categorised in this study as large grants, thirteen projects were awarded medium grants between £500,000 and £999,999 and nineteen projects obtained less than half a million pounds, which were classified as small grants. Of the survey sample eighteen fell into the large-grant group, eight into the medium-grant group and nine into the small-grant group (see Table 6.1.1).

6.1.1.3 Country/Region

1997 UPP grant-awarded historic urban parks, gardens and other public open spaces are found throughout the four countries of the United Kingdom. Sites in England are further divided into ten regions. The distribution of the grants according to country/region is shown in Table 6.1.1. Within the survey population, the Greater London area outscored all others with sixteen projects being awarded grants, followed by the North West, Yorkshire and Humberside, and Wales, each with six grant-aided projects. As for the survey sample, six of them were in the Greater London area and six in Yorkshire and Humberside region. There were four in the North West and West Midlands respectively.

6.1.2 The background information of survey respondents

6.1.2.1 Type of site

The HLF has adopted a broad definition of the term 'park' to include "urban parks, gardens and other urban open spaces e.g. town squares, town moor, seaside promenade gardens, memorial gardens, historic cemeteries" (HLF, 1996, p.1). In this survey, more than two thirds of the grant-aided sites were identified as historic parks (71%), although some of which were not actually named as parks. Gardens were identified as the second significant group, but consisted of less than one fifth (17%) of the surveyed sites (Table 6.1.2). The rest of the surveyed sample was made up of churchyards, a cemetery and a square.

Table 6.1.2 Background information of surveyed projects (n=35)

Variables	Categories	Frequency	%
Type of the site	*Park*	25	71
	Garden	6	17
	Churchyard	2	6
	Cemetery	1	3
	Square	1	3
	Total	35	100
Located area	*Inner city area*	11	31
	Urban (not inner city) area	14	40
	Suburban area	7	20
	Rural area	3	9
	Total	35	100
Numbers of other public open spaces within 400m	*None*	18	51
	1	6	17
	2	8	23
	More than three	3	9
	Total	35	100

6.1.2.2 Location of the site

Most large municipal parks in Britain were sited on the then urban fringe areas when first

developed in the middle years of the 19th century (Conway and Lambert, 1993). But with the expansion of cities during the Industrial Revolution, these parks were no longer surrounded by fields and farms but houses. As the structure of cities went through several changes after the Industrial Revolution, many historic public parks are now located in urban areas. In this study, the location of an historic urban park is broadly classified into four broad categories: inner-city areas, non-inner-city urban areas, suburban areas, and rural areas. It was found that most of the surveyed sites (71%) were located in urban areas, with fourteen sites in non-inner-city urban areas and eleven in inner-city areas (see Table 6.1.2). Only three were located in rural areas and all of these were gardens.

6.1.2.3 Proximity of other public open spaces

As Plummer and Shewan (1992) indicate, the use of a space is largely dependent on the facilities offered, the size of the area and the distance which people have to travel to use it. The result of park user surveys carried out for the *Park Life* study (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995) suggests that more than two thirds of park users walk to parks. The pedestrian catchment of local parks, as suggested by the modified Great London Development Plan's hierarchy of open spaces (Llewelyn-Davies Planning Environment Trust Associates, 1992), should be a radius of 400 meters. In order to understand whether the historic urban parks being surveyed were the only public open space in the areas they are situated in, a question about the number of other open spaces within a 400-metre radius of the research site was asked. Over 50% of the surveyed project sites did not have any other public open spaces in the vicinity. Forty per cent of the surveyed sites had one or two public open spaces. Only three sites had more than three other public open spaces within the vicinity (see Table 6.1.2).

6.1.2.4 Characteristics of surrounding communities

A question regarding the characteristics of the local community surrounding the surveyed historic parks or gardens was asked in an open format. The details and contents of the characteristics of surrounding communities given by different respondents for different sites varied enormously. Table 6.1.3 shows several dominant common characteristics mentioned by the survey respondents. They can be summarised in the following points:

- Half of the surveyed sites were located in residential areas. Only three were located in commercial areas.

- Residents in the surrounding communities of most sites were predominantly white. There were six sites (17%) with a high ethnic minority population and two sites (6%) with a dominant Asian population.

- In terms of socio-economic status, two extremes appeared: affluent middle-class and low income. The criteria, however, was dependent on the respondent's understanding to the area. A few of the survey respondents indicated that the project site was within a SRB

funding area.

- A high unemployment rate was mentioned by thirteen survey respondents.

- Some other significant features of the surrounding communities included a high proportion of single parent families, elderly, or young people and a high population density.

Table 6.1.3 Frequency with which the characteristics of surrounding communities are mentioned by all respondents (n=35)

Characteristics		No. of times mentioned*	Percentage of respondents identified this item
Zoning	*Residential Area*	13	37
	Commercial Area	3	9
Ethnic composition	*White dominant*	15	43
	Asia dominant	2	6
	High ethnic minority population	6	17
Socio-economic Status	*Middle class*	5	15
	Low income	4	12
	SRB funding area	5**	15
High unemployment		13	37
High proportion of elderly		5	15
High proportion of single family		4	12
High proportion of young		3	9
Densely populated		4	12

* Responses are based on the open-ended responses of 35 respondents.
** One of them is currently attempting to secure SRB funding.

6.1.2.5 Type of users

People who may use the historic urban parks are broadly grouped into four categories: local residents, visitors, office workers, and students. Table 6.1.4 shows that among the four types of park users, local residents were identified by the majority of respondents (91%) as the most

Table 6.1.4 Main user groups of the sites* (n=35)

User Types	Frequency	Percentage of respondents identifying this item
Local residents	32	91
Visitors	19	54
Office workers	15	43
Students	12	34

* This is a multiple-choice question.

important user group of historic urban parks. Over half of the respondents (54%) considered visitors as the second significant user group.

6.1.2.6 Initiation of the project

When the restoration projects were initiated and whether the initiations were as a result of the availability of the HLF's UPP grants or not is revealed in Table 6.1.5. Over one third of the surveyed restoration projects were initiated in 1996. This, to some extent, reflected the launch of the Urban Parks Programme by HLF in January 1996, as twelve out of fourteen projects were initiated because of the availability of the HLF grant.

Table 6.1.5 The initiated date of the restoration project and the availability of the UPP grant (n=35)

Availability of HLF grant / Initiated Date	Yes	No	Do not Know	Total
In and before 1994	1	6	0	7
In 1995	2	6	0	8
In 1996	12	1	1	14
In 1997	1	3	0	4
Total	16	16	1	33

Taking 1996 as a baseline, the number of projects initiated before 1996 is almost equal to the number of projects initiated in and after 1996. The initiation of most projects in the first group is less related to the UPP grants while, in contrast, the majority of projects in the second group were more likely to be initiated because of this funding opportunity.

6.1.2.7 Linkage with wider strategic contexts

"Relevance of the project to local, regional or national strategies" (HLF 1996, p.4) is a criterion to assess application for the UPP grant. Seven major categories of wider environmental strategies to which a restoration project might be linked were listed in the questionnaire for the respondent to choose as applicable. They are: Local Agenda 21, urban regeneration initiatives, Unitary Development Plan, urban open space system, wider leisure strategies, broader park strategies and heritage conservation strategies. The respondent could also specify any other strategy if it was not covered in the categories listed.

According to the responses in this survey, three wider environmental strategies stand out (Table 6.1.6): urban regeneration initiatives (49%), broader park strategies (49%), and heritage conservation strategies (49%). Other strategies that were mentioned by the survey respondents include anti poverty strategies, sports development plans, and town centre active plans and strategies.

Table 6.1.6 Linkage with wider environmental strategies (n=35)

Wider environmental strategies	Frequency	Percentage of respondents identifying this item
Urban Regeneration Initiatives	17	49
Broader Park Strategies	17	49
Heritage Conservation Strategies	17	49
Wider Leisure Strategies	14	40
Local Agenda 21	12	34
Urban Open Space System	10	29
Unitary Development Plans	9	25
Others	6	17

6.2 The Partnership

In recent years, the establishment of partnerships between the public, private and community sectors has been recognised as an essential element in most regeneration processes (Carley, 1995; Taylor, 1995; DETR, 1998f). It is advocated in the *Park Life* report that local authorities should form new partnerships with local communities as part of their park strategies (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1995). Partnerships in UPP grant-aided restoration projects were required in terms of 'partnership funding' and 'organisational strength' (HLF, 1996). The survey results reveal the composition of the partnership in the regeneration of historic urban parks and the specific contributions from different types of partners.

6.2.1 The steering group

6.2.1.1 Existence of a steering group

More than two thirds of the survey respondents indicated that there was a steering group specifically set up to prepare the proposal for the application to the HLF. Among the ten projects which did not have steering groups, one reported that a steering group was set up later to deliver the plan and one other said that there was a working party to carry out the preparation of the bid.

6.2.1.2 Composition of the steering group

The number of partners in a steering group varied from one to seven. Most projects had four or five partners on their steering groups. Table 6.2.1 shows the partners sitting on steering groups set up for the regeneration of these historic urban parks. Local authorities' different departments and units were identified as the most important partners in preparing the bids. Friends groups, together with other local organisations and practitioners in private consultancy, were also significant actors involved in the bid preparation process.

According to the survey responses, the compositions of steering groups in these park regeneration projects mainly fell into two patterns:

Table 6.2.1 Partners in the steering group

Partners	No of times mentioned*
Local authorities (different departments/units included)	46
Other local organisations	8
Practitioners in private consultancy	7
Friends Groups	6
Regional and national organisations	4
Others	4
Site Owners (other than local authority)	3
Lottery Officers	2
Academics	1
Individual local residents	1

* Responses are based on the open-ended responses of 24 respondents.

- *External*: comprised of various partners outside the local authority together with one or two departments in the local authority. External organisations or individuals involved in steering groups included site owners (not local authority), practitioners in private consultancy, academics, friends groups and/or other local organisations, some national or regional organisations which had interests in the restoration of historic urban parks and individual local residents. Seventeen projects came under this group.

- *Internal*: made up of different departments/units in the local authorities such as Leisure Services, Landscape Services, Park/Garden Managers, Project Managers, and Conservation Officers. Note that, in addition to leisure and landscape design services which were conventionally responsible for park affairs, there was a large variety of departments which might be involved in the regeneration of historic urban parks. The various titles given by the respondents which referred to similar functional departments showed the different structures in different local authorities. Eight projects belonged to this category.

6.2.2 The funding partners and technical-support partners

6.2.2.1 The Funding partners and their contributions

Partnership funding, commonly known as matched funding, is one of the most important elements in UPP grant-aided restoration projects. The flexible approach adopted by HLF has allowed contributions in kind, other than money, to be considered as partnership funding (HLF, 1996). It should be noted that although the term 'partnership funding' was used in the HLF's guidance note, the term 'matched funding' was adopted in the *Town and Country Park* reports (ETRASC, 1999b) and used more extensively by most of the case-study interviewees to refer to the part of the total project cost not funded by the UPP (see Chapters Seven and Eight).

Organisations or individuals who could become a funding partner to support the restoration of an historic urban park can broadly be grouped into the following categories:

- local authorities;
- private sector, including landfill tax, water companies, developers, trusts, and private foundations;
- site owners (not local authority);
- universities, colleges, and schools in the vicinity of the site;
- friends groups and other local organisations;
- national or regional organisations such as English Heritage, English Partnerships, Environmental Agency, North West Arts Board, CADW/Welsh Historic Monuments, Welsh Tourist Board, Historic Scotland, etc.;
- other funding opportunities, such as Single Regeneration Budget (SRB), European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), City Challenge Fund (CCF), and Estate Action Fund from the former Department of the Environment; and
- local residents.

Although funds from another Lottery Distribution Body are not counted as partnership funding (Shell Better Britain Campaign, 1999), three survey respondents have reported either the Lottery Arts or Sports, or even both, in the questionnaire as one of their funding partners.

The amount of money contributed by these funding partners varies enormously, ranging from several hundred pounds to several hundred thousand pounds. Table 6.2.2 reveals how the different size of grants relates to the different types of funding partners. Considering the size of grants and the frequency with which one particular funding partner was mentioned by the survey respondents, local authorities were the most important bodies for providing the money required for obtaining the partnership funding. For seven projects, the local authority was the sole provider of the matched funding. The total project cost for these projects ranged from £4.4m to £0.11m and, thus, the amount of money contributed by these local authorities varied from £1.1m (which was the highest among contributions made by local authorities) to £0.06m. Another local authority also made a contribution of £1.1m, accounting for almost 99% of the required matched funding for that particular project.

The private sector appeared to be a significant funding partner by the number of times they were mentioned, but their financial contributions seem to be smaller in size. Regeneration-related funding opportunities (e.g. SRB, ERDF, CCF) were another important source for raising matched funding, with eleven projects benefiting from such money. Two of these projects even obtained funding from both SRB and ERDF. In addition, national and regional

Table 6.2.2 Funding Partners and their contributions

Funding Partner	Size of grant	£200,000 or more	£199,999 - £100,000	£99,999 - £10,000	£9,999 - £1,000	Less than £1,000	Number of grants
Local Authorities		9	5	8	1	-	23
Private Sector	*Landfill Tax*	-	2	2	1		27
	Private companies	1	2	6	7	1	
	Trusts	-	-	1	1		
	Private foundations	-	1	-	2		
Other funding opportunities	*SRB[1]*	2	-	2	-		12
	ERDF[2]	2	2	1	-		
	CCF[3]	1	-	1	-		
	EAF[4]	-	-	1	-		
National or regional organisations		2	2	4	3	-	11
Universities/colleges/ schools		-	-	1	2	1	4
Owners of the site (not local authorities)		-	1	1	-	-	2
Friends groups		-	-	1	-	-	1
Other local organisations		-	-	1	2	2	5
Local residents		-	-	1	-	4	5
Others		-	-	-	2	1	3

[1] Single Regeneration Budget

[2] European Regional Development Fund

[3] Capital Challenge Fund

[4] Estate Action Fund (from former Department of the Environment)

Note: the number in each cell represents the frequency with which the funding partner was mentioned by survey respondents

organisations were also significant partners for providing financial support to the regeneration of historic urban parks.

6.2.2.2 The technical-support partners and their contributions

The technical support required in the regeneration of historic urban parks was provided by various partners, including experts from different departments/units in the local authorities, academics, some national organisations, and practitioners in private consultancy.

The type of technical support and the most likely sources from which support could be provided were summarised as below.

- *Architecture*: mainly from architectural- or building-related departments in the local authority and architects in private consultancy.

- *Landscape architecture*: mostly from the relevant department in the local authority such as design and technical services, landscape services, etc. but also from landscape

architects/consultants in private consultancy and from academics.

- *Conservation*: usually from different departments in the local authority, including planning services, archaeologists, and conservation officers, etc.

- *Historical aspects*: academics and practitioners in private consultancy are important in providing support regarding historic landscape design. Garden historians and local historians were also able to provide help with historic interpretation of the site.

- *Surveys and research*: this includes ecological surveys, social and visitor surveys, soil research, hydrological studies and traffic studies. These were mainly provided by local authorities, academics, and practitioners in private consultancy.

- *Horticultural and botanical advice* - mostly from academics and relevant horticultural societies.

- *Engineering* - mainly provided by engineers in the local authority and hydrologists in private consultancy.

- *Financial advice/ cost control* - usually provided by quantity surveyors and financial services in the local authority.

- *Project management and monitoring*: mainly from the local authorities and practitioners in private consultancy.

- *Other technical support*: such as advice on park management and maintenance, and property management from the local authority's various departments; aquatic management which was provided by academics; consultation on work regarding the bids being provided by either the relevant department of the local authority or practitioners in private consultancy, and arts consultation by Arts Trusts or artists.

Most projects received technical support from outside the local authority, with only four projects completely relying on local authority in-house teams. Around one third of the projects surveyed have involved private landscape consultants in the preparation of the HLF bid and/or the development of the restoration project.

6.2.3 'Friends of Parks' groups and other local organisations

6.2.3.1 'Friends of Parks' groups and their contributions

According to the survey results, sixteen respondents indicated that there was a friends group for the site and another six respondents reported that there was a plan to set up a friends group for the site in the future.

It is found in this survey that friends groups can contribute to the regeneration process of historic urban parks in various ways. They may:

- act as a partner in the steering group to help the preparation of the bid and the general development of the project;

- help in organising public consultation activities at an early stage of the project;
- act as important consultees to be involved in regular meetings and other consultation activities;
- be involved in planning or programming future events such as guided tours, talks, and educational activities on the site;
- help in overseeing or monitoring the delivery of the project;
- help in providing voluntary work in kind, such as horticultural activities and practical conservation work on the site;
- act as an intermediary and thereby reflect the views of the individual park users or that of the wider community to the local authority;
- give out information about the project to park users and local communities;
- contribute at later stages of the restoration project, including management, maintenance, promoting and marketing of the restored sites, and monitoring the usage of the parks, etc.;
- help in raising partnership funding; and
- participate in events and activities held on the site and give support to the restoration project.

6.2.3.2 Other local organisations and their contributions

In addition to the participation of friends groups, there were sometimes some other local organisations and groups, or even individual residents, who had been involved in the restoration of historic public parks. According to the survey results, the number of such local groups varied greatly between different projects, ranging from none to about a dozen. More than two thirds of the surveyed projects had the involvement of at least one non-friends-group local organisation. Nine respondents did not identify any such group.

Table 6.2.3 shows the type of non-friends-group local organisations, which are broadly grouped into eleven categories, and the frequency of each category is given. Three categories, societies/user groups/clubs with specific interests, educational institutes, and local businesses, stand out as the most significant participants.

The contribution of these non-friends-group local organisations and groups were then summarised as follows:

- to provide advice on issues relating to their specific interests;
- providing opportunities for communication;
- to sit on the steering group as partners;
- to act as consultees and being involved in regular meetings, user questionnaire surveys, or design workshops, etc.;
- providing relevant information;

Table 6.2.3 Non-friends-group local organisations

Type of local organisations	No of times mentioned*
Societies/user groups/clubs with specific interests	28
Educational institutes	10
Local businesses	8
Disadvantaged groups (ethnic minority, disabled, elderly, and women etc.)	6
Charitable trusts	5
Residents association	5
Voluntary groups	3
Police/safety partnership/neighbourhood watch	3
Civic association/society	2
Action group	2
Regional group of national organisations	2
Others	5

* Responses are based on the open-ended responses of 24 respondents.

- to help in preparation of bids;

- helping in practical work;

- to participate in events and activities held on the site; and

- helping with publicity of the project.

6.2.3.3 The involvement of individual park users

In addition to the participation of friends groups and other local organisations, more than half of the survey respondents indicated that local residents who did not participate in any organised groups have been taking part in the park's regeneration. On a few occasions, individual residents had been involved in sitting on the steering group, giving financial support, providing information on local history, and undertaking voluntary work on site.

The respondent was asked to evaluate the extent to which general resident's needs and opinions were represented by any community organisation or group identified in the earlier part of the questionnaire. More than two thirds of respondents (74%) considered the identified group to be representative, with only two respondents reporting poor representativeness.

6.2.3.4 Tourism

Historic urban parks and gardens in many British cities and towns are often used not only by the local residents but also by visitors from other areas, or even abroad. In this survey, tourists have been attracted to these historic landscape spaces for various reasons, which were summarised as:

- the historic value or significance of the site, including historic features on the site, importance to the history of landscape design, or relevance to historic events, etc.;

- the easy accessibility in terms of free access and the proximity to the city or town centre;

- the enjoyment provided, including the scenic beauty, the variety of facilities, the botanical collections, etc.; and

- the site as a green space in the urban area.

With regard to whether the potential of the site as a tourist attraction was taken into account in the UPP grant-awarded project or not, the majority (80%) of the projects encompassed such consideration. However, the involvement of tourists was less of a consideration in most restoration projects. Only around one fifth of the survey respondents indicated that tourists were involved or will be involved in the project. For those projects in which the involvement of tourists in the development of the restoration project was taken into account, the possible benefits identified were: to know visitors' needs or perceptions about facilities and features on the sites to help the formation of a strategy; and to generate the motivation of repeat visits.

6.2.4 The money for long-term management of the site

As long-term management of the site was emphasised by the HLF in the *Additional Guidance Note 1* to all the applicants preparing restoration proposals (HLF, 1996), an open question was asked for the approximate percentage of the total fund allocated for this aspect. The answers provided by the survey respondents ranged from 0% to 34%. The responses were assigned into four broad categories: 0%, more than 0% but less or equal to 10%, more than 10% but less or equal to 20%, and more than 20%. As shown in Table 6.2.4, around two fifths of the respondents indicated that no money from the funds raised was or would be set aside for the long-term management of the site once it has been restored. However, for those projects which did allocate a certain amount of money for the long-term management of the park, the majority of them set aside no more than 10% of the received funding.

Table 6.2.4 Percentage of the total funds allocated to the long-term management (n=31)

Categories	Frequency	%
0%	13	42
More than 0%, but less or equal to 10%	9	29
More than 10%, but less or equal to 20%	3	10
More than 20	2	6
Did not know	4	13
Total	31	100

In terms of the sources of funding for the long-term management of the restored site, the survey results show that the money could come from the following sources:

- local authorities' revenue budgets or ground maintenance budgets;

- other funding opportunities, such as European support;

- a combination of multiple funding sources; and

- generated from facilities on site (tea rooms, shops, etc.), donations from visitors, income
  from Friends Groups or holding events on site, etc.

Among the above sources, revenue budgets and ground maintenance budgets from the local
authorities were identified as the main financial support for the long-term management of an
historic urban park or garden once it is restored.

6.2.5 Summary of this section

This summary focuses on park restoration partnerships. Overall, partnerships commonly
existed among the 35 surveyed restoration projects. More than two thirds of these projects had
steering groups established for preparing the HLF bids. Most of these steering groups
consisted of four to five partners, with various combinations of local authorities' different
departments and units, friends groups and other local organisations, and professionals in
academia and private consultancy. Two patterns of the steering group emerged from the survey
results: (1) external – comprising of partners outside the local authority together with at least
one of the local authority's departments; and (2) internal – consisting primarily of the different
working departments/units in the local authority.

Partnerships in funding and technical support were active and diversified in the surveyed
projects, with varying contributions from different types of partners as mentioned above.
Local authorities were identified as the most important source for matched funding in terms of
the frequency they were mentioned by the survey respondents and also the amount of money
they contributed. Seven projects had the local authority as the only contributor to the matched
funding. In-house experts in the local authorities and practitioners in private consultancy are
the two most significant parties in providing necessary technical support for park regeneration,
including primarily architecture, landscape architecture, historic landscape design,
conservation, research, engineering, financial advice, and project management. Four projects
relied solely on local authority in-house team. Only one project had the local authority
providing all the required matched funding as well as technical support.

Around half of the surveyed sites had friends groups and several sites planed to set up such
kind of groups. Friends groups could contribute to the restoration of historic urban parks in
many ways, most notably being to act as a partner on the steering group to help prepare the bid
and develop the project, to help organise public consultation activities, to act as important
consultees, and to participate in planning future events in the parks. In addition to friends
groups, other types of local organisations were also involved in the restoration process of

historic urban parks, including most significantly societies/user groups/clubs with specific interests, educational institutes (schools/colleges/universities), and local businesses. They could give advice on issues relating to their specific interests, provide opportunities for communication and relevant information, act as consultees, and participate in events and activities held in the parks. Three project did not have the involvement of either friends groups or other types of local organisations.

6.3 The Process of Community Involvement

The involvement of local communities is not only essential to urban, rural or housing estate regeneration, but also to urban nature conservation (Millward, 1983), urban greening (Bradley, 1986; GFA Consulting, 1996), open spaces provision (Greenhalgh and Worpole, 1996; Richardson and Baggott, 1998) and open spaces protection (Open Spaces Society, 1992). This is no exception in the restoration of historic urban parks. Either as a part of an area's regeneration or simply as an important public open space in one locality, an historic urban park cannot be successfully renovated unless the local community is engaged in this process.

Although it may seem that community involvement is only required by the HLF in two aspects of proposed restoration schemes: the consultation with local communities at the initial stages of the restoration project (HLF 1996, para 3.10) and the involvement of local people in the planning of the long-term management of the site (Ibid., para 3.12), more than this has actually been achieved by many of the grant recipients. The following survey results reveal which sectors of the local community are involved, at what stages of the restoration they are involved, the objectives behind the involvement of local communities, together with the factors which enhanced or restricted the effectiveness of community involvement in park regeneration.

6.3.1 The involvement of local communities
6.3.1.1 Who is the COMMUNITY?
When community involvement is decided to be included in the project development process, several key issues immediately appear. Among them, the question about what constitutes a community or who in the community is to be involved can be challenging to anyone charged with the project. Should the community be referred to as only the local residents (e.g. Taylor, 1995)? Or should various groups within a relevant locality or even non-local organisaitons be included in the definition of community (e.g. Bishop *et al.*, 1994)?

As shown in Figure 6.3.1, it is found in the survey results that local residents, individual park users, and friends groups/local organisations were considered as the three most significant sectors of the local community to be involved in the restoration process of historic urban parks. Local residents were identified by all the respondents to be included in their restoration

Figure 6.3.1 Members of the community to be involved in the restoration project

Members of
the Community

Local residents	35 (100%)
Individual park users	34 (97%)
Local organisations/ friends groups	32 (91%)
Schools/colleges/ universities	30 (86%)
Police	25 (71%)
Local businesses	23 (66%)
National organisations with interests in historic urban parks and gardens	19 (54%)
Others	7 (20%)

0   5   10   15   20   25   30   35   40

Frequency
(N = 35)
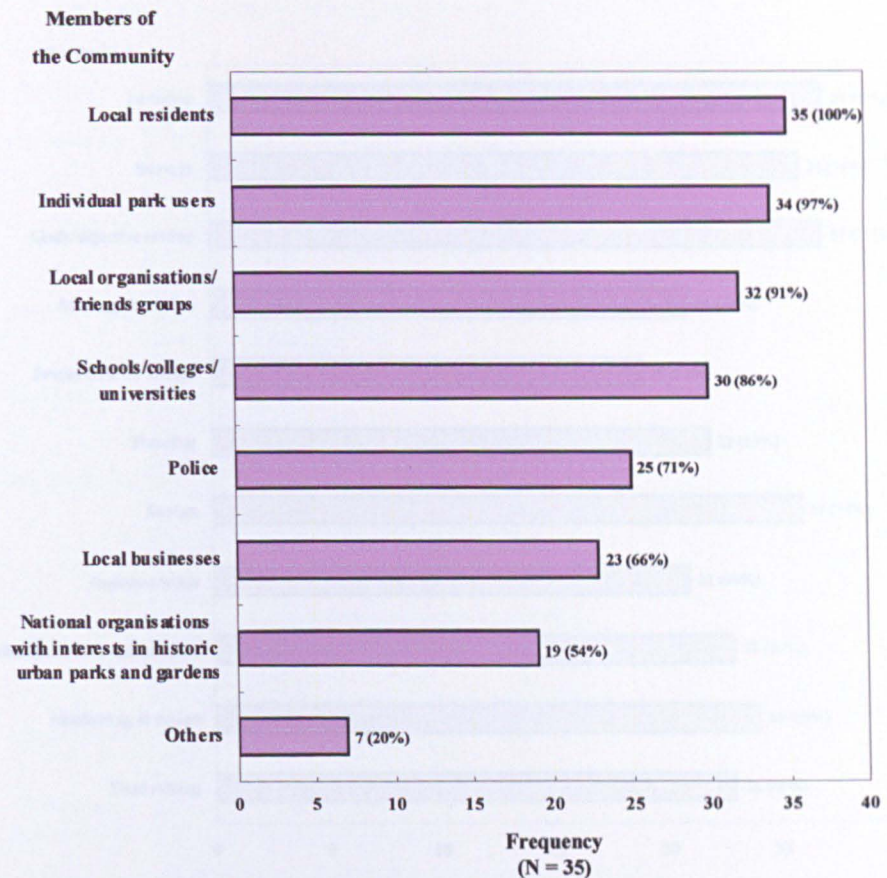
projects; 97% of the survey respondents indicated that individual park users should be included, while 91% responded that friends groups/local organisations should also be included.

6.3.1.2 When is the local community involved?

Like any other regeneration schemes, the restoration of an historic urban park is a long-term activity. A manual published by the DETR (1997) to provide practical advice on community involvement in regeneration programmes points out, although not explicitly, that at different stages of the regeneration process there are different concerns regarding the involvement of local communities. Thus, it is important to know when local communities may become involved.

In order to investigate at what stages of a restoration process the local community could be involved, a process model was proposed in this study which divided the park restoration process into eleven stages, namely initiation, surveys, goals and objective setting, strategy formation, preparation for the bid to the HLF, planning, design, implementation, management and maintenance, monitoring and review, and fund raising. As shown in Figure 6.3.2, it was found that community involvement could take place at any stage of the restoration process. According to the survey results, the local community was most often involved in initiation and

Figure 6.3.2 Community involvement at each stage of the restoration project

Stages of the Project / Frequency (N = 35)

Stage	Value
Initiation	27 (77%)
Surveys	26 (74%)
Goals/objective setting	27 (77%)
Strategy formation	21 (60%)
Preparation for the bid	19 (54%)
Planning	22 (63%)
Design	26 (74%)
Implementation	21 (60%)
Management & maintenance	23 (66%)
Monitoring & review	24 (69%)
Fund raising	23 (66%)
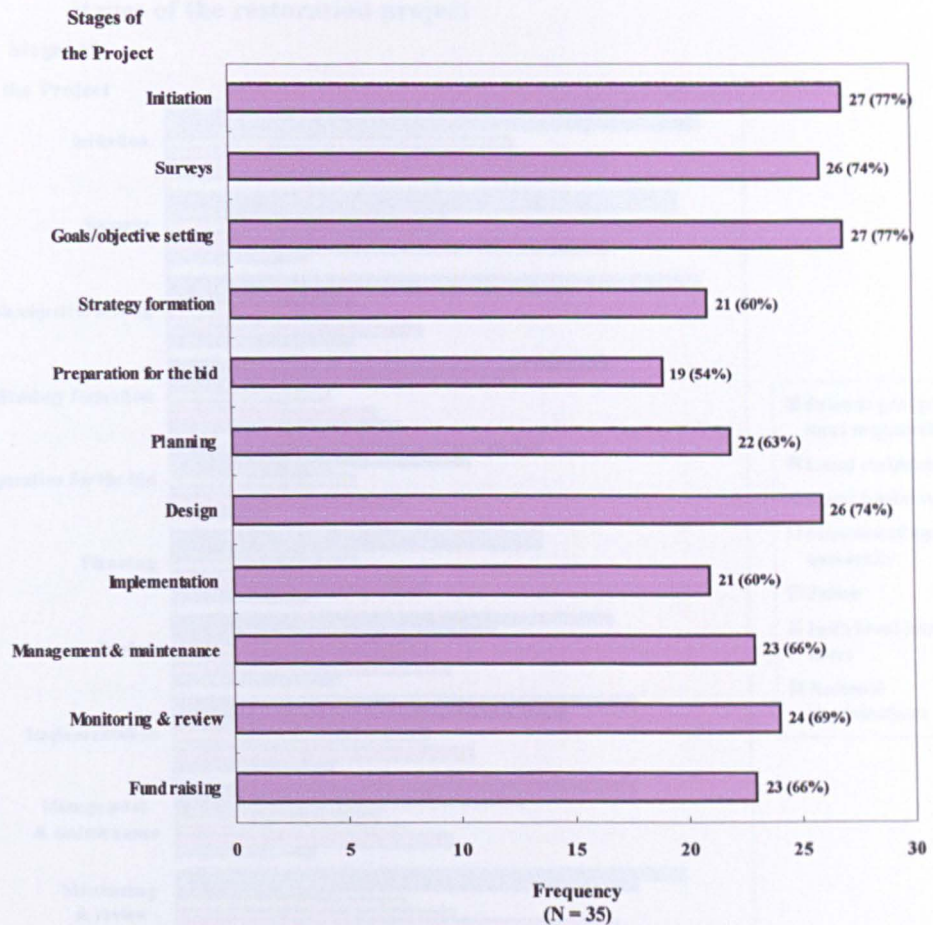
goal/objective setting stages, then at the survey and design stages. The bid preparation stage was identified as having the least involvement of local communities.

In terms of the number of stages with community involvement, eight projects reported that local communities were or would be involved at all stages of the restoration process. Another ten projects had at least eight stages with community involvement. The smallest number of stages at which local communities were or would be involved was two. Two projects fell into this category. The local community was involved in surveys and design stages in one and surveys and fund raising in the other.

6.3.1.3 Who vs. When

Instead of viewing the local community as a whole as the previous discussion has done, this section focuses on the cross-analysis between the 'who' and 'when' factors of community involvement in the restoration process. Figure 6.3.1 reveals the relationship between the involvement of different sectors of the local community and the different stages of the restoration process. It is easily noticeable that, except at the initiation and planning stages, friends groups/local organisations were the most important sector of the community to

Figure 6.3.3 The involvement of different members of the local community at different stages of the restoration project
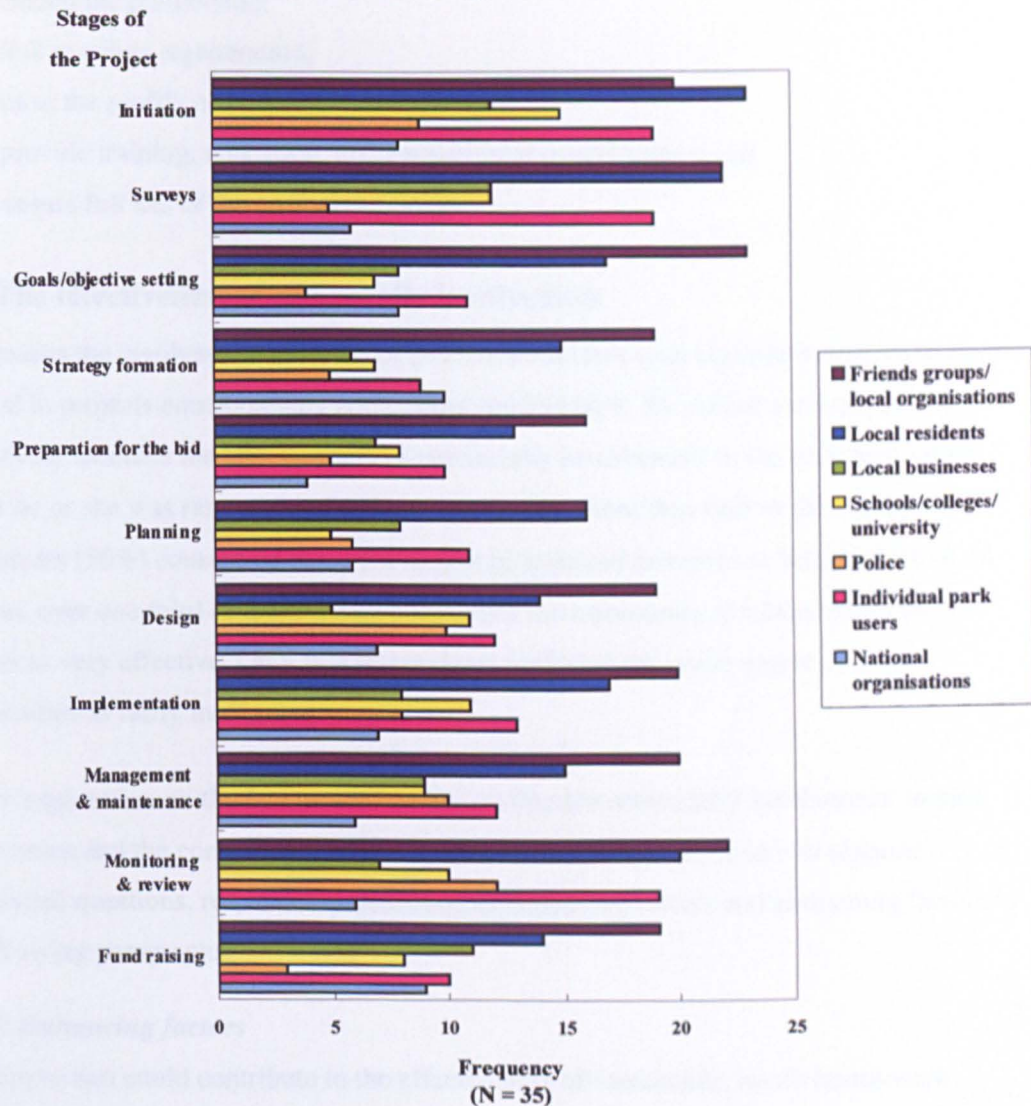
be involved. The next two significant groups involved in the regeneration of historic urban parks were local residents and individual park users.

6.3.2 The objective of involving local communities

Clearly identified objectives of community involvement are important when the involvement of local communities is encompassed in the project development process (Richardson and Baggott, 1998; DETR, 1997). For the regeneration of historic urban parks, various reasons for involving the local community were given by the survey respondents. The two most significant ones were to generate a sense of ownership and to reflect park users' needs and views; both were mentioned by nearly half of the respondents. Other objectives identified in the survey were summarised as follows:

- to ensure public support of the project;
- to generate more funds;

- to use local knowledge;
- to extend the partnership;
- to link to urban regeneration;
- to raise the profile of the park;
- to provide training, education, and employment opportunities; and
- to ensure full use of the park in the future.

6.3.3 The effectiveness of community involvement

What makes the involvement of local communities effective is an important concern to anyone engaged in projects encompassing community involvement. By asking each respondent to subjectively evaluate the effectiveness of community involvement in the park restoration project he or she was responsible for, it was found that more than half of the survey respondents (56%) considered the involvement of local communities as fairly effective. In addition, over one third of them (35%) considered the community involvement in their projects as very effective. Only two respondents indicated the involvement of local communities as fairly ineffective.

Further exploration on the factors attributing to effective community involvement in park regeneration and the constraints to this effectiveness was carried out in two separate open-ended questions, respectively described as enhancing factors and restraining factors in the following paragraphs.

6.3.3.1 Enhancing factors

The factors that could contribute to the effectiveness of community involvement were summarised as including:

- good communications, which can be achieved in various ways such as keeping the community informed and thus increase better understanding of the project, extensive or regular consultations, positive response to communities' views and needs, and direct involvement of local communities in design workshops ;
- the park or garden *per se* being valued, with the local community's desire to see the site improved and a sense of attachment to the park;
- friends groups and other local organisations' support in the forms of providing voluntary help in kind and extending access to more funding opportunities; and
- other factors such as a sense of ownership of the project by local communities, good publicity of the project, and well-programming activities and events in the park to keep the local community interested in participation.

6.3.3.2 Restraining factors

The factors which could restrain the effectiveness of community involvement may stem from the following aspects:

- the lack of local organisations;

- some user groups loosing their focus;

- apathy from groups and from the vast majority of local residents;

- lack of resources – human and funding;

- the limitation of the funding opportunity itself as the Heritage Lottery Fund's remit for restoring historic landscape may sometimes restrain local community's aspirations or exclude the restoration of non-landscape elements in the park;

- cultural differences;

- the scale of the project; and

- bureaucracy within local authorities.

6.3.4 Summary of this section

According to the survey respondents, local residents, individual park users, and friends groups/local organisations were considered as the three most important sectors of the local community to be involved in the restoration of historic urban parks and gardens. Local communities can take part at any stage of a restoration project; however, their involvement was more likely to happen at the initiation, goals/objective setting, survey, and design stages. The preparation of the application to the HLF was the stage which was least likely to involve local communities.

To generate a sense of ownership and reflect upon park users' needs and views were the two most significant objectives for involving the local community. In addition, ensuring public support of the restoration project, generating more funds, using local knowledge, extending partnership, linking to urban regeneration, raising the park's profile, providing training, education and employment opportunities, and ensuring future use were also reasons for engaging local communities in the restoration process of an historic urban park.

Generally speaking, the involvement of local communities in the surveyed projects has been effective. Effective community involvement was mainly attributed to good communications between the local community and the local authority, to the park or garden *per se* being valued, and to the support from friends groups/local organisations.

Chapter Seven
Research Results of Case Studies: Individual Case Analyses

This chapter is divided into seven main sections, each looking at a single case-study site. The discussion in each main section is based on a structure consisting of the following parts:

(1) An introduction to the development of the restoration project and its major elements;

(2) A description of the methods adopted to involve the local community.

(3) A discussion of the 'Friends of Parks' group and their involvement in the restoration of the site, subject to the existence of such a group.

(4) A discussion of the local communities' involvement in the long-term management of the park once the restoration project has been complete.

For a few sites, there is also a discussion of any special element which contributes to community involvement in the restoration project. In addition, an introduction to each site (including a brief review of the site's history and its current condition) and a brief analysis of the characteristics of the local community, based primarily on the 1991 census data to the electoral ward level are presented in Appendices D-1 to D-7 to provide a context for each case study. It should be noted here that although information provided by the 1991 census is now out of date, it is still the best available one, as the 2001 census data is not yet accessible at the time of writing. The author is aware that this, therefore, may not truly reflect the immediate communities surrounding a particular site, as some sites are located in very mixed areas, with mobile populations. However, further detailed analyses of the census data is beyond the scope of the research and therefore the action should be justified.

A brief summary section is presented at the end of this chapter to draw out common themes emerged from the seven case studies.

7.1 Clarence Park (CP), St Albans
7.1.1 Introduction to the restoration project

Having heard of the emergence of the HLF's UPP prior to its launch, the St Albans City and District Council submitted a bid for the restoration of Clarence Park (Plate 7.1.1) in September 1996 in consideration of the park being a Victorian park and therefore fitting in quite well with the funding regime. The restoration project for CP was awarded £145,100 by the HLF's UPP in May 1997. The total cost of the project was £193,467 and the St Albans City District Council contributed to the rest of the partnership funding from its Special Project Reserve (St

Plate 7.1.1 Clarence Park, St Albans

Albans City and District, 1997).

The restoration plan (Plate 7.1.2) was drawn up by an in-house multi-disciplinary team comprising of officers from leisure, technical and planning departments. To repair and restore the historic fabric of the park, the major elements of the restoration project included:

- the refurbishment and enhancement of the main entrance;
- the reinstatement of the lost bandstand;
- the restoration of the drinking fountain;
- the refurbishment and extension of the children's play area;
- the development of a new toddlers' play area next to the Italian restaurant to enable better adult supervision;
- the restoration of the sports pavilion;
- the replacement of existing toilets;
- improvements to access paths to the park, including the provision of ramps and steps for the Hatfield Road entrance and restoration of footpath link to York Road;
- the reassessment of vehicular and pedestrian circulation and the redesign of the car parking area;
- the provision of screen-planting to the park depot and football club;
- the restoration of perimeter chain and bollard fence of the sports ground; and
- the general refurbishment of perimeter fence, resurfacing of footpaths, reassessment of the location and condition of seats and litter bins, and renewal of signage.

Although there should be little doubt that the refurbishment of the sports pavilion was definitely an integral part of a full restoration of the park, this particular element was excluded

Plate 7.1.2 Restoration plan of Clarence Park

despite the fact that the pavilion was original to the park and formed the visual and social focus to the park. The local authority later acquired funding from the Sports Lottery to restore the pavilion; however, delays to some of the landscape restoration work had occurred because of the restoration to the pavilion. At the time of the fieldwork, the bandstand has been reinstated (Plate 7.1.3) and the refurbishment of the children's play area has also been complete.

Plate 7.1.3 The new bandstand, Clarence Park

7.1.2 Community involvement

The local community's involvement in the refurbishment of CP was mainly through the Clarence Park Users' Forum (CPUF), a forum established in 1994 as the local authority's initiative to "act as a sharing of information between the park users and those who are responsible for managing the park". It consisted of representatives from the various user groups of the park, including the hockey club, football club, cricket club, bowling club, croquet club, mums and toddlers group, dog walkers association, and the Friends of Clarence Park (FOCP), representatives from the National Childbirth Trust and Groundwork Hertfordshire, as well as relevant council officers, representatives of the police and ward councilors. Usually between fifteen to twenty people attended the forum.

The CPUF has been meeting twice a year – spring and autumn – since its establishment to discuss issues regarding the general maintenance and management of the park, but there were a couple of additional meetings during the summer of 1996, held specifically to discuss the development of the restoration project. The project officer considered that the forum was "extremely useful" in drawing up proposals for the refurbishment of the park in terms of coming up with comments and suggestions on how the park should be restored and what the scheme should contain. However, the chairperson of the FOCP commented that the forum did not meet often enough and suggested that it should meet every three months instead as one would have to wait for six months in order to be able to raise a particular issue in the forum and get it done.

In the project officer's viewpoint, the forum has represented the wider community's concerns and views rather well. In many occasions, individual groups in the forum canvass their own members regarding what improvements they would like to see in the park. Apart from consulting through the CPUF, the local authority also put the restoration plan on notice boards within the park for comments and had a number of separate meetings with the owner of an Italian restaurant which is located on one corner of the park, regarding improvements to the pavement around the restaurant. However, conventional consultation techniques such as questionnaire surveys and public meetings were not employed during the preparation of the restoration scheme.

7.1.3 The Friends of Clarence Park (FOCP) and their involvement in the restoration project

Initiated and chaired by one of the local residents who has lived very close to the park and been largely involved in the park's dog walkers association for quite a long time, the FOCP was formed at the time when the CPUF was established in 1994 as a separate entity from the other groups in the forum to represent the general users of the park. The group is made up of around

six people from the dog walkers group and two residents from one of the streets surrounding the park (York Road), but has not been formally constituted. There is no actual membership of the friends group. The chairperson of the friends group argues that anyone who uses the park is automatically seen as a member.

The group met regularly in the park to discuss things that should be undertaken regarding the park and, then, as the group was a member of the CPUF, the representative of the friends group, i.e. the chairperson of the group, could raise their issues in the forum meetings. Like other members of the forum, the friends group was involved in commenting on the restoration plans, putting forward the group's ideas with regards to how the park should be restored, and discussing ideas put forward and issues raised by other groups.

The group has undertaken small-scaled fund raising activities in order to do things which were not covered by the councils' budget or when the council did not have the money to do it. In the past, they had collected money from users in the park to replace a specimen tree which was damaged in a storm. For the restoration project, they intended to raise some funds for planting bulbs in a newly established bank which would be formed due to the work done to improve the pavement outside the Italian restaurant.

However, the friends group has relied almost entirely on the action of the chairperson himself. For instance, he personally published the group's newsletters from time to time (including writing the content and photocopying) and circulated the newsletter himself by physically delivering it to every house on two of the streets surrounding the park (York Road and Clarence Road), posting it to anyone requesting to be kept informed about what has been happening in the park and taking copies of the newsletter with him to hand out to people that he met in the park. In addition, he printed small flyers for a concert held in the reinstated bandstand, putting them on notice boards within the park and distributing them in the park. Because the local authority did not do any advertisement for the previous two events, even though they had organised them, consequently, only a few people knew about these events and turned up. Based on a thought that if he did not take some action, nobody, including the local authority, would bother to do anything, he wrote to a lot of schools and people to ask if there was a band, an orchestra, etc. that would like to play in the park next year, with the idea that there would be a band plying on the bandstand in the park every other Sunday afternoon. Well-known to local people apparently, he has also become a point where people come up to express their concerns, needs or views regarding the park and ask him to raise the issue in the CPUF meetings.

7.1.4 Community involvement in the long-term management

With regards to the long-term management of the park once the restoration project is complete, the project officer of the CP restoration project indicated that the CPUF would remain the focus of community involvement in the continuing management of CP. The twice-a-year meetings would retain regular contact between the local authority and the various user groups of the park. Thus the local community's involvement would not be on a day-to-day basis and any concern regarding the everyday maintenance of the park would normally be raised at the forum's meetings unless the problem was urgent, when they could directly contact the project manager or the park manager for their attention.

While arguing that the twice-a-year meetings of the CPUF were not frequent enough, the chairperson of FOCP noted that it was essential for the friends group to keep representing general users of the park on the forum to put forward ideas regarding the ongoing management of the park and discuss ideas suggested by other members of the forum. In his view, forming a community-based organisation such as the forum they had for CP was the approach that local communities should adopt in terms of becoming involved with the development of a local park.

7.2 Hammond's Pond (HP), Carlisle

7.2.1 Introduction to the restoration project

The sorrowful condition of Hammond's Pond (Plate 7.2.1), as it was by 1995, finally aroused a petition which went around in the local areas and received more than a thousand signatures, asking the local authority to take action to halt the continuing decline of the park. In responding to this petition, the Park and Countryside Section of the Leisure and Community Development Department, Carlisle City Council, started to carry out a public consultation exercise with the local residents. This happened to take place at the time when the HLF launched the UPP in January 1996. Seeing the UPP as "an ideal opportunity" (Carlisle City Council, 1996) for restoring the park, the local authority submitted a proposal for the renovation of Hammond's Pond to the HLF and was awarded £915,000 in December 1997 (Heritage Lottery Fund, 1997d). This grant accounted for 75% of the total project cost which was £1.22 million and the rest was contributed by the City Council (Carlisle City Council, 1998a).

In consultation with the Carlisle City and District Model Engineering Society, Carlisle Model Boat Club and Angling clubs, the restoration project was initially developed by a City Council in-house team consisting of a landscape architect and playground officer from the Park and Countryside Section, architects and engineers from the Design Section, and a Community

Plate 7.2.1 Hammond's Pond, Carlisle

Development Officer from the Community Support Unit (Carlisle City Council, 1996). A Park Development Officer was appointed to oversee the further development of the park's restoration after the lottery funding was secured. Five steering groups, all with the involvement of local communities, were subsequently established to look at five different aspects of the restoration project: landscape, café, play areas, wildlife and safety/security. More details regarding the involvement of the local community in restoring HP is discussed in the next section.

As the pond is the most dominant element in the park, its regeneration was the first priority in the overall process of improving the whole park. Work associated with restoring the pond included (Plate 7.2.2):

- dredging the pond as silt and methane had built up over a period of years;
- re-edging the entire perimeter of the pond as the original edging was falling into disrepair;
- installation of a floating aerating fountain and the creation of other water features, e.g. a 'Bubbling Cairn' and a 'Highland Stream', to improve the aeration of the water;
- creation of a wetland habitat area at the east end of the pond to improve the ecology of the pond;
- reconstruction of two nesting islands for birds;
- creation of a decking and viewing platform; and
- construction of a new jetty for the Carlisle Model Boat Club (Carlisle City Council, 1996, 1998a and 1998c).

Plate 7.2.2 Restoration plan of Hammond's Pond

Hammonds Pond
Plan of Proposed
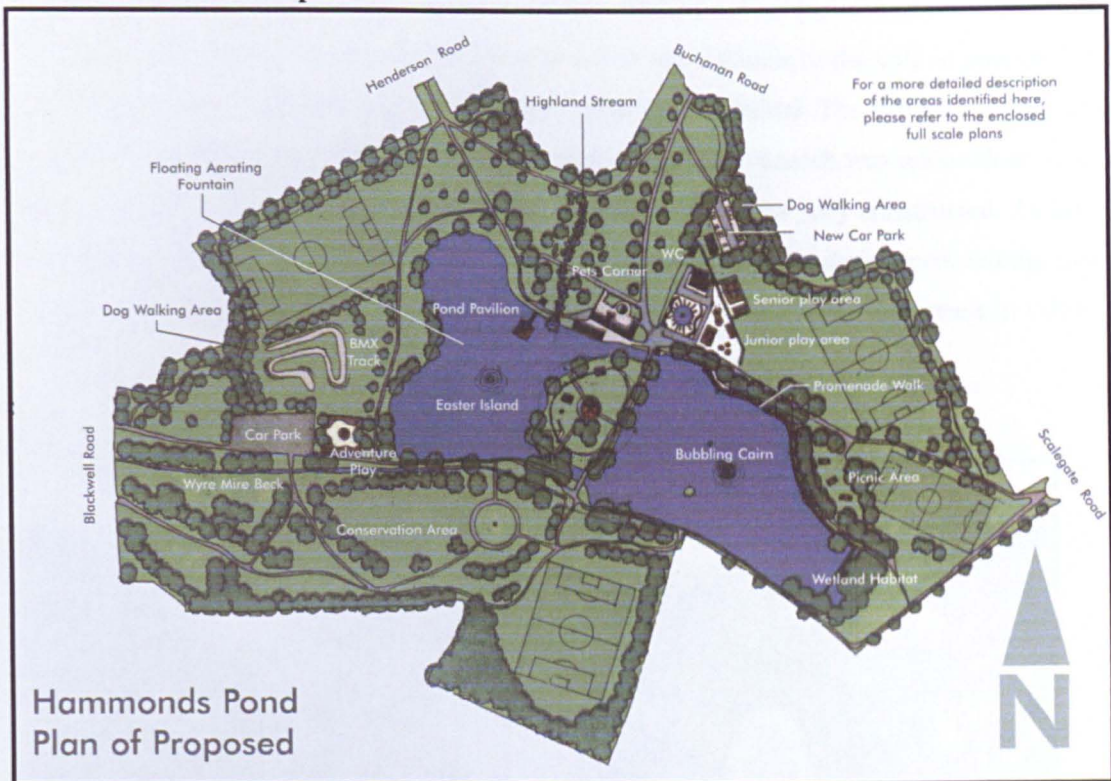
Other major elements of the restoration project included:

- refurbishment and re-opening of the café and frontage improvements;

- relocation and reconstruction of three play areas for toddlers, juniors and over tens;

- installation of new gates and railings;

- general landscaping work, including footpaths resurfacing, tree planting, picnic area and street furniture etc.;

- environmental improvements to the central island;

- upgrading changing rooms and toilets; and

- improving security in the park, e.g. installation of CCTVs (Carlisle City Council, 1996 and 1998a).

The only area in the park which was not funded by the UPP grant was the Pets Corner which had become very run-down in the last few decades and required a considerable amount of work to return it to an acceptable condition (Carlisle City Council, 1998a and 1998b). While most animals had been removed and only a couple of rabbits and birds remained, it was still very popular with younger children. Although it was proposed in the local authority's proposal to the HLF to include the redevelopment of this area into an Animal Farm with a fish aquarium, butterfly house, small animal house and improved dovecote, with no lottery funding allocated towards this area, only very basic refurbishment work was carried out in early 1999 and the future of this area remained uncertain at the time of the fieldwork.

At the time of the site visit, the café has been refurbished and reopened and new children's play areas (Plate 7.2.3) have been relocated to a new site adjacent to the café to provide better adult supervision. New gates and railings have also been installed. The full restoration of the lake was complete by the time the park users survey for this research was undertaken in the park, with the floating aerating fountain functioning and the new jetty constructed. As the chairperson of the friends group has observed, with the restoration project proceeding, there was more publicity for the park and, as a result of this, there has been an increase in visitor number.

Plate 7.2.3 One of the new children's play areas, Hammond's Pond

7.2.2 Community involvement

As the Park Development Officer has commented, community involvement has been the key to the overall restoration of HP. Apart from coordinating the various aspects of the restoration project, the bulk of the Park Development Officer's responsibilities has been related to amplify the involvement of the local community in the regeneration of the park, with the most significant one being the development of a friends group for the park which is discussed in the next section. This section focuses on how the wider community has been engaged in restoring the park.

The petition was doubtlessly the driving force for the initiation of the whole regeneration process. Thenceforth, there had been a series of community consultation and involvement activities. After receiving the petition, the first step undertaken by the Parks and Countryside Section of Carlisle City Council was to employ a private research organisation to carry out a

household survey in Currock and Upperby. Before the application was submitted to the HLF, public exhibitions were held on two successive weekends at local community centres to display the proposal. Around 200 people attended these activities (Carlisle City Council, 1996).

Following the announcement of the award, an open meeting was held at a local parish hall, aimed at the organisation of steering groups to look at a number of key aspects of the restoration project. About 50 local residents turned up, and consequently, five steering groups – landscape, play areas, café, wildlife, safety/security – were set up. The steering groups have been the major way of involving local communities in this project and eventually led to the establishment of the Friends of Hammond's Pond (see Section 7.2.3). The steering group meetings scheduled every fortnight to discuss the five main issues in turn and were opened to local residents. To encourage local people to come over to the steering group meetings and get involved in the restoration process, they were specifically referred to in the newsletter of the park and the programme of meeting dates was advertised locally.

The newsletter, 'Hammond's World', has been an important means to keep people aware of what would be happening and when with regards to the restoration work and to generate local support and commitment to the revitlaisation of the park. It was produced by the Park Development Officer bi-monthly and was circulated through local housing offices, community centers, schools, shops, post offices, and in the Civic Centre and libraries. Copies of the newsletter were also displayed on notice boards within the park and were available in the café in the park as well (Carlisle City Council, 1998a).

In addition to involving the local community through the steering groups meetings, five local residents were elected to sit on the project monitoring group which met monthly (Carlisle City Council, 1998b). Local groups which represented people with disabilities were also consulted during the development of the restoration plan. Throughout the whole restoration process, press releases had been an essential way of keeping people informed about the project. Information relating to the regeneration of the park was fed through the local newspaper, TV and radios to the general public.

In recognition that younger children's views tended to be under represented by such groups, several other measures were employed to ensure their involvement. The Park Development Officer kept regular contacts with local schools to find out how young people wanted the park to be developed. Children from one of the primary schools actually took part in the design of the new play areas. Special meetings were also arranged for older children (aged 12 to 17) to take part in the friends group's discussions. Although usually only a few would come over, the

Park Development Officer described the experience as "difficult but surprisingly positive". It was intended that through involving the school children, parents would get involved as children were in general very keen on the restoration project (Carlisle City Council, 1998b).

Not only had the local communities taken an important part in the development of the restoration project, their continuous involvement with the long term management of the park has also been addressed in the ten year management plan of the site, which was a requirement of the UPP. It was specified in one of the sections that the Park Development Officer and a Community Development Officer would be responsible for developing community involvement in HP, including: to work closely with the City Council's Community Support Unit in enabling community-based initiatives in the park and surrounding areas; to set up the friends group at the earliest possible time; to commission and enable further surveys of the park; to encourage events in the park; and to identify younger age groups. In addition, the involvement of local communities was regarded as one of the ways of marketing and promoting the park (Carlisle City Council, 1999a).

7.2.3 The Friends of Hammond's Pond (FOHP) and their involvement in the restoration project

As mentioned earlier, the establishment of a friends group for the park has been one of the major responsibilities of the Park Development Officer. While the intention was explicit, it actually took around fourteen months of close working with a group of local residents who had been regularly attending the steering groups' meetings every fortnight over that period of time and under the constant assistance of a Community Development Officer, from the Council's Community Support Unit, to have such a group formally set up.

The Park Development Officer recalled that over the first six moths, the meetings were very antagonistic as people who came to the meetings tended to look back at how nice the park used to be and complain about how the city council had allowed the park to deteriorate to its current state. By setting an exercise to ask these people to look at things they would like to do or to see happening in the park, this group of local residents began looking forward. As time progressed, it was found that there was so much interest in the park with these residents expressing their willingness to continue meeting subsequent to the completion of the restoration project and having a say in how the park is developed in the future. At this point, the Community Development Officer started to try and mould these local residents into a working group by introducing a variety of ideas including the role of a chairperson, the role of a secretary, the formation of a group and constitution, etc. Nevertheless, it was a visit to a park in Hartlepool in the autumn of 1998, to meet the friends group there and see the events and activities that that group had organised, which inspired this group of local residents in Carlisle to decide that they

would like to form themselves into a proper friends group and be able to attract extra funding to run events and activities in the park and to develop further some ideas in the park which the local authority is unable to afford. Consequently, there was a sub-group formed to work out the group's constitution and, in March 1999, a public meeting was held in a local school to elect the group's chairperson, treasurer, secretary and other committee members. From then on, the FOHP was officially established, aiming to be instrumental in the development and management of the park.

The friends group mainly consists of up to twenty senior members who are elected publicly onto the management committee. There is no general membership. While there is provision for junior members as well, at the time of the fieldwork, the group has not yet had any junior members. The Community Development Officer indicated that the group was aware of the need for that part of the group to be developed. The friends group had twenty committee members and a mailing list of around 60 people, with that number growing.

It is considered by both the chairperson of the friends group and the Park Development Officer that the group has been very keen and committed. The management committee of the friends group has continued meeting every two weeks to discuss any concerns raised regarding the renovation of the park and things they would like to do or to see happening in the park. The Park Development Officer has often attended the meetings to report the progress of the restoration project and to consult the group on issues relating to the park's regeneration and the Community Development Officer has also had a frequent presence in the groups' meetings to provide advice on events organisation and fund raising. Some relevant local authority officers were invited by the group as guests to the meetings from time to time to respond to the group's inquiries. In order to enable the friends group to find its own feet, the Community Development Officer has arranged training for chairing skills and minutes-taking skills for the group's chairperson and secretaries respectively.

Apart from the fortnightly meetings, the friends group has also started to reach out to the wider community. For example, in the summer of 1999 when the park had its annual event, the Upperby Gala, members of the friends group set up a stall to promote their group and run a small raffle to raise some money for putting up events or funding the installation of some facilities which the lottery money will not pay for. After the gala, some younger members of the group were quite keen to start organising a variety of events such as Halloween walk, Salvation Army band concert and Christmas carol singing in the park to encourage more people to come and use the park. This is exactly the kind of role both the Park Development Officer and Community Development Officer would like to see and actually encourage the friends group to play, as this would not only get the members together as a group but also help

the group to make contact with the wider community and general park users. Nevertheless, the chairperson of the friends group noted specifically that there has been a conflict of opinions between younger and elderly members in this regard as the latter considering organising events should be the local authority's responsibility.

Regardless of whether the friends group would take on the role as the event organiser for the park or not, members of the group have naturally become the unofficial contact points for local residents to express their concerns, queries and even complaints regarding the restoration of the park, expecting that they would then raise the issues in the group's meetings and with the local authority representatives. This is in fact one of the other roles which the Community Development Officer had envisaged for the group to take on; that is for the friends group to become "the link between park users and the local residents and the city council". It was also expected that the friends group would adopt a range of different means, e.g. publishing its own newsletters and going out to talk to other park users and local residents, in order to communicate with as a wide cross section of the local community as possible.

7.2.4 Community involvement in the long-term management

In terms of the long-term management of the park, the FOHP has been involved in putting forward suggestions for the ten-year management plan for the restoration project. Two things the group strongly argued for were a full-time park warden/ranger and a full-time gardener, both dedicated to the park. Despite this, as the chairperson of the friends group has indicated, the group will continue to be the guardian of the park and to encourage the involvement of more people with the development of the park.

In addition, there were discussions between the FOHP and the local authority regarding involving the friends group in another four aspects of the park's continuing management. First, the idea of the friends group taking on some responsibilities for the park's ongoing management had been discussed in the group's meetings and a list of possible responsibilities had been identified. One of them was for the group to be involved in the recruitment of dedicated on-site park staff, most possibly a park ranger that would have more of an educational role in encouraging the involvement of local schools. The friends group's involvement in this respect may include drawing up a job description and a personnel specification (with support from local authority officers) and being engaged in the interviewing process. In addition, the friends group may take part in making decisions about planting and maintenance regimes of the park.

Second, it was proposed, in the ten-year management plan for the park, that the local community should be encouraged to reclaim the organisation of the park's major annual event,

the Upperby Gala, together with a variety of other events (Carlisle City Council, 1999a). Under the assistance of the Community Development Officer, the friends group was developing an events sub-committee to take on the responsibility of organising park events.

Fund raising was the third aspect of park management on which the FOHP would be engaged. It was noted in the ten-year management plan for the park that the friends group would have fund raising capabilities which could enable them to look at ways of improving the park further (Ibid.). One of the ideas that had been supported by some members of the group was to raise funding for employing a youth worker to work with young people using the park, as they realised that there were a lot of young people coming to the park but no youth worker had been provided in the surrounding area.

Finally, the friends group would be involved in overseeing the day-to-day maintenance of the park, as most of the group's members used the park on a daily basis. The project manager indicated that there would be some sort of reporting sheets or forms which would be made available at the café within the park. Members of the friends group and in fact any user of the park could fill in these forms when they observed any problems relating to the park's routine maintenance work. Relevant action could then be taken to tackle the problems reported.

In was pointed out by the Community Development Officer that, no matter what responsibilities the friends group would eventually take on for the ongoing management of the park, it should be the result of negotiation between the friends group and relevant local authority departments. He also suggested that there should be a formal agreement, possibly in written format, to clearly define the friends group's responsibility so that all parties involved in the management of the park would have a clear idea of where the responsibility of the friends group ended and that of the local authority began.

7.3 Lister Park (LP), Bradford

7.3.1 Introduction to the restoration project

The restoration project for Lister Park (Plate 7.3.1) was awarded £3.22 million in May 1997 (Heritage Lottery Fund, 1997b), with the aim of restoring, protecting and enhancing the heritage of the park and increasing visitor numbers through the renovation, refurbishment and replacement of existing historic features and landscaping (Heritage Lottery Fund, 1997b). Along with the matched funding made up of a contribution of around £1.1 million from the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council and a grant of £15,000 contributed by a local private company, the total project cost was around £4.3 million.

To develop the proposals for the park, an in-house multi-disciplinary team was set up,

Plate 7.3.1 Lister Park, Bradford

consisting of officers from the city council's Recreation Services, Regeneration and Conservation Unit, Design and Construction Services and Arts Museums and Libraries Division (City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, 1996). Four surveys: photographic survey, arboricultural survey, structural survey and ecological survey, were undertaken to obtain updated information on the park's physical environment. Consultations with local communities on what they wanted from the restoration project and how they would like the park to be developed were also carried out during the development of the restoration scheme (see Section 7.3.2). The LP restoration project (Plate 7.3.2) contained the following major elements scheduled to a three-phased programme:

Phase One:

- restoration of the lake and islands;
- provision of a modern-structured boathouse incorporating toilet facilities and a display area;
- introduction of boating on the lake;
- restoration of the two park lodges (Oak Lane and North Park Road);
- restoration and repair of the Norman Arch, park gates, other entrance ways, fences and boundary walls;
- replacement of the fencing around the weather station;
- removal of the garden for the blind and reinstatement of the original landscape; and

Plate 7.3.2 Restoration plan of Lister Park
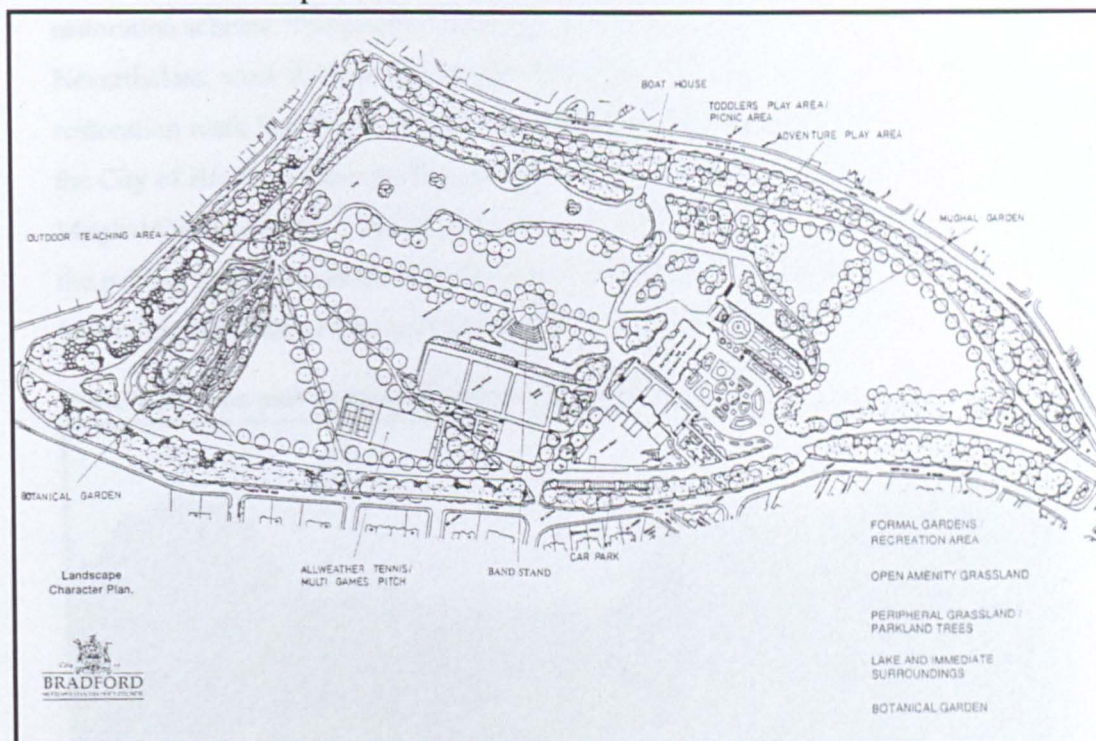
- replacement of the old toilet block with a new building containing four "superloo" style toilets.

Phase Two:

- restoration of the bandstand;
- refurbishment of the play area;
- creation of new Mughal Gardens which would reflect the cultural diversity of the area and complement the setting of Cartwright Hall and the formal flower gardens; and
- appointment of an Interpretative Officer (see Section 7.3.4).

Phase Three:

- restoration of the statues of Samuel C. Lister and Sir Titus Salt and installation of feature lighting to enhance their visibility;
- restoration and extension of the botanical garden to create additional interest;
- transformation of the skateboarding area into an outdoor classroom to help promotion of the Botanical Garden as an educational resource;
- restoration of the formal flower gardens;
- provision of lighting and CCTV to improve security in the park; and
- miscellaneous landscaping work, e.g. resurfacing of footpaths, provision of new park furniture and signage, and replacement of shrub planting.

In addition, arboricultural work and drainage work were also incorporated in the overall

restoration scheme. The project was programmed to be implemented between 1997 and 2000. Nevertheless, work did not start on site until early 1998. At the time of the site visit, some restoration work had been complete. According to information available from the web site of the City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, the construction of the boathouse and Mughal Gardens (Plate 7.3.3) has also been finished and the two attractions are now open to the public, together with the introduction of rowing boats and pedal boats onto the restored lake (City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, 2001a and 2001b).

Plate 7.3.3 The new Mughal Gardens, Lister Park

(Source: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council website)

7.3.2 Community involvement

The first step undertaken by the City Council's Recreation Division that led the in-house team in developing the restoration plan for bidding to the UPP was an extensive questionnaire survey carried out through four ways to determine public opinion about current uses, facilities and the future development of the park:

(1) a household survey was undertaken with questionnaires and prepaid envelopes distributed to each household within the 1.5 km radius of the park;

(2) an on-site park users survey using the same questionnaire was carried out for around three weeks in the summer of 1996;

(3) all the schools within the 1.5 km radius of the park were contacted and asked to help distribute the questionnaires to students; and

(4) the questionnaire was made available in locations such as local community centres, dentists and doctor surgeries which would help increase the distribution.

Altogether, between 12,000 to 15,000 questionnaires were distributed and in excess of 2,100 questionnaires were returned. In addition to the questionnaire survey, there were meetings with local schools, community organisations and existing user groups, presentations to two neighbourhood forums and a consultation evening at Cartwrhight Hall. A Young People's Forum was specifically developed with a base in the park and assisted by a Youth Community Officer to give local young people a voice and get them involved in the restoration of the park. Although there were ongoing consultation with the neighbourhood forums and with the wider local communities through Cartwright Hall's consultation meetings, not a single organisation or group had particularly come forward and become more intensely involved in the development of the restoration scheme for LP.

Other means which were mainly used to keep people informed about the regeneration of the park included the establishment of four large sign boards in the park with the telephone number of the Project Development Officer and a display of the restoration plan in Cartwright Hall which was updated regularly.

The Project Development Officer indicated in the interview that the local authority intended to involve the local community more directly in the future. This is to be achieved through two measures. The first one is the creation of mosaics in the children's play area and a dozen of other mosaics throughout the park. It is intended that a local community artist will work with a dozen different community groups to create these mosaics. The second measure is the appointment of a Park Interpretive Officer. This is one of the major elements of the restoration project and considered as an important approach for sustaining the improvements to the park. It is proposed that the Interpretive Officer will be based full time in the park and he/she will play an important role in involving the local communities with activities such as bulb planting, tree planting, etc. The Interpretive Officer will haves a wide range of responsibilities, including pulling schools into the park through talks and activities, promoting the park, giving tours and talks to visitors, involving local residents in the day-to-day management of the park, implementing the park's bylaws, and maintaining the day-to-day security within the park.

7.3.3 Community involvement in the long-term management

Among the seven case-study restoration projects, LP was the only one which did not have the involvement of a friends group or any community-based groups in the preparation of the HLF bid and the development of the restoration project after the grant was awarded. It was also the one in which local communities were involved at the least stages of the restoration process. Nevertheless, the project manager indicated that in the long term there would be a lot more opportunities to involve local communities in the management and maintenance of the park than there had been in the initial restoration scheme. With the appointment of the Park

Interpretive Officer noted in the previous section, it was anticipated that, through this post, there would be an ongoing process of community consultation to review and ensure that the management practices and policies implemented in the park would be relevant to the needs of local communities and the various groups using the park. This would be very closely linked with the Best Value approach adopted by the local authority.

In addition, the Park Interpretive Officer would play an important role in increasing community involvement in the continuing management of the park by networking with local communities, organising various events and activities such as bulb planting and tree planting, giving talks about the park, and working with local schools.

7.4 Manor House Gardens (MHG), London Borough of Lewisham

7.4.1 The restoration project

Although the restoration project for Manor House Gardens (Plate 7.4.1) was awarded a UPP grant in December 1997, the third announcement made in the first year of the funding regime, the attempt to halt the decline of the park and get it renovated can actually be dated back to 1995, initiated by the Manor House Gardens User Group (MHGUG) – an active group of local residents formed in 1993 (see Section 7.4.3). The group actively and successfully lobbied the then head of the Leisure Services to invest just over £9,000 to employ appropriate consultants to draw up a landscape strategy for the park which would identify the existing condition of the park and how the park would be developed in the future. Consequently, Land Use Consultants

Plate 7.4.1 Manor House Gardens, London Borough of Lewisham (as has been restored)

were appointed in early 1995 to carry out the work. Hearing of the coming up of the HLF's UPP, the strategy was therefore developed with the intention that it would be an application to the UPP in due course.

The final report of the landscape strategy consisting of an historic survey and a restoration plan was complete in November 1995; however, because of the reorganisation of the Leisure Services which became the Leisure, Economy, Environment Directorate during that period of time, the progress of transferring the strategy into a formal bid to the UPP was considerably delayed. Awaiting the borough council to agree to provide the matched funding, the process of putting in the bid encountered a further suspension through the first half of 1996. A summer festival in the gardens was organised by the MHGUG (see Section 7.4.3) in July that year to make the local community's determination of being involved in the regeneration of the park politically aware. Consequently, the borough council agreed to offer the necessary matched funding and the bid was eventually submitted in early 1997 jointly by the MHGUG and the London Borough of Lewisham Council. The restoration project for NHG was awarded £727,700 in December 1997 (Heritage Lottery Fund, 1997d) and the total project cost was around £1 million (NHGUG, 1999).

The MHG restoration project included the following major elements (Plate 7.4.2):

- restoration of the lake, including the installation of aerators and fountain to improve water quality, the reinstatement of bank vegetation and the provision of a timber deck for duck feeding and pond dipping;
- restoration of the River Quaggy with repaired bank and new planting;
- refurbishment of the shelter to accommodate a café, a Park Rangers Office and public toilets;
- resurfacing of existing tennis courts;
- provision of a new children's play area, a new formal flower garden and a new multi-sports area; and
- creation of new steps to the entrance of the Ice House (Land Use Consultants, 1996; Manor House Gardens User Group, 1999).

The actual work to implement the restoration plan started on site in May 1999 and much of the gardens was closed to the public due to the work. The restoration project (Plate 7.4.3) was completed by the end of 1999 and the gardens have been re-open in full since early 2000.

7.4.2 Community involvement

As the MHGUG has been the primary driving force behind the successful bidding to the UPP to secure enough funding for a complete restoration of the gardens, their engagement in that

Plate 7.4.2 Restoration plan of Manor House Gardens
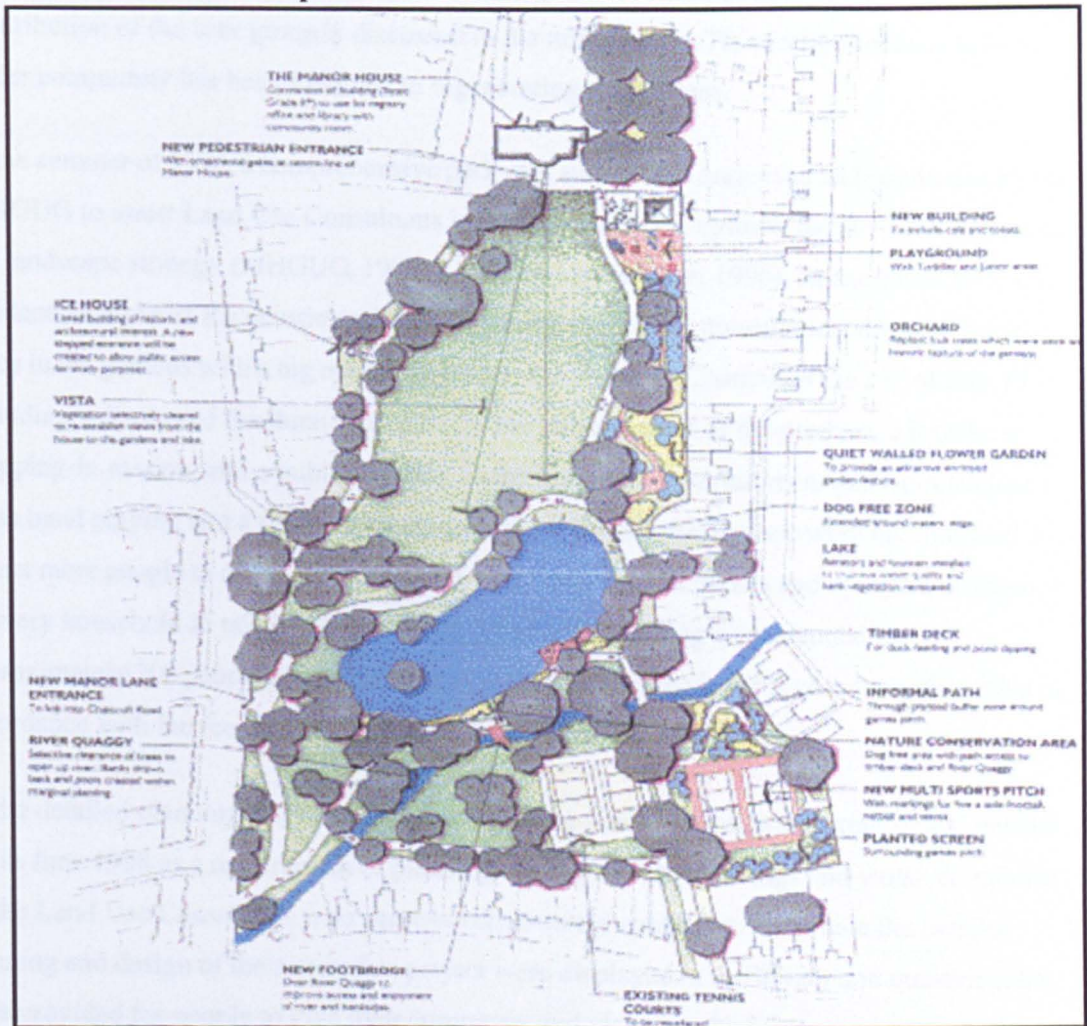
Plate 7.4.3 A new timber deck installed alongside the restored lake, Manor House Gardens

process is unquestionably the focus of community involvement in this project. The contribution of the user group is discussed in the next section. This section looks at how the wider community has been involved in regenerating the gardens.

In the summer of 1995, a comprehensive park user survey was organised and conducted by the MHGUG to assist Land Use Consultants in determining local opinion for the development of the landscape strategy (MHGUG, 1996; Land Use Consultants, 1996). In excess of 250 local residents completed the questionnaire. A major one-day public consultation exercise then took place in the gardens with a big marquee hired by the Borough Council on the 15th of July 1995, including a display of the three proposals for the enhancement of the gardens, a four-hour dropping-in session, and a public meeting as the highlight. Entertainment activities such as a brass band playing and a raffle together with provision of refreshments were incorporated to attract more people to come. The event was advertised in local papers and by flyers distributed to every household in neighbouring streets. The public meeting was attended by approximately 200 people and a final design of the restoration plan was consequently settled in accordance with the feedback from the local community.

At the detailed planning stage of the project, another public consultation exercise was carried out in June 1998 as a requirement of planning regulation. The drawings and works completed by the Land Use Consultants who successively won the contract to undertake the detailed planning and design of the restoration project were displayed in the library and questionnaires were provided for people to give their comments and views on the scheme.

There was a local history society, the Manor Lee Society, which was consulted in particular for the restoration of the Ice House, but the local authority officer responsible for the general administration of the project indicated that many of the members of that society were the same people in the MHGUG. The society has worked closely with the MHGUG; however, it has a wider interest in all the historic buildings in the area and thus the Ice House was only a small project that they took on board.

7.4.3 The Manor House Gardens User Group (MHGUG) and their involvement in the restoration project

The MHGUG was established in 1993 as a result of the then Borough Council's initiative to establish user groups for each of its parks in the idea that it would be a good way to communicate with people living around the park and to decide what improvements to parks would be most needed. However, the chairperson of the user group considered that the reason behind such an initiative was the continuous cutting back of services in parks, which led to the thought that through talks with the user groups could better decide how the limited budget for

parks should be spent. A public meeting was organised and local residents who turned up at the meeting agreed to hold further meetings to try and assist the council regarding the future development of the park. A chairperson, secretary and treasurer were elected and that was the start of the MHGUG.

From then on the group has been meeting every two months with an average attendance of between 35 to 40 people. According to the chairperson, there are approximately 60 people who have been coming to the group's meetings regularly (even though not every time). The user group has a mailing list of over a hundred people and a voluntary membership fee of £5 per year. This income is used to fund mail-outs, leaflets, handouts, etc. Newsletters which were occasionally published by the chairperson to inform local residents about what had been going on in the park were circulated through the mailing list and made available in the local library and local health centres. The group's bimonthly meetings as well as its annual general meetings are all open to the general public as a way of communicating with the wider community and getting more people involved.

The group experienced a great deal of frustration during the first year in receiving no positive responses from the council regarding their suggestions on improvements to the park. Having been told by the council all the time that they did not have the money to carry out the improvements, the group began to apply for grants from co-operative associations, private foundations and conservation trusts in order to undertake small-scaled improvements to the park such as painting the shelter, replanting and tiding up the park, but they were never successful. In recognition that their failure in securing any of those funds was due to the lack of a proper strategy/business plan for the park, the group started to lobby the local authority robustly for the production of a formal landscape strategy for the park. Another impetus for the group to do so was because at that time one of the members of the user group, a landscape architect, had become aware of the emergence of the UPP within the HLF. The user group addressed two contentions. Firstly, the community was serious about getting involved in the development of the park but cannot do things only by themselves without the help from the local authority. A landscape strategy would give the group a financial strategy in terms of applying for funding to improve the park. Secondly, the UPP would be a great opportunity for the local authority to obtain enough funding to invest in the park. As described in Section 7.4.3, the head of the Leisure Services was persuaded and the Manor House Gardens Landscape Strategy was subsequently drawn up by Land Use Consultants.

The MHGUG was heavily involved in assisting the landscape consultants with the preparation of the landscape strategy and later with putting the bid together and the detailed planning of the restoration plan. Representatives of the group took part in the two interview panels for

selecting the landscape consultant first to do the landscape strategy and then to develop and carry out the restoration scheme. A steering group was set up in consisting of the landscape consultants, relevant local authority officers (initially including the head of the Leisure Services who was made redundant during the local government reorganisation in late 1995), and four representatives of the user groups to work on the development of the strategy and the bid and to conduct public consultations. The steering group met every ten weeks or so and more intensive meetings were held during the detailed planning stage of the restoration project to go through all the drawings and decide all the final details about the work.

The user group also contributed significantly to the public consultation process during the preparation of the landscape strategy. With regards to the comprehensive park user survey mentioned in Section 7.4.2, the landscape architect of the group developed the questionnaire and several members of the group conducted the survey with visitors to the gardens. The group helped to provide refreshments and organised a raffle during the major public consultation day in July 1995, and their representatives were there, together with the landscape consultants, to answer people's questions regarding the restoration plan at the public meeting that day.

The persistence and long-term commitment of the user group to see the condition of the gardens improved could be regarded as the most fundamental element in the successful bidding to the UPP. To push the Borough Council to agree to provide the matched funding for the restoration project, the group organised a summer festival which was held in the gardens on a Sunday in July 1996, with a big marquee and a beer tent erected on the main lawn area and various events such as dance and music performances from local groups and schools, face painting, a magician, a dog show, etc. throughout the day. Refreshments and a bumper raffle were offered by the user group to help raise funding for future events in the gardens. The chairperson of the user group indicated that the foremost purpose of the festival was to convince the local authority that this was what the local community wanted and what the gardens were for, to demonstrate that this was what the local community could do, and to show that they were willing and happy to become involved in the renovation of the gardens. Over a thousand people turned up to the festival as well as the deputy leader of the council. As a result, the matched funding was secured.

In addition to the summer festival, the user group also organised other events in the gardens, e.g. family days, children's days and clean-up days, to encourage more people to come and use the gardens and to get involved. Another summer festival was organised by the user group to celebrate the completion of the restoration work and the reopening of the gardens in the summer of 2000. Approximately 1,500 people attended the event (Hopkins and Bosworth-Davies, 2000). The group has also liaised with the local police, attempting to organise a 'park

user watch' programme to tackle the problems of vandalism and other antisocial behavours in the gardens.

It is worth noting in particular the presence of a landscape architect in the user group, which has been mentioned twice in previous paragraphs. Experienced in park design and public consultation through his own professional engagements, this landscape architect was accounted as an invaluable contributor to the group's involvement in prompting and supporting the restoration of the MHG. His knowledge of the emergence of the UPP led to the development of the landscape strategy as a base for the HLF bid and he composed the questionnaire for the park user survey. In addition, he was one of the user group's representatives on the steering group meetings and the author of the brief for the landscape strategy. Because of his expertise, the group was apparently more confident in their own views, and, as the local authority officer responsible for the general administration of the restoration project has commented, the group had a very clear idea about what they wanted to do. Most importantly, their ideas were thus realistic and achievable.

The principal landscape consultant working on the project suggested that the MHGUG had been more involved than many other similar community groups his company had worked with for other restoration projects. The group was described by the local authority officer as a 'proactive user group' as they would physically do things in the gardens and develop the gardens to bring more people in. The group's determination and continuing efforts not only enabled the full restoration of MHG, their success in accomplishing the one-million pound bid to the HLF has inevitably encouraged other park user groups in the borough to press the local authority for the regeneration of their parks.

7.4.4 Community involvement in the long-term management

As the restoration plan began to be implemented on site, the steering group meetings ceased and the attention of the MHGUG shifted from pressing ahead with the project to looking at both the current and long-term management of the gardens. The landscape consultant involved in preparing the ten-year management plan for the restoration project indicated that there would be a consideration regarding involving the MHGUG in the decision making relating to the park's ongoing management. The user group has come up with many ideas for the future development of the gardens and there have already been some members expressing an interest and willingness to become involved with the various aspects of the management of the gardens, including nature conservation, sports, the use of the café and children's play area, the organisation of events and activities, and encouraging the involvement of schools.

At the time of the fieldwork, the management and maintenance of all parks in London

Borough of Lewisham was undergone privatisation. As the project manager of the restoration project indicated, the new contractor eventually obtaining the contract would be required to attend the user group's bimonthly meetings. In his view, it was very important that the views expressed in those meetings would be acted upon; therefore, the contractor was expected to send along senior managers who had decision-making powers, so that people would feel that they were listened to and valued. However, considering that there was no park expertise within the local authority to monitor the contractors' work, the user group was anxious and in doubt that the gardens would drift into another decline.

In order to make sure that the gardens would be kept in good condition, the user group had pursued fiercely the employment of a dedicated park ranger. One of the responsibilities of the ranger would be to work with the user group as well as other local interest groups to supervise and coordinate projects within the gardens, such as small-scale plantings, conservation activities and events, and to liaise and work with the user group to maintain a better level of day-to-day management of the gardens. The chairperson of the user group argued that, without such a post, those ideas that the group's members have come up with could not be put into practice. While the idea was initially supported by the local authority in its then new borough-wide parks management strategy, the strategy was superseded in January 1999 (Hopkins and Bosworth-Davies, 2000). Consequently, while a number of new rangers were employed for parks within the borough, that wider community role which the MHGUG had fought for was not addressed. The user group was very frustrated with such a development within the local authority. Nevertheless, as a member of the user group pointed out, the group's members were ready and waiting to work with the park ranger on different aspects of the future management and maintenance of the gardens once the ranger was in post.

7.5 Norfolk Heritage Park (NHP), Sheffield

7.5.1 The restoration project

In late 1995, Sheffield City Council was awarded an SRB grant towards the regeneration of the Norfolk Park area (Sheffield City Council, 1996b). In recognition that the renovation of Norfolk Heritage Park (Plate 7.5.1) would play a key role in the environmental regeneration of the area, some of the SRB money was allocated to prepare a feasibility study for the restoration of the park. When the UPP was launched in 1996, Sheffield City Council decided to put in a bid for NHP as it had had the feasibility study done. A £4.7 million restoration plan was drawn up by a partnership between the city council and its community and voluntary sector partners, including primarily the Friends of Norfolk Heritage Park (FONHP) and Sheffield Wildlife Trust (SWT). The project was awarded a grant of £2.35 million by the HLF in May 1997 (Heritage Lottery Fund, 1997a). Other major funding partners for the project include the SRB

Plate 7.5.1 Norfolk Heritage Park, Sheffield

Partnership, Parkwood Group via Enventure (Landfill Tax), South Yorkshire Forest (Landfill Tax), and Sheffield City Council (Sheffield City Council, 1999b).

To develop the restoration project further, a four-tier project team structure, as shown in Figure 7.5.1, was set up. The steering group was formed at the time when the project was first

Figure 7.5.1 Norfolk Heritage Park project team structure
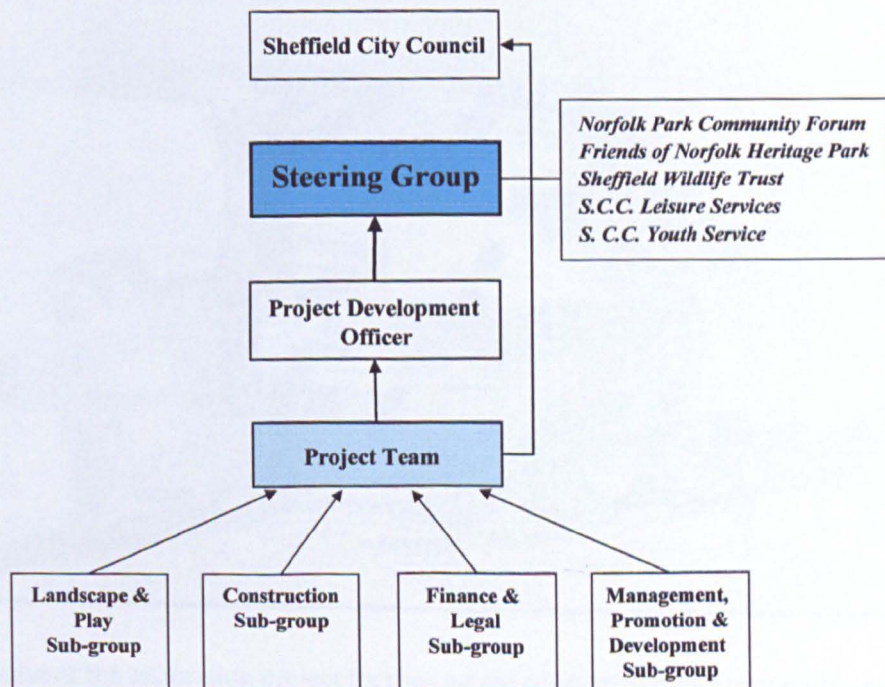
Adopted and modified from Sheffield City Council, 1996b, Norfolk Heritage Park Project Structure

initiated and consisted of representatives of the local community, represented by FONHP and Norfolk Park Community Forum, SWT, and Sheffield City Council, represented by Leisure Services (Parks and Open Spaces Division) who led the project and the Youth Service. A dedicated Project Development Officer was appointed in late 1997 to coordinate various aspects of the restoration scheme and develop the project team structure. Officers from relevant departments of the city council were then drawn together to form a project team, whose remit was to keep overall control of the project, to respond to HLF project monitors, to coordinate information from sub-groups and to report to the steering group and the city council. Four sub-groups were established with each one looking at a specific aspect of the restoration project, namely (1) landscape and play; (2) construction; (3) finance and legal; and (4) management, promotion and development.

The restoration project (Plate 7.5.2) aimed to preserve and enhance the historic landscape and heritage of the park and to encourage greater use and enjoyment by the local community and public through provision of better access for both vehicles and pedestrians and improvements to the park itself and its facilities. It contains four phases of work implementing between 1998 and 2004. Work carried out at the first phase of the project was the restoration of the two park lodges; and this was complete in mid 1999.

Plate 7.5.2 Restoration plan of Norfolk Heritage Park
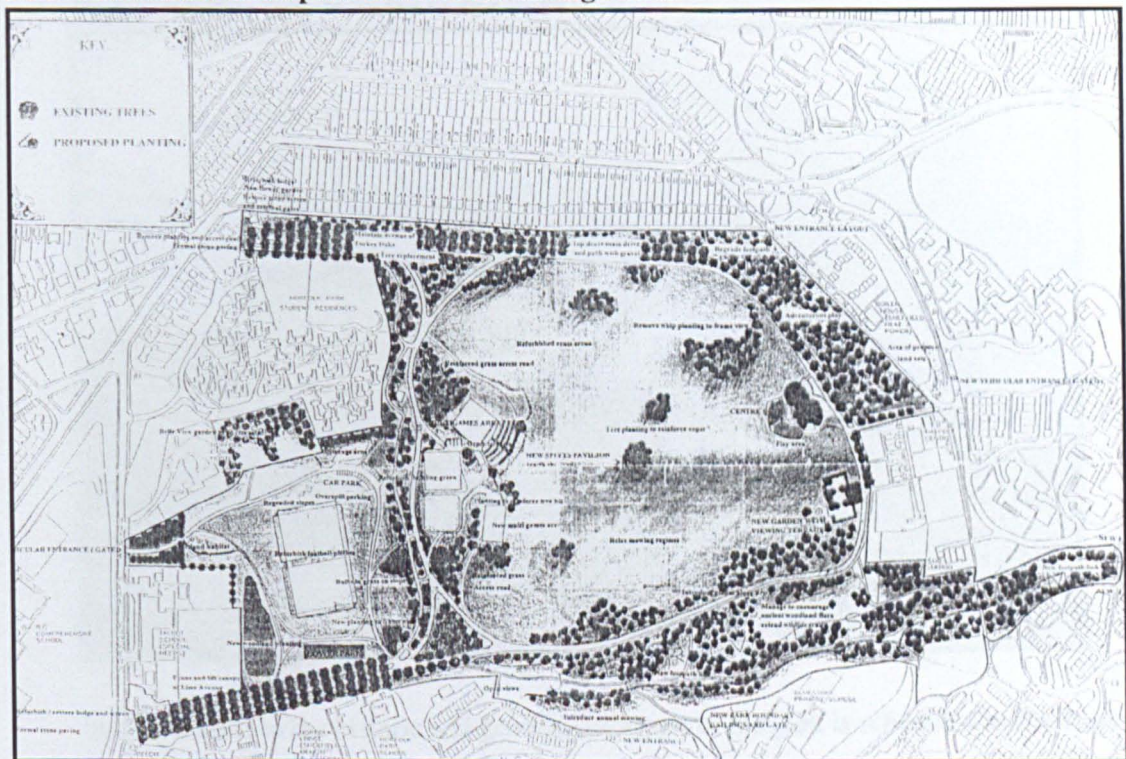
The second phase of the restoration project focuses on the construction of a new multi-purpose community and visitor centre. Although not an historic feature, this building, known as the

'Centre in the Park', is included in the restoration of NHP in response to requests from localgroups and regarded as the key to bring people back to the park. Built near to the site of the burnt down Tea Pavilion, the 'Centre in the Park' contains the following facilities:

- a community-run café,
- a community-run crèche,
- a community hall,
- an office for the park Rangers,
- offices for the Youth Service,
- meeting rooms for local Youth Club,
- several rooms available to hire for local community groups,
- a visitors area with a display space and information point, and
- toilets (Sheffield City Council, 1999b).

It is intended that this building will be a focal point for community activities and consequently inspire a sense of ownership and pride in the local community. It is also hoped that more visitors will be drawn to the park with the provision of new visitors and interpretive facilities. The construction of the Centre (Plate 7.5.3) was completed around mid 2000 and was opened to the public later that year.

Plate 7.5.3 The new 'Centre in the Park'

Improvements to the historic and general landscape of the park is scheduled as the third phase of the restoration project, including resurfacing the carriage drive, improving the park entrances and boundaries, creating a new garden and viewpoint around the arch of the old Tea Pavilion, providing new park furniture, signs and interpretation boards, and creating a new wild life habitat (with the assistance of the SWT). The last phase of the restoration project

includes improvements to existing sports facilities and the construction of a new sports pavilion to replace a number of sub-standard or derelict buildings and to provide changing facilities. Although an integral part of the full restoration of the park, the work of this phase apparently falls outside the remit of the HLF and therefore is not included in the UPP grant. An application to the Sports Lottery Fund was made to acquire the needed funding.

7.5.2 Community involvement

It is indicated explicitly in one of the bidding documents submitted to the HLF that the local community has been involved in developing proposals for the restoration of NHP and "this involvement must continue in order to create a feeling of ownership" (Sheffield City Council, 1996b, p. 49). The major approach adopted in this project to involve local communities with the regeneration of the park was the regular meetings of the steering group. Although initially there was an intention that the community representatives would chair the steering group and drive the development of the project, this responsibility eventually fell upon Leisure Services mainly because of the lack of confidence to do so by the community representatives. The steering group met approximately monthly and the minutes of the meeting were sent to each of the local groups (it was identified there were about 40 to 50 of them) to keep them informed. Any major policies and decisions relating to the park were brought to the steering group for their endorsement.

In addition to the steering group, it was also intended originally that each of the four sub-groups would all have at least a community representative. However, as the Project Development Officer has indicated, because there were only a small number of community activists in the Norfolk Park area and these people tended to be already engaged in some of the sub-groups or in many other activities relating to the overall regeneration of the estate, it became rather difficult to have all the sub-groups successfully set up and operated. Eventually, those sub-groups had to be brought together. Therefore, the local community was certainly involved at the steering group level but not necessarily the sub-group level.

As mentioned earlier, the local community was represented primarily by two local groups: the FONHP whose involvement is to be discussed in next section and the Norfolk Park Community Forum – an umbrella organisation for various organisations and agencies on Norfolk Park estate focusing on the regeneration of the whole area. The forum acts as a point of information exchange and is regarded as "the central coordinating point for regeneration efforts in the area" (Norfolk Park on the Web, 2001). There were two major benefits of involving the community forum in the steering group. First, the wider community's views on how the park should be restored and developed and in particular what facilities the new Centre in the park should provide could be taken into account in developing the restoration project.

Second, local groups could be kept informed about the development of the restoration scheme. The Project Development Officer indicated that while there were only a limited number of people in the forum originally, this organisation has grown a lot over the years. The forum has become formally constituted and therefore is eligible to apply for funding. Apart from the friends group and the community forum, the local community's involvement in the restoration of NHP has been facilitated by SWT. The contribution of the trust is discussed in Section 7.5.5.

Consultation with the wider local community was undertaken through market research at the very early stage of the feasibility study for the park's restoration, partly because of community consultation being one of the requirements of the SRB funding regime. The market research was commissioned by the steering group, aiming to ensure that the improvements strategy for the park would be developed based on what people used the park for and what they wanted from the park, and so that any improved and new facilities to be placed in the park would meet the local community's needs. To make sure that a wide range of people were consulted, the research comprised the following four parts:

(1) an interviewer-based questionnaire survey of 200 park users carried out within the park;

(2) an interviewer-based questionnaire survey of 100 local residents undertaken door to door in randomly selected houses in surrounding streets;

(3) consultation meetings with relevant community groups in which questionnaires were distributed and 116 of them were returned; and

(4) a questionnaire survey of local young people (school children aged 11-14) conducted by students of two of the local schools, obtaining 254 complete questionnaires.

At certain times, there had been ad hoc meetings with various local groups to consult them for specific issues. For instance, a number of designs for the play equipment to be installed in the new children's play grounds were displayed at the local Women and Children Centre and Youth Club for commenting. The project team then worked with people from the Women and Children Centre to draw up the final design after taking account of received comments. With the regeneration of the Norfolk Park estate taking place simultaneously, there were many community consultation exercises such as community planning weekends, etc. going on in the area. These were also a tool for giving out information regarding the development of the restoration project and as a way of listening to the ideas of the wider community about what they wanted to see happening around the park and how these ideas could be fit in to the restoration scheme of the park.

7.5.3 The Friends of Norfolk Heritage Park (FONHP) and their involvement in the restoration project

Evolving from an action group formed by a number of local residents to fight against the

design of a development proposal of student accommodations for Sheffield Hallam University which was very close on the boundary of NHP and considered by the local community as unsympathetic with the Victorian style of the park, the FONHP was established in 1994 with the aim of protecting the park from decline and misuse. The friends group started to meet once a month to discuss things needed to be done in the park. In the light of the park being very neglected and also in response to the local authority's lack of funding to maintain the park properly, the group began undertaking cleanups and other small-scale improvements to the park and lobbying politicians to take action to improve the situation. The group is formally constituted and now has a membership of around 30 to 40 people. It still meets monthly and produces its own newsletters and leaflets.

Although initially a relatively small group with only about ten to twelve active members, the friends group has been actively involved from the very outset by sitting on the steering group for the feasibility study and the restoration project. They have also been involved in the SRB management board for the regeneration of the estate. The chairperson of the friends group indicated that by getting a voice there, the group helped to ensure that developments around the park would help to bring people in from the estate to use the park.

The group played an important role in raising the matched funding for the restoration project, mainly with contributions from the Landfill Tax. Apart from this, they also took on small-scale fund raising activities, including an application to the Arts Lottery for sculptures in the park created by local artists and children and running a small stall at events around the estate. By working closely with the SWT, the friends group commissioned local artists to work with children on a wood carving in the park as part of the city's children's festival. There have also been various activities in the park, such as fungus trails and bat watch nights, organised by the friends group to encourage more people to come and use the park. Having had a park ranger dedicated to the park, the group is prepared to work with the ranger to come up with more activities and to get more people in the community involved with the restoration and future development of the park. In addition, the friends group also tried to promote the park by attending a local history fair, showing painting and old photographs of the park.

Aware of their small membership, the friends group has been trying to recruit more local people by advertising the group in the small stall they run at any events around the estate. While it is generally perceived that due to the nature of the estate, people tend to be less motivated to join any sort of community groups, both the Project Development Officer and another local authority officer who had previously led the development of the restoration project felt that the friends group has grown bigger over the years and anticipated that there will be more people joining the group once local residents begin to see the improvements to

the park brought about by the restoration project.

7.5.4 Community involvement in the long-term management

In terms of involving local communities in the long-term management of NHP, the project manager indicated there were two aspects that needed to be considered: involving local communities in carrying out the actual maintenance work and in making decisions regarding the ongoing management of the park. For the former, the local authority has worked with the SWT to develop a training programme which would enable local people to benefit from working and training for environmental skills in the park and, possibly, lead to the acquisition of a National Vocational Qualification. As the Environmental Development Worker of the SWT pointed out, a number of local people would be employed not only to develop a tree nursery alongside the park which would hopefully become a local business, but also to actually undertake some of the maintenance work in the park.

For the second aspect, it was proposed in the bid document that there would be an advisory group made up of representatives of park users to help control how the park would be managed and developed in the future. As the new Centre in the Park would be the focus for activities within the park after the restoration project has been completed, a management board consisting of a park manager (to be recruited in the future), representatives of the restoration partnership, tenants of the building and representatives of users would be set up specifically to coordinate activities in that building. In addition, it was expected that the current restoration partnership would be developed to the extent in which the local community would be able to take over the management of the Centre in the Park on a lease arrangement.

Nevertheless, the project manager indicated that part of the problem with involving local communities in the ongoing management of the park was that different funders had different requirements regarding the ownership of the park. For some funding bodies, they wanted the community group which was grant-aided to be given a stake in the park by obtaining some type of ownership or lease of the park. Whilst other funders insisted that the ownership of the park should stay with the local authority. Therefore, it was important to come up with a way which would give local communities some of the control over the future management of the park but without changing the ownership of the park.

Although it was not mentioned by any of the interviewees if the FONHP would be involved in the proposed advisory group and management board, it seems to be beyond question as the friends group was one of the partners of the restoration partnership and represented the local community and users of the park during the regeneration process. Another area of the park's ongoing management where the friends group would continue to get themselves involved was

to work with park rangers to organise events and activities within the park. As the chairperson of the friends group noted, it would be an ongoing process to promote the park and to encourage more people in the local community to come and use the café, the crèche, and the Centre and the park; therefore, a viable friends group would always be needed to play this role in the long-term management of the park.

7.5.5 Sheffield Wildlife Trust (SWT)

Sheffield Wildlife Trust has been one of the key partners in developing the restoration scheme for NHP and played an important role in facilitating community involvement in regenerating the park. Aiming to improve Sheffield's natural environment for both people and wildlife, the trust's remit covers the whole metropolitan area as well as nearby districts to the city. Nevertheless, it has focused on particular areas of the city because the trust was partly funded by the city council to commission the compilation of a park regeneration strategy for the city (which was completed by Alan Barber in 1993) and to implement that strategy. NHP is one of the areas in which the trust has been working since about 1994.

Prior to the HLF bid, the trust had organised events and run children's activities in NHP to encourage the local community to come and use the park. With regards to the trust's involvement in the park's regeneration, they were engaged in undertaking a vegetation survey, conducting the park users survey and coordinating the young people's survey. The latter two surveys were part of the market research undertaken to consult the wider community for the preparation of the feasibility study. The trust also carried out small research projects to consult local communities and collect information on how the park should be developed. In terms of fund raising, the trust assisted the FONHP in securing the Landfill Tax grant as part of the matched funding for the restoration project.

As one of the trust's Environmental Development Workers involved with the renovation of the park has commented, the trust has a role in representing the local community in the areas where they work because, in addition to environmental conservation projects, they have been doing a lot of community development work as well. It is argued by this Environmental Development Worker that, having had the links with the local community, the trust is able to bring the community into the project in a way that the city council cannot. In particular, the trust was involved in setting up the FONHP and has supported the group since then, including working with them to do cleanups in the park, helping the friends group in facilitating large amounts of funding, and organising events and children's activities in the park.

7.6 Sheffield Botanical Gardens (SBG), Sheffield

7.6.1 Introduction to the restoration project

As the chairperson of FOBS has recalled, Sheffield Botanical Gardens (Plate 7.6.1) in general had became very run down over the last two decades of the 20th century, in particular in the early 1990s, mainly because budgets, resources and labour for open spaces in the local authority were all slashed. The advent of the UPP was obviously a great opportunity for obtaining money to restore the architectural and landscape fabric of the gardens; thus, a partnership, known as the Sheffield Botanical Gardens Steering Group, was formed consisting of representatives from the Sheffield Town Trust (owners), Sheffield City Council, Directorate of Development, Environment and Leisure (managers), FOBS, and the Department of Landscape at the University of Sheffield (chair of the steering group and advisors), to develop a bid for the renovation of SBG (Sheffield City Council, 1998b). In May 1997, the gardens were granted £5.06 million, the largest award made in that first announcement of the UPP, by the HLF. This grant made up 75% of the total project cost which was estimated to be £6.75 million and the remaining 25%, i.e. another £1.67 million, would have to be raised as matched funding. The steering group was later expanded to take on another partner, the Sheffield Botanical Gardens Trust (SBGT), a new organisation set up in 1996 by FOBS particularly to support the gardens and to raise money for the project (see Section 7.6.3 for more discussion).

Plate 7.6.1 Sheffield Botanical Gardens, Sheffield

Following the success of the bid, a series of working groups were set up under the steering group to progress more detailed work of various facets of the project, including buildings,

landscape, fund raising, publicity and finance. A Project Development Officer dedicated to work on the SBG restoration project was appointed in late 1997. One of the major responsibilities of the Project Development Officer was to coordinate the steering group and working groups and to develop a project framework (Figure 7.6.1). Each working group would ideally be made up of representatives of each steering group partner and then representatives of each working group would be drawn together to form a core project team to coordinate the overall progress of the restoration project. The steering group originally met intensely but the frequency of meetings has reduced to every three months after the establishment of the working groups and core project team that meet roughly monthly. The steering group's remit has also shifted to steering the policy on the project and making major decisions. A new Curator was also appointed in the spring of 1999. In addition to being responsible for the everyday management of the gardens and staff, the Curator has also played an important role in the development and implementation of the restoration project.

Figure 7.6.1 Sheffield Botanical Gardens project team structure
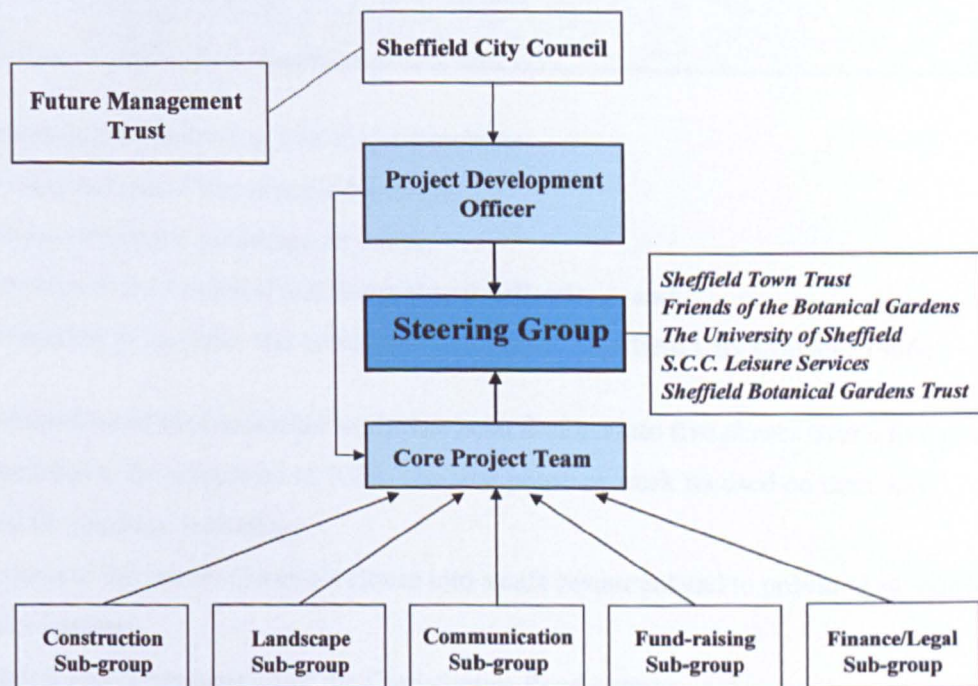
Adopted and modified from Sheffield City Council, 1998a, Sheffield Botanical Gardens Project Team Structure

In recognition of the gardens' national significance as a Grade II listed historic designed landscape, the overall restoration strategy (Plate 7.6.2) is to restore the gardens to Marnock's design based on their late 19th century condition (Sheffield City Council, 1996c). This is to be achieved mainly through reconstructing the spirit of the layout of that period with its original design intentions, while at the same time taking full account of modern requirements. Based on the strategy, a range of specific proposals have been developed for physical restoration

Plate 7.6.2 Restoration plan of Sheffield Botanical Gardens

works, comprising the following four major elements:

- restoration and use of key historic buildings;
- restoration of historic landscape structure;
- regeneration of the botanical and horticultural collections; and
- improvements to facilities and access and enjoyment (Sheffield City Council, 1996c).

The implementation of the restoration works has been divided into five phases over a five year period, scheduled to be completed in 2004. The first phase of work focused on three key buildings of the gardens, including:

- conversion of the former Curator's House into a café/restaurant and to provide new visitor facilities (toilets);
- restoration and refurbishment of the Clarkehouse Road entrance gatehouse to accommodate an office for the Curator, an exhibition/display area and a shop; and
- refurbishment of South Lodge to provide improved tenant accommodation (Sheffield City Council, 1998b).

The above works were completed in the autumn of 2000 and the main entrance on Clarkehouse Road (Plate 7.6.3) and the new café/restaurant formally opened to the public in mid-December of that year.

The second phase of work involves the substantial restoration of the three "Paxton Pavilions"

Plate 7.6.3 The restored Gatehouse, Sheffield Botanical Gardens

together with the reinstatement of the original ridge and furrow linking glass corridors to form one linear long glasshouse. This phase also includes the establishment of new plant collections from various temperate regions of the world in the restored glasshouse. The physical restoration work of the pavilions commenced on site in the summer of 2001 and the plants to go into the glasshouse are being procured. It is anticipated that that work will take around one year to complete.

Landscape consultants have been appointed to work closely with the Project Development Officer, the Landscape Working Group and the Curator to develop the proposals for the last three phases of work further. These include:

- restoration and refurbishment of the original turnstile entrance on Botanical Road;
- restoration of the gardens key features, including the Bear Pit, bandstand, fountain, Pan statue and fossil tree;
- restoration of the landscape structure, including entrances, boundaries, paths, street furniture and signage; and
- enhancement of the plan collections throughout the gardens.

7.6.2 Community involvement

With FOBS being one of the partners of the Sheffield Botanical Gardens Steering Group, it is quite clear that the friends group, whose roles and involvement are discuss in Section 7.6.3, has been the focus of community involvement in the restoration of SBG. Having said that, there have also been various other efforts being put in to ensure that not only is the wider

community kept informed about the progress and development of the project, but their views and concerns are also properly channelled into the regeneration process of the gardens.

For the preparation of the HLF bid, market research was undertaken by the Department of Landscape at the University of Sheffield, a partner of the steering group, during the summer of 1996 to collect information on how the gardens were used and what people would like to see improved or provided in the gardens to encourage more frequent visits. The research was made up of three questionnaire surveys: one with users, one with local residents and businesses, and one with specialist user groups. The users survey was carried out in the gardens, with 200 visitors randomly selected and interviewed. As for the residents survey, 500 questionnaires with stamped addressed envelopes enclosed were distributed to all the houses that back onto the gardens and a random selection of houses in adjoining roads. Some of the houses were for business uses. Finally, three hundred and eighteen questionnaires were received and 200 of them were randomly selected for analysis. With regards to the user groups survey, questionnaires were sent to the 37 user groups identified as using the gardens on a regular basis. Fifteen completed questionnaires were returned. To further develop a transport strategy for the gardens, a transport survey was undertaken, also by the university, in September 1998 to look at how users of the gardens travel there.

A series of public meetings were held in the New Centre in the gardens at various stages of the restoration process, mainly as a way of informing the local community about the progress of the project. The Curator and Project Development Officer have also given tours of the gardens to the public to introduce the various phases of restoration work. The tours have been planned at different times of the day, intending to catch as many people who would be interested in the restoration project as possible and to inform people in advance so that when they see the work starting on site, they would not be too worried. All these events were advertised in local shops, around local houses, and also in the newsletters of the gardens which have been purposely produced to give out updated information on the regeneration of the gardens. The newsletters are circulated in places such as leisure centres and libraries in Sheffield and houses in the immediate vicinity of the gardens.

In addition to two large notice boards erected at both major entrances to explain about the restoration project, small temporary notices are put up at locations where restoration work is to be carried out before the work commences to inform visitors in advance about the changes that are going to take place. Keeping a regular dialogue with the local media including newspapers, radios and TV at various key stages of the project has also been an important means to reach out to a wider range of people in Sheffield and give out information on the development of the gardens' regeneration. Furthermore, a web site for the gardens has been developed since December 1998 to provide general information and updates on the restoration project. This is

undoubtedly a new way of keeping people informed as up to September 2001 the web site has been visited around 15,000 times.

Apart from adopting the above methods to inform the local community about the progress of the project, the Project Development Officer and another officer who has been involved with the restoration project from the outset have been attending the meetings of Broomhill Forum regularly not only to give out updates on the regeneration process of the gardens, but also to understand other developments taking place in the Broomhill area which may have an impact on the restoration and future development of the gardens and to take back any ideas and concerns raised by other members of the forum. As the Forum is a local organisation which brings together local businesses, schools, churches, community police and politicians to discuss issues affecting the area, it is considered that there is a real mix of all sectors of the community in the forum and thus it can represent the community more broadly than FOBS and perhaps those people that live in the area but do not necessarily use the gardens on a regular basis. The representatives of the friends group and University often go along to the Forum meetings as well, in an attempt to demonstrate to the wider community that the restoration project has been developed by a partnership.

As one local resident group had a particular concern regarding the extra traffic and parking problems that may be generated during and after the restoration of the gardens, a specific meeting was held to consult the group and listen to their views. Other specialist user groups/societies that have been using the gardens regularly have also been approached through FOBS when relevant information was required.

As the physical restoration work starts to be implemented on site, people begin realising the scale of the project and it becomes apparent that more people's involvement with the regeneration of the gardens, particularly in terms of raising the matched funding, is greatly needed. Both FOBS and SBGT are trying to take more people into this process. Their specific involvement is discussed in the following section.

7.6.3 The Friends of Sheffield Botanical Gardens (FOBS) and their involvement in the restoration project

Concern about the run-down condition of SBG, FOBS was set up in 1984 with two major roles: to promote interest in amateur gardening in the city and to support the work of the gardens. During the first few years, due to the restriction of city council policy, the friends group could not undertake any practical work in the gardens and therefore worked mostly on the gardening society aspect of it. At that stage, the group had started raising money for the gardens to help fund a number of capital projects. In the early 1990s, the council policy was changed to allow

voluntary work to be undertaken in the city's open spaces, FOBS commenced practical maintenance work in the gardens right away as they had watched the gardens decline significantly through the 80s and into the early 90s and had wanted to do voluntary work in the gardens for many years. The friends group very rapidly shifted its focus from being chiefly a gardening society to becoming an active support society in about 1993 or 1994.

Nowadays, FOBS is a formally constituted group with a membership of between 450 and 500 members that is still growing. While some of the members live very locally and a few come from areas further outside Sheffield, most members are scattered around the city. The current annual subscription for each member is £10 per person. There is an executive committee consisting of seventeen committee members and meeting five times a year. In addition, there are four subcommittees organised to deal with various aspects of the group's business. The subcommittees meet more frequently for detailed discussions and report back to the executive committee who take the final major decisions. According to the chairperson of FOBS, such a structure has been working really well. The group produces its own newsletters twice a year and organises a range of events and activities, some for its members only but some open to the public as well, mainly for fund-raising.

As noted earlier, FOBS has played a key role in developing the restoration project for Sheffield Botanical Gardens. In fact, the friends group, together with the Sheffield Town Trust, provided some of the funding for the initial research for the preparation of the restoration project. The group subsequently became one of the partners of the steering group and has been represented in almost all the working groups. With regards to the general development of the restoration project, FOBS's representatives have taken part in recruiting the Project Development Officer and the Curator, putting together the business plan by indicating the amount of funding they are prepared to offer over the coming ren-year period, drawing up the briefs for the lease of the café/restaurant and shop, and selecting the franchisees. The local authority officer who was initially involved in putting together the bid considered that the friends group has been involved from a position of power, not just a token involvement.

While continuing to be actively involved in the day-to-day management and maintenance of the gardens, FOBS have also taken on many other roles to support the renovation of the gardens. One of the most significant ones is to help raise the £1.67 million matched funding for the restoration project. In this respect, FOBS actually contributes in two ways. First, it has been written into the budget for the bid that FOBS per se is to supply between £15,000 and £20,000 each year as part of that budget. FOBS has been organising various events, most notably the three major plants sales every year, even prior to the restoration project, to raise money for the gardens. For instance, the three plants sales raised around £10,000 in 1999. The

friends group also supply plants for people having open days, coffee mornings or other fund-raising events for the group and for the gardens. A series of cards have been produced and sold on a small stall the group run in various events they go to. In addition, the time that FOBS members put into the development of the plant collections (including naming and labelling) and other work relating to the regeneration of the gardens is counted as work in kind for the matched funding. As well as raising cash, FOBS has also been offered and is seeking sponsorships for materials for the regeneration scheme. Nevertheless, there have been problems occurred regarding this because the materials to be sponsored sometime do not fulfil the requirement of heritage restoration and therefore are unlikely to be approved by the project monitors.

The second aspect of FOBS's contributions toward fund raising relates to SBGT, a registered charity initially established by the friends group in 1996 just to support the gardens financially and whose first major job has been to raise approximately £1.25 million for the restoration project. As the chairperson of FOBS has argued, this is considered as a more effective way of fund raising because, as a registered charity, they are able to attract funds from many more sources such as other national, regional and local charitable trusts and foundations. By December 2000, SBGT has raised in excess of £793,000 which is made up of contributions from FOBS, large institutions, businesses, charitable trusts and funding from local Landfill Tax credit schemes. However, as more funding is still needed, the trust has initiated a Supporter scheme to ask members of the public interested in and concerned about the gardens to become supporters of the gardens who will pay an annual subscription to support the gardens.

Apart from being heavily involved in fund raising, FOBS has engaged itself a lot in publishing and promoting the gardens in order to raise the profile of the gardens. There are leaflets and handouts with information about the gardens and the restoration project produced and distributed widely by the friends group. They also take tours round the gardens and go out to give talks all around Sheffield and surrounding villages to explain about the regeneration of the gardens. The friends group also organises a children's day with the park rangers in the autumn time and is getting school groups to come into the gardens as part of their national curriculum to encourage more children's uses of the gardens and to develop a contact at the school age.

7.6.4 Community involvement in the long-term management

With regards to the long-term management of SBG after the restoration work has been completed, it was proposed in the bid document that a management trust would be established in the future to replace the local authority to manage the gardens. As the project manager for

the gardens' restoration project pointed out, the advantage of a trust managing the gardens was that the trust, with a charitable status, would be able to access more funding opportunities than the local authority could.

However, the idea has not been put into practice yet for two reasons. Firstly, because the UPP grant was awarded to the local authority as the current manager of the gardens, there could not be a sudden shift of the gardens' management to a new organisation. Secondly, the model of how the management trust should be set up was still being explored at the time of the fieldwork. Nevertheless, the Sheffield Town Trust, the owner of the gardens, would want an active role in the gardens' management. The FOBS has also been very interested in the ongoing management of the gardens since they had been actively involved before and during the gardens' regeneration. As the local authority officer who was initially involved in putting together the bid indicated, the success of the friends group in fund raising is actually going to be closely tied in to the revenue stream of the gardens because the city council can no longer fund this from its own budget. In addition, the SBGT would certainly be involved in the management trust as it had been written in the bid that the trust would raise between £15,000 to £20,000 annually for the gardens. Thus, the above three organisations and the local authority would be the essential members of the management trust.

As the chairperson of FOBS noted, the friends group would certainly be represented on a management committee for the gardens before the management trust could be established. Apart from being involved at the managerial level, the friends group would continue to have involvement with practical maintenance work in the gardens. Nevertheless, the FOBS chairperson suggested that there might be a change in how the group's volunteers being organised to carry out practical maintenance work. Currently, volunteers of the group tended to move from point to point in the gardens. It was anticipated that in the future when there are enough staff for the gardens, volunteers could be formed into smaller groups and each of the groups would be related to a particular member of the staff to work on specific areas of the gardens.

7.7 Ward Jackson Park (WJP), Hartlepool

7.7.1 Introduction to the restoration project

While the necessity of regenerating Ward Jackson Park (Plate 7.7.1) was recognised in Hartlepool Borough Council's environmental strategy developed in June 1996, it was also clearly indicated in the strategy that external funding would have to be sought for that purpose (Hartlepool Borough Council, 1996). As considerable capital investment is needed to prevent further significant deterioration of the park, a bid was submitted to the HLF's UPP for the

Plate 7.7.1 Ward Jackson Park, Hartlepool

restoration and revitalisation of WJP in September 1996. The project was awarded around £1.41 million in July 1997, the second announcement made by the HLF in that year (Heritage Lottery Fund, 1997c). The total project cost was approximately £1.93 million and the matched funding primarily consisted of a £0.4 million grant from Capital Challenge and a £50,000 contribution from Hartlepool Borough Council.

The restoration project submitted for bidding was devised and worked up by a local authority in-house team comprised of officers from the council's major departments, including the Chief Parks and Recreation Officer, Principal Architect, Principal Quantity Surveyor, Senior Landscape Architect, Parks and Countryside Officer, Conservation Officer and Public Arts Officer (Hartlepool Borough Council, 1996). A Park Development Officer was then appointed in April 1998 to perform two major roles: coordinating the various aspects of the further development of the restoration project, and working with the local community to develop their involvement and contribution to the future of the park.

Aiming to return the park to its original splendour and to provide for the full involvement of park users in the future, the restoration project (Plate 7.7.2) contains the following major elements:

- restoration and improvements of the lake, including replacing the existing edging, additional tree planting, seating provision and refurbishment of the boat house;
- improvements to the park's historic landscape, focusing on reinstatement of paths and new planting schemes in the Woodland Walk area and refurbishment of walls and steps and introduction of attractive bedding display in Terrace Walk area;

Plate 7.7.2 Restoration plan of Ward Jackson Park

WARD JACKSON PARK
MASTERPLAN
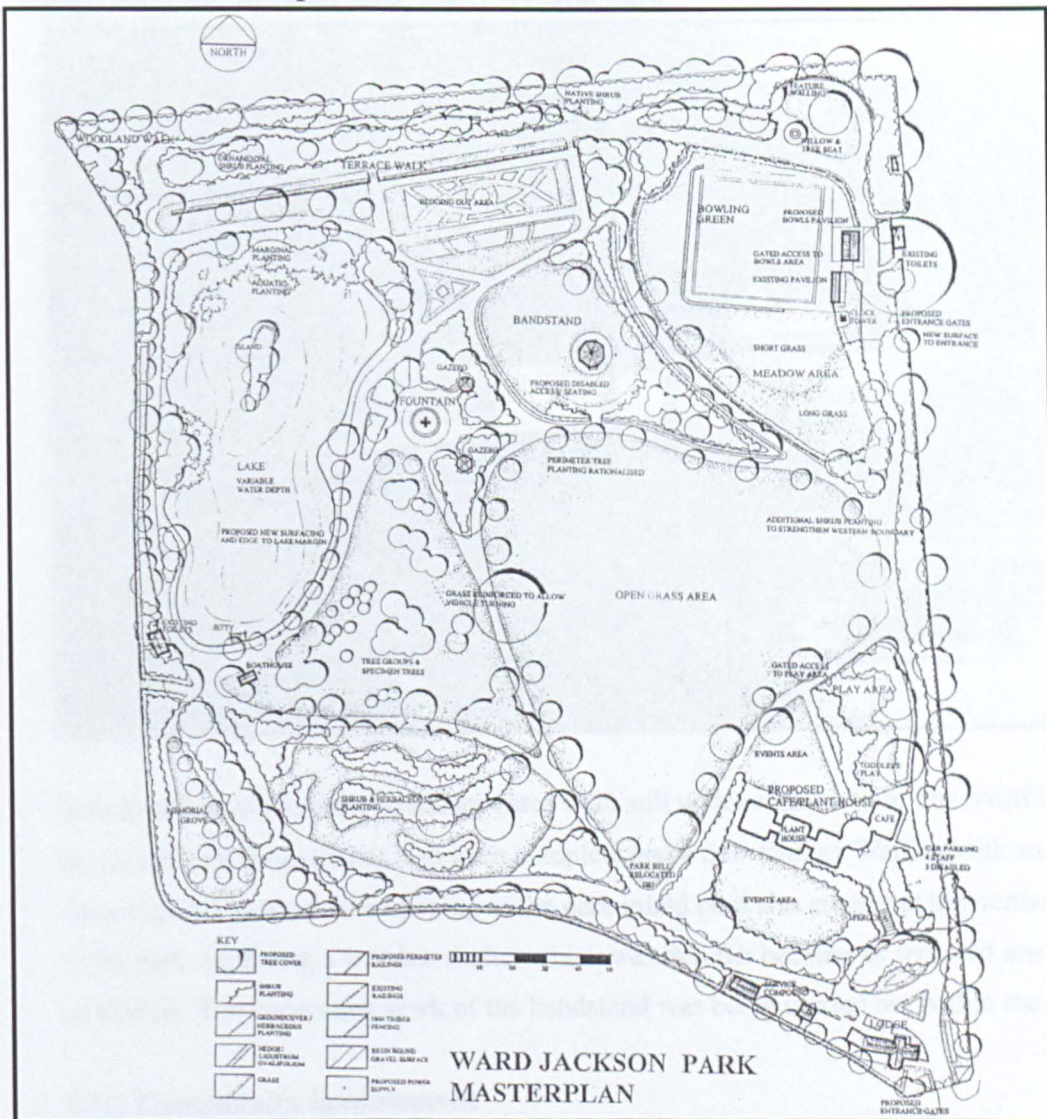
- repair and preservation of the park's historic buildings and structures, including the park keeper's lodge, clock tower, bandstand and fountain, and improvements to their surrounding areas;
- repair and re-instatement of boundaries gates and railings;
- refurbishment of park infrastructure such as paths and the lakeside broadwalk;
- provision of appropriate street furniture, signage and public art; and
- creation of new recreational and community facilities, including a Bowls Pavilion and a Park Centre incorporating café, plant house, office provision, visitor facilities and flexible space for education, exhibition and community use (Hartlepool Borough Council, 1996).

The project was phased over a three-year programme and the physical restoration work commenced on site in early 1998. At the time of the site visit, the lake (Plate 7.7.3) was being restored together with the replacement of the old edging, construction of a new jetty and resurfacing of the lakeside broadwalk. New gates for the main entrance on Elwick Road have

Plate 7.7.3 The restored lake, Ward Jackson Park

been installed, while other boundary gates were still under construction. The refurbishment of the ornamental fountain has also been complete and a new Feature Walling with an extract from a speech given on the opening of the park inlaid on it was created at the northeast corner of the park, replacing a wooden shelter which was derelict because of repeated arson and vandalism. The restoration work of the bandstand was being carried out within the park.

7.7.2 Community involvement

Community involvement has definitely been a focus of the renovation of WJP as the Park Development Officer was assigned the responsibility to encourage the active participation of all sections of the local community at the various stages of the restoration process ranging from design through to implementation and maintenance. In this respect, the most significant work has been to facilitate the establishment of a friends group for the park. In addition, a community art group was also purposely set up to take part in the creation of public arts in the park. The friends group and Community Sculpture Group are discussed in Sections 7.7.3 and 7.7.5 respectively. This section looks at the methods that were adopted to consult the wider community.

At the outset when the HLF bid was developed, a park user survey was undertaken to draw out the views of park users on possible changes and improvements to the park as well as to provide the information on how the park was used and what the users' feelings about the park were. Commissioned by the Parks and Countryside Officer of the Education and Community Services Department, the interviewer-based questionnaire survey was carried out by the

Corporate Policy Unit's Research Team of the Borough Council in the summer of 1995, with a total of 372 interviews with visitors to the park completed (Hartlepool Borough Council, 1996). In August and September 1999 (at the time of the fieldwork), another park user survey was being undertaken in the park to consult users about cycling in the park; however, no further information regarding this survey was revealed to the author.

After the UPP grant was awarded, there were then a series of press releases in the local media to start informing people of the development of the restoration project. As the Park Development Officer revealed, these press releases were actually used also as a means to obtain a list of names of people interested in the regeneration of the park. This was achieved by advertising in the press releases that there would be a public meeting coming up, with only the contact number of the Park Development Officer but not a date for the meeting. People who rang up to express their interest in attending the public meeting then had their names and contact information noted down subject to their willingness. Having had a good response for this, a public meeting was consequently organised, with a slide show to explain the restoration project and a period of time for people to express their concerns and views. Following this major public meeting, a number of smaller public meetings were held in a variety of locations in an attempt to engage people in other areas around the town. Hartlepool Volunteer Development Agency was approached to provide a list of local groups who were subsequently invited to attend the public meetings. By this way, it was expected that a cross section of people would be consulted. In total approximately 170 people attended the public meetings and these people formed a basis on which the friends group was gradually brought about (see Section 7.7.3).

In addition, a number of local groups, businesses and agencies, generally with people at the managerial level, were approached individually to communicate with them regarding the project and to help spread the information out. Through involving more local groups with the creation of public arts in the park (see Section 7.7.5), it was anticipated that more people would become aware of the renovation of the park. The local community forum has also been tied in not only to keep people informed about the progress of the restoration work but also to obtain feedback.

While it was indicated in the interview with the Park Development Officer that there was a concept to develop a web site of the park as a means of giving out information on the regeneration scheme, it seems that the intention was not delivered eventually as a search for such a web site has obtained no result. The Park Development Officer, however, was quite aware of the limitations this most advanced communication medium may actually possess as it would depend on the ownership of a personal computer, access to the internet and even the

motivation of people to utilise free internet access in places such as local libraries.

7.7.3 The Friends of Ward Jackson Park (FOWJP) and their involvement in the restoration project

As noted in the previous section, the Park Development Officer was instrumental in setting up a friends group of WJP as a focus of community involvement in supporting the regeneration of the park. Shortly after the major public meeting, the Park Development Officer sent out newsletters to people attending the meeting and started calling a meeting every four weeks of those who were interested in the park to update them on new developments of the restoration project, listen to their views and concerns, and, intentionally, to discuss the various aspects of forming a friends group. Approached by the Park Development Officer for assistance, the Hartlepool Volunteer Development Agency also played an important role in facilitating the establishment of the friends group. One of the agency's project officers actually chaired the first meeting held in September 1998 which had a turnout of around 50 people. From then on, there were more formal meetings in the following two months to discussion issues relating to the formalisation of a group. In November 1998, a formal constitution based on a model taken from the Charities Commission for England and Wales was finally adopted, marking the formal formation of the FOWJP.

While at one point, the group had over 140 names on its mailing list, the number has gradually dwindled. At the time of the fieldwork, there were around 35 people on the mailing list receiving minutes of previous meetings and notifications of future meetings and activities. Among them, approximately ten or so were considered as the hard core of the group. These people comprised the group's management committee and met about every six weeks at a cricket club very close to the park. Initially the group just discussed issues regarding the restoration project and a variety of things that they would like to see happening in the park; and gradually they started to look at organising events in the park. The annual subscription for membership of the group is two pounds per person.

The first event successfully organised by the friends group was a grand opening to celebrate the completion of the restoration of the ornamental fountain in August 1999. Volunteers of the group helped to clean the site up, set up chairs and stands, and arrange entertainment activities and other things that were needed. The event was considered a big success as thousands of people turned up on the day. As the Park Department Officer observed, the friends group was getting disappointed and started to lose its confidence prior to the opening of the fountain because the number of people attending the meetings diminished. The success of the fountain event apparently helped the group to regain its confidence. Subsequently, the friends group was not only encouraged to come up with more events in the park but also began to look at the

potential of adopting a charitable status. The group is now included in the Central Register of Charities maintained by the Charity Commission for England and Wales (Charity Commission, 2001). The secretary of the friends group indicated that as well as helping the friends to come together as a group, those events would obviously have wider benefits to the local community and hopefully encourage more people to become interested in the group's work. Thus, "as an organisation, we can grow up", he stated.

The friends group has in the past written to charitable trusts and companies to raise some money and there were also a number of fund-raising activities at the fountain event. The secretary of the friends group anticipated that writing to charitable trusts and companies would be continued in the future. The money raised has mainly been used to support the events the group is going to put on in the park and for the administration costs of the group.

Having instrumentally set up the friends group, the Park Development Officer expressed that it was intended that the group would eventually not only take on the position of being the mediator between Hartlepool Borough Council and Hartlepool people, but also take over some of the roles the Park Development Officer has played in encouraging the involvement of local communities.

7.7.4 Community involvement in the long-term management

Although the necessity of involving local communities in a partnership to manage WJP after it has been restored was recognised by the local authority, it was noted by the Park Development Officer that, at the time of interviewing, there was not yet a clear idea regarding what form the partnership would take. Nevertheless, it was the Park Development Officer's intention that the FOWJP would take on a number of proactive roles, including coordinating the involvement of other user groups in the park's ongoing management, organising park events, and being engaged in the running of the park. With regards to the last respect, this relates very much to the running of the proposed new Park Centre which incorporates some community facilities. As the secretary of the FOWJP indicated, the group may in the future be involved in the managerial running of those facilities or in seeking funding to employ its own park or maintenance staff. Nevertheless, he also sounded a note of caution that if the group is to be involved in the management and maintenance of the park in the future, then there must be a clearly and carefully defined agreement between the group and the local authority regarding each other's responsibilities to avoid causing an unreasonable burden on the group.

The secretary of the friends group also pointed out that the group would need to have more people in the local community start becoming involved as volunteers in order to carry out activities such as patrolling the park in the late evening, reporting maintenance problems, and

perhaps being responsible for the opening, closing and running of the new visitor/community centre within the park when it has been built. While these aims may not be achievable ultimately, it was noted by the Park Development Officer that, with Best Value being introduced, local communities would certainly be involved at least in the annual review of the park's maintenance regimes.

7.7.5 The Community Arts Programme and Community Sculpture Group

Originally proposed in the HLF bid for the provision of artistic installations in the park, a Community Arts Programme (CAP) was consequently developed as one of the major elements of the WJP restoration project. As the Park Development Officer has indicated, the programme was seen as symbolic to the local community because every piece of art work to be installed in the park would have input from local groups. Once these art works are in place and people start seeing the result of their input in a solid way, there may be a possibility of using this as a bridge to bring in more people, particularly those feeling disadvantaged or alienated from the park, into the process of regenerating the park.

Under the assistance of a Community Arts Officer from the Borough Council's Arts, Museums and Events Section, a list of existing local groups who could best represent a wide cross section of the local community was put together and representatives of these groups were invited to a meeting regarding the restoration project and the CAP. While initially a large group was formed by people turning up at the first meeting, the group diminished after a number of meetings and ultimately around twenty people who were seriously interested in being involved became the Community Sculpture Group (CSG). This group has acted as a core group of the programme, helping to establish links with other local groups and, on some occasions, providing venues for workshops. Members of the group were consequently involved in drawing up the brief and selecting the artists. As well as undertaking workshops with the two employed artists, they have also been assisting the artists with one or two of them attending each of the workshops held with other local groups to explain the CAP and bring information back to the main group. In this way, all the groups involved in the programme were networked together. In total there have been fifteen different community groups, ranging from schools to adult education centres and from a civic society to a local arts club, working together with the artists to design and/or construct and install the art works in the park.

The Community Arts Officer has played an important role in coordinating various aspects of the CAP and facilitating the establishment of the CSG. Apart from working closely with the selected artists on a series of workshops with the sculpture group and other community groups, the officer would also work with some community groups to create a number of temporary sculptures in the park from time to time. The Community Arts Officer suggested that there my

be more opportunities to involve the local community in arts projects in the park after the new Park Centre is opened because it will provide the space needed for working with community groups.

Unlike the FOWJP, the CSG did not adopt a formal constitution because the group was set up specifically for the provision of public arts in the park and would be totally dismissed once the CAP is complete. However, the Park Development Officer has expressed his intention that, having successfully put the "symbols of the community", i.e. the art works in the park, the CSG could become a more long lasting group, not in terms of filling the park with thousands of artistic installations, but to encourage the involvement of other people by sharing what they have learnt from the process that anybody can be involved with the park in a very real and solid way. With the skills they have developed and information that they have obtained with regards to fund raising or gaining support from either other members of the local community or form the local authority and other agencies, it is hoped that the group would be confident to carry out their own projects and thinking such that they can make a difference in the park, and eventually, a sense of ownership could be generated.

7.8 Summary

The seven case studies described above illustrate a very rich and diverse picture of how local communities have been involved in regenerating historic urban parks. Whereas each case has its own distinctive characteristics regarding the development of the restoration work, the local communities surrounding the park, and the process of involving the local communities, the following common themes noticeably come into sight:

- In addition to the restoration and refurbishment of historic features, most of the case-study restoration projects have included the introduction of new facilities and/or features into the park. The decisions to do so were usually based on the outcome of community consultation exercises undertaken prior to the submission of the bid to the HLF and during the development of the restoration scheme.

- The introduction of full-time on-site park staff has been incorporated in many of the case-study restoration projects. This seems to reflect the idea discussed in Section 2.3.3 that the absence of direct park staff has been a major factor causing the decline of many historic urban parks. Therefore, local communities want to see constant on-site supervision being brought back to their parks and this is often linked to such direct park staff to play an important role in sustaining the involvement of local communities in the long term.

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- Regardless of the size of the UPP grant and the region where the park is located, community involvement has certainly been an integral element of all the case-study restoration projects. Nonetheless, the extent and level of community involvement have varied from one project to another.

- In addition to being engaged in developing the HLF bid and the follow-up restoration scheme, local communities will also contribute to the long-term management of the restored park, with varying levels of community involvement among different restoration projects.

- A wide range of community involvement methods have been employed to inform and consult local communities about the development of the restoration project.

- Where 'Friends of Parks' groups exist and are formally constituted, irrespective of the time and the way the group was established, they have been the focus of community involvement in the case-study restoration projects. They have in general played an important role in voicing the local community's views and working in partnership with the local authority to development the park restoration project.

- The importance of involving school children in the park regeneration process has been addressed in almost all the case-study restoration projects. This is usually related to the sustainability of the restoration project.

- Activities and events in the park are considered to be an important means of widening the involvement of local communities in the regeneration of historic urban parks. Friends groups often view the staging of various events and activities in the park as a way to encourage more use of the park and to generate more community interest in the development of their local parks.

These themes are discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.