



**Renfrewshire Local Development Plan
Proposed Plan
Open Space Audit 2019
Background Paper 5**



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Open Space Audit Aims and Objectives

Renfrewshire Council commissioned Ironside Farrar to assist with the preparation of an Open Space Audit for Renfrewshire. The purpose of the Open Space Audit is to assess and analyse open space provision across Renfrewshire.

Open space is a key element of the Green Network and the Open Space Audit will help inform the preparation of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan and the Renfrewshire Green Network Strategy which is to be prepared as an action in the Local Development Plan Action Programme. Understanding the role and function of Renfrewshire's open spaces will help the Green Network Strategy to make the most of these assets including access and connections to them.

The Open Space Audit includes a quantitative audit and a qualitative audit as set out below:

Stage 1: Quantitative Audit

- The quantitative audit will review and update the database of open spaces in Renfrewshire, which was mapped as part of the previous 2007 Audit.
- Develop a methodology for identifying open spaces to be reviewed in the Qualitative Audit

Stage 2: Qualitative Audit

- Agree sites to be assessed, reflecting the agreed methodology
- Prepare criteria which reflect Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership templates
- Undertake qualitative assessment
- Identify and describe textually the conditions and characteristics of each open space.



Fountain Gardens, Paisley

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Benefits of Open Space

Open spaces play an important role in the life of a community, providing a range of facilities and places for quiet reflection, physical activity, sport and fun. The multi-use nature of our open spaces can meet many local community needs close to where people live and bring economic benefits to the area through tourism. Open spaces can be used for sport, children's play, relaxation, education and can provide a place for local events.

Renfrewshire's parks, sports pitches and open spaces form a central part of the area's character, ranging from historic Victorian parks to school grounds, from village greens to riverside walks and woodlands. Good quality open space contributes to the delivery of Council objectives to support stronger, well connected and thriving communities by providing an attractive and safe resource for people to meet, lead healthy active lives, learn and develop.

Open space can make a positive contribution to an area on environmental, social and economic grounds. The benefits to the environment include:

- Protect and enhance wildlife and habitats, thereby ensuring biodiversity
- Provide an attractive setting for urban areas
- Provide an environmental education resource
- Create and enhance a local sense of place and aid the distinctiveness of local areas
- Reduce pollution and noise

The benefits to the community include:

- Encourage healthy lifestyles and promote mental well-being
- Provide opportunities for sport, recreation and play that are accessible to all
- Foster local pride and community involvement
- Provide outdoor educational opportunities

The benefits to the local economy include:

- Attracting inward investment, businesses and tourism
- Creating a positive image of urban areas and the public realm



3.0 AUDIT METHODOLOGY

3.1 Methodology

The following tasks were undertaken as part of the 2018 Open Space Audit and are summarised in the following sections:

Stage 1: Quantitative Open Space Audit

The quantitative audit has reviewed and updated the database of open spaces in Renfrewshire, which was mapped as part of the 2007 Open Space Audit.

- This was a Geographical Information System (GIS) map-based review, including provision for new open spaces and removal of developed sites
- Sites were reviewed using Scotland's Greenspace Map
- Each site was classified according to the categories set out in Annex 1 of PAN 65
- Sites were placed within a hierarchy of open spaces:
 - Regionally / Nationally Important
 - Locally Important - Settlement
 - Locally Important - Neighbourhood

Not all open spaces across Renfrewshire were assessed qualitatively. A methodology for identifying which open spaces should be included in the Qualitative Audit was developed, determined by the primary use typologies, number of functions, location (urban/urban-fringe), settlement and size.

Stage 2: Qualitative Open Space Audit

Stage 2 included undertaking qualitative audits of the selected open spaces, in accordance with current best practice, to record and assess the open space resource through site visits to open spaces across the Council area

- Agree sites to be assessed, reflecting the agreed methodology
- Prepare criteria which reflect Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership templates for qualitative assessment
- Based on agreed criteria, undertake qualitative assessments of approximately 600 sites
- Identify and describe textually the conditions and characteristics of each open space, design opportunities and potential scope for future enhancement



4.0 QUANTITATIVE OPEN SPACE AUDIT

4.1 Review of Renfrewshire's Open Space Database

The quantitative audit aimed to review and update the database of open spaces in Renfrewshire, which was mapped as part of the 2007 Open Space Audit. This was a Geographical Information System (GIS) map-based review.

A GIS desk-based review was undertaken to update the database of open spaces in Renfrewshire. This involved the cross-checking of the 2007 database with the following databases:

- a. Scotland's Greenspace Map 2017: A "sense check" was undertaken on the database, and the conclusion made that the Renfrewshire Council 2007 database was more up to date and accurate.
- a. Landscape and natural environment designations, including SSSI, SINCl, Local Nature Reserves, Core Paths, SPA, Gardens & Designed Landscapes, Ancient Woodland
- b. New developments, planning permissions and sites allocated for development were removed from the open space database
- c. Provision of new open spaces were added to the open space database

4.2 Classification of the Open Space Resource

Once the database was finalised, each site was classified according to the categories set out in Annex 1 of PAN 65.

Appendix 1 sets out the Open Space Typology, which is summarised in the following table:

Table 1: Renfrewshire Open Space Typology

PAN 65 Category	Sub-category	Description
Public Parks and Gardens	Country Park	All public parks maintained by Renfrewshire Council plus one privately-owned and maintained (but publicly accessible) park in North Renfrew. The hierarchy reflects that set out in the Council's Sustainable Park Strategy.
	Town Park	
	Village Park	
	Neighbourhood Park	
Private Gardens or Grounds	Schools	All school grounds, often with limited public access.
	Institutions	
Amenity Greenspace	Housing	Maintained land separating different buildings. It may range from landscaped grounds with a high visual quality through to areas of cut grass. Areas where housing has been demolished and replaced by cut grassland have been included in the residential amenity category.
	Business	Amenity space of strategic business locations only have been mapped.
Children's Play Equipment		Children's play equipment generally found within either residential amenity sites or public parks. Recorded as features of other open space types.
Sports Areas	Playing Fields	All public and privately-owned sporting facilities. Playing fields are most commonly used for football but may also be for cricket or rugby.
	Golf courses	
	Tennis Courts	
	Bowling Greens	
	Other Sports	Includes multi-activity courts and athletics tracks.
Access Routes	Green Corridors	Dedicated long-distance walking and cycling routes including routes along disused railways, waterfronts etc.
	Existing off road	Significant routes within, and linking, open spaces.
	Existing on road	May form part of national routes.
	Proposed off road	
	Proposed on road	
Natural/ Semi-natural Greenspaces	Woodland	Areas of natural habitats whose primary functions are to promote bio-diversity and nature conservation. May include some previously developed land, and all are mapped regardless of ownership or accessibility. The semi-natural category also includes land that has been previously developed and may now be included in the Vacant and Derelict Land Register.
	Open Semi-Natural	
	Open Water	
Other Functional Greenspaces	Allotments	
	Churchyards & Grounds	
	Cemeteries	
	Other	Includes city farms
Civic Space		Predominantly hard landscaped areas such as public squares and pedestrian streets.

5.0 QUALITATIVE OPEN SPACE AUDIT

5.1 Selection of the Quality Audit Sites

Stage 2 included undertaking qualitative audits of the selected open spaces, in accordance with current best practice, to record and assess the resource through site visits.

Not all open spaces across Renfrewshire were assessed qualitatively. A methodology for identifying which open spaces should be reviewed in the Qualitative Audit was developed, determined by the primary use typologies, number of functions, location (urban/urban-fringe), settlement and size.

Sites were selected according to the following criteria:

- a. Primary use typologies:
 - Public Parks and Gardens
 - Private Gardens or Grounds, but not including schools / institutional grounds
 - Amenity Greenspace (Amenity Residential and Business included, but not Amenity Transport)
 - Play space for Children and Teenagers (a description will be included where a play space forms part of a larger open space e.g. park)
 - Sports Areas not included as an assessment has been undertaken as part of the Sports Pitch Strategy. However, sites that are accessible to the public and that also made a wider recreational or landscape contribution were included, or where a pitch forms part of a larger open space e.g. park
 - Access Routes
 - Natural / semi-natural greenspace, where it is within a settlement boundary
 - Allotments and community growing spaces
 - Burial grounds not included as part of the Cemeteries Strategy
 - Other functional greenspaces will be assessed on an individual basis (e.g. caravan parks, institutional grounds, private gardens and golf courses)
 - Civic space
- b. Number of functions
- c. Location (urban/urban-fringe)
- d. Settlement – all settlements
- e. Size – above 0.2 ha in size

185 sites were omitted due to type of open space: School, Institution, Tennis Courts, Bowling Green, Other Sports, Churchyard, Cemetery, as the auditing of these types of open space are included in other Renfrewshire Council Strategies (e.g. Sports Strategy, Cemetery Strategy etc.) 396 sites were omitted due to the size of open space (below 0.2 hectares in size): predominantly amenity greenspace, Natural / Semi-natural. However, sites included in the 2007 audit, that were under 0.2 hectares in size were included.

A further sifting of the sites was undertaken through a mapped desk study removing sites which are not included in the Pan 65 Typology of Open Space: 94 omitted due to uses, for example Riding School, developed sites, industrial park, river, woodlands on periphery, golf driving range, sports complex, golf club, cricket club and road verges

The GIS shapes for each of the open space sites were selected from the Renfrewshire Council databases, with some sites amalgamated as necessary, reflecting the 2007 audit assessment sites. Following a review of the 600 sites, 490 sites were identified to be included in the Open Space Quality Audit 2018.

5.2 Quality Audit Methodology

The audit was largely based on the open space typologies and boundaries identified in Stage 1 of the Quantitative Open Space Review. Where necessary, primary typologies were amended following site visits.

The approach taken to the quality assessments was based on the need to allow:

- A consistent and, as far possible as possible, objective assessment of open space quality
- Consistency with the approach and datasets of other local authorities within the Glasgow & Clyde Valley Region
- A simple, effective system capable of allowing a meaningful in-the-field assessment of quality without the need for lengthy site visits

A digital proforma was prepared for the site visits using the agreed categories and assessment criteria, to be completed using portable digital devices. The information was entered into an Excel spreadsheet with a unique reference for each site, enabling the information to be easily transferred into GIS.

The following information was recorded for each site:

- Site ID
- Site Name
- Address
- Location
- Area (ha)
- Site hierarchy
- PAN 65 typology
- Open space code
- Sub category
- Any changes to the typology
- Characteristics of the site
- Importance to the setting of the settlement

Based on the agreed criteria, site visits were undertaken to qualitatively assess the open space sites. A GIS shape file was prepared for the open spaces included in the audit, to which the site survey data will be attached.

In addition, a photographic record was collected for all sites. All quality assessments were carried out on site and involved a walk over and drive around the external area of the site to review the various site entrances. This approach provided a clear, consistent and transparent assessment and a simple basis for future monitoring.

6.0 FINDINGS OF THE OPEN SPACE AUDIT

6.1 Amount of Open Space within Renfrewshire's Settlements

The total amount of open space included in the Open Space Audit is **5,647** hectares (excluding Private Gardens/ Grounds or Golf Courses). Paisley contains the highest number and mix of open spaces, which reflects the size of the settlement and the population that it serves.

The table below illustrates the amount of open space in each settlement.

Table 3: Open Space within Renfrewshire's Settlements

Settlement	Total amount of open space per settlement (ha)	Total number of sites per settlement	Number of sites included in the quality assessment
Bishopton	20.41	31	19
Bridge of Weir	18.15	35	18
Brookfield	1.35	4	2
Dargavel *	41.33	6	0
Elderslie	16.61	28	14
Erskine	168.88	95	54
Hillington	0.89	1	2
Houston	68.82	67	33
Howwood	5.97	16	8
Inchinnan	7.96	18	8
Johnstone	143.61	95	34
Kilbarchan	14.65	26	9
Langbank	4.48	8	4
Linwood	113.1	139	29
Lochwinnoch	4043.41	20	8
Paisley	886.62	388	174
Renfrew	90.71	96	41

* From Masterplan - does not include community woodland

6.2 Open Space Hierarchy

An appreciation of the hierarchy of open spaces can assist to understand the different functions they perform and distinguish between spaces of strategic, local and neighbourhood importance. Some types of open space, for example country parks serve the council wide area. Other types of open spaces have a role that serves a neighbourhood or a settlement.

The sites were placed within a hierarchy of open spaces: **nationally** and **regionally** important; of importance to a **settlement**; and **locally** important.

The table below provides a summary of the types of open space for each settlement and Appendix 2 includes an open space map for each settlement showing the distribution of open space across Renfrewshire.

Table 4: Open Space Hierarchy

Settlement	Open Space of Regional / National Importance (ha)	Open Space of Settlement Importance (ha)	Open Space of Neighbourhood Importance (ha)
Bishopton	0	7.2	13.21
Bridge of Weir	0	11.74	6.41
Brookfield	0	1.28	0.07
Dargavel *	0	41.33	
Elderslie	0	4.27	12.34
Erskine	7.01	98.58	63.29
Hillington	0	0.89	0
Houston	0	42.75	26.07
Howwood	0	2.85	3.12
Inchinnan	0	2.12	5.84
Johnstone	0	73.66	70.05
Kilbarchan	0	8.74	5.91
Langbank	0	1.96	2.52
Linwood	49.65	25.99	37.46
Lochwinnoch	4034.12	5.88	3.41
Paisley	506.08	158.85	221.69
Renfrew	11.2	43.29	36.22

* From Masterplan - does not include community woodland

7.0 QUALITY OF OPEN SPACE IN RENFREWSHIRE

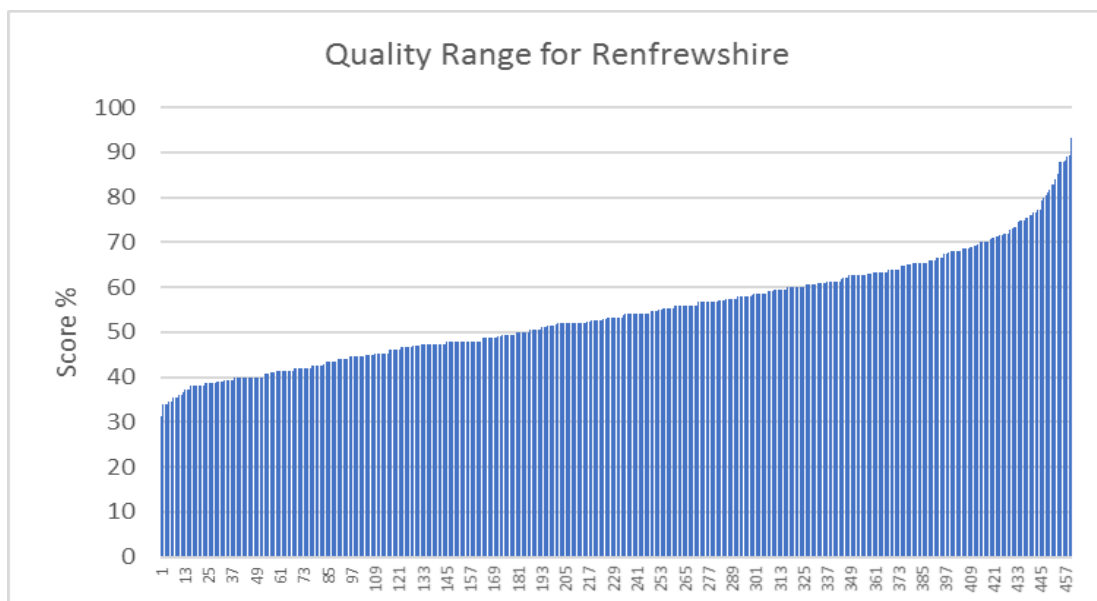
7.1 Quality Assessment

Quality is a key component of open space. Open spaces need to be “fit for purpose” and serve local communities by providing for informal leisure and recreational needs. Scottish Government policy supports increasing multi-functionality of spaces to maximise their contribution to quality of place and the benefits that they provide to local communities. Policies also support greater integration of green infrastructure functions, such as water management, green networks and active travel routes into new and existing open spaces.

The Qualitative Audit includes an assessment of the quality of open space across Renfrewshire. The quality scoring of open space utilised the assessment sheets developed by the Glasgow and Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership, as these had already been used effectively by several local authorities within the region and would enable consistency across the area. The assessment considers:

1. Access relative to function
2. Design and layout
3. Supporting infrastructure
4. Visitor experience
5. Management and maintenance
6. Biodiversity contribution to habitat network

This work is currently being reviewed by the Council and will inform the preparation of the Renfrewshire Green Network Strategy which will focus on the protection of existing natural assets and will identify local green network priorities and opportunities for delivery across Renfrewshire. Initial outputs from this work indicate that quality scores vary widely across Renfrewshire and reflect a variety of open spaces in respect of size, type and location.



8.0 NEXT STEPS

8.1 Analysis of the Open Space Data

The outcomes of the audit will allow a detailed analysis of the current open space provision across Renfrewshire, to assist in the preparation of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposed Plan.

The assessment of Renfrewshire's open spaces according to their quality is currently being reviewed and will inform the preparation of the Renfrewshire Green Network Strategy through helping to identify strengths, gaps and opportunities to enhance the green network and open space assets across Renfrewshire.

Areas of open space that are classified as Nationally/Regionally important or of Settlement importance will be identified and protected on the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan Proposals Maps. All other areas of open space will be protected in line with the relevant policies in the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan and the New Development Supplementary Guidance.

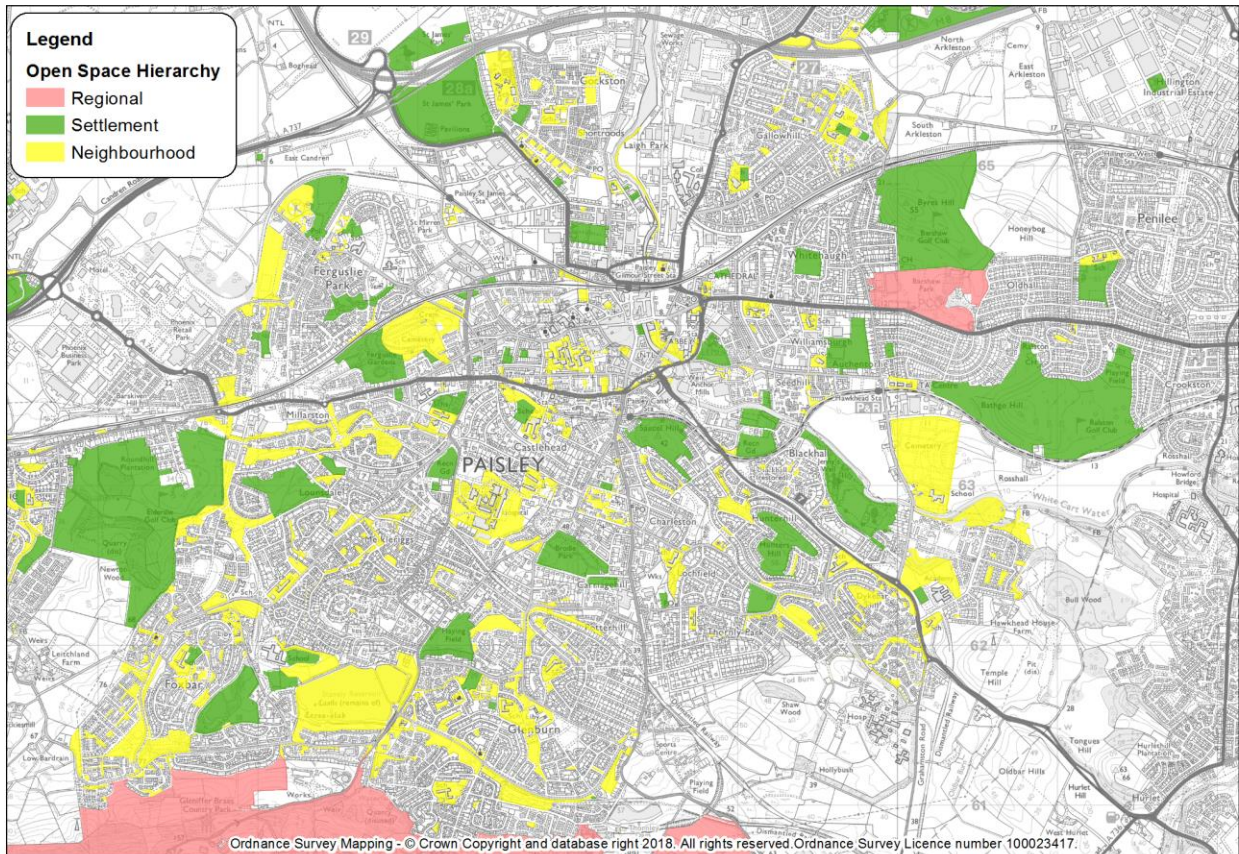
The Audit is a dynamic piece of work which will be reviewed and updated as appropriate to ensure that the information remains up to date.

APPENDIX 1 Open Space Typology

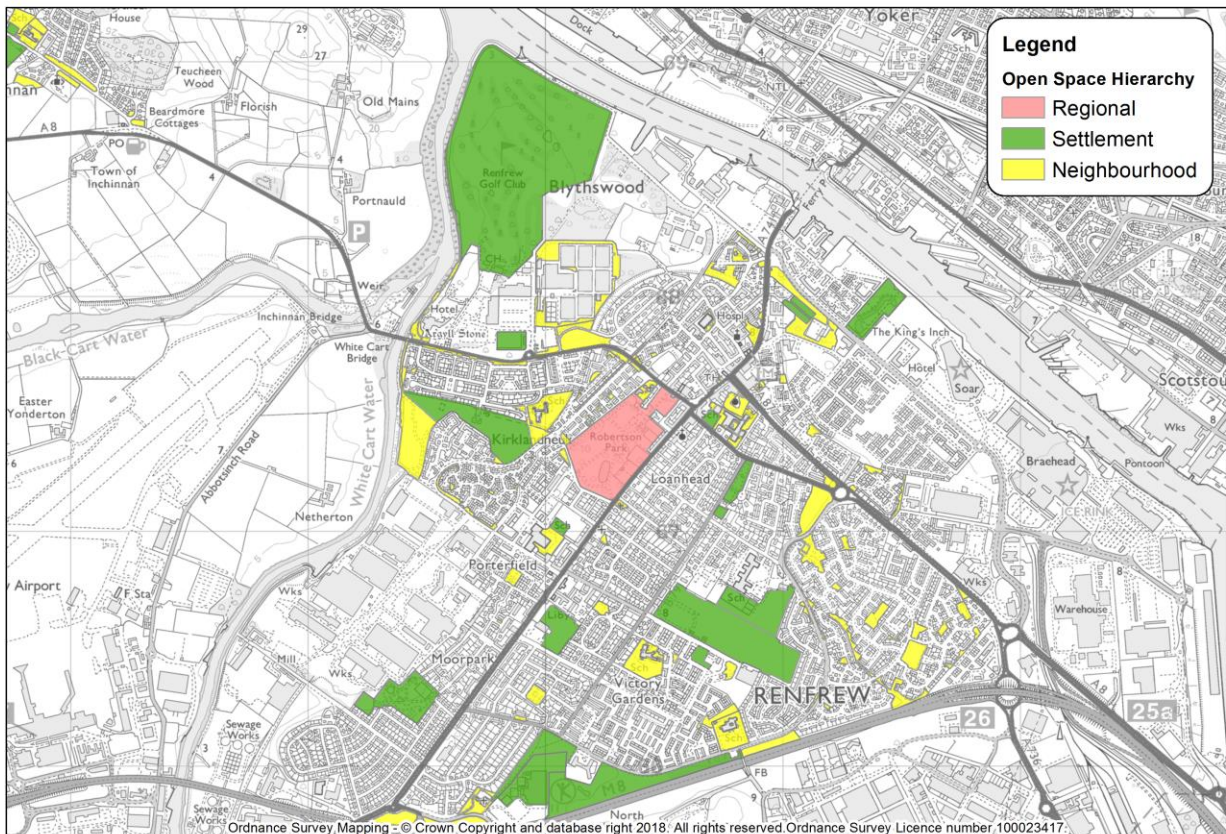
TYPE OF OPEN SPACE			DESCRIPTION
6.1 Public Parks and Gardens	6.11	Country	All public parks maintained by Renfrewshire Council plus one privately-owned and maintained (but publicly accessible) park in North Renfrew. The hierarchy reflects that set out in the Council's Sustainable Park Strategy.
	6.12	Town	
	6.13	Village	
	6.14	Neighbourhood	
6.2 Private Gardens or Grounds	6.22	Schools	All school grounds, often with limited public access
	6.23	Institutions	
6.3 Amenity Greenspace	6.31	Housing	Maintained land separating different buildings. It may range from landscaped grounds with a high visual quality through to areas of cut grass. Areas where housing has been demolished and replaced by cut grassland have been included in the residential amenity category.
	6.32	Business	Amenity space of strategic business locations only have been mapped.
6.4 Children's Play Equipment			Children's play equipment generally found within either residential amenity sites or public parks. Recorded as features of other open space types.
6.5 Sports Areas	6.51	Playing Fields	All public and privately-owned sporting facilities. Playing fields are most commonly used for football but may also be for cricket or rugby.
	6.52	Golf Courses	
	6.53	Tennis Courts	
	6.54	Bowling Greens	
	6.55	Other Sports	Includes multi-activity courts and athletics tracks
6.6 Access Routes	6.61	Green Corridors	Dedicated long-distance walking and cycling routes including routes along disused railways, waterfronts etc. The proposed routes are shown for information only.
	6.62	Existing off road	Significant routes within, and linking, open spaces.
	6.63	Existing on road	Self explanatory. May form part of national routes
	6.64	Proposed off road	As 6.62 but not yet established. Shown for information only.
	6.65	Proposed on road	As 6.63 but not yet established. Shown for information only.
6.7 Natural / Semi Natural Greenspace	6.71	Woodland	Areas of natural habitats whose primary functions are to promote bio-diversity and nature conservation. May include some previously developed land, and all are mapped regardless of ownership or accessibility. The semi-natural category also includes land that has been previously developed and may now be included in the Vacant and Derelict Land Register.
	6.72	Open Semi-Natural	
	6.73	Open Water	
6.8 Other Functional Greenspaces	6.81	Allotments	Self-explanatory
	6.82	Churchyards & Grounds	
	6.83	Cemeteries	
	6.84	Other Functional Greenspace	Includes city farms
6.9 Civic Space			Predominantly hard landscaped areas such as public squares and pedestrian streets.

APPENDIX 2 Open Space Maps

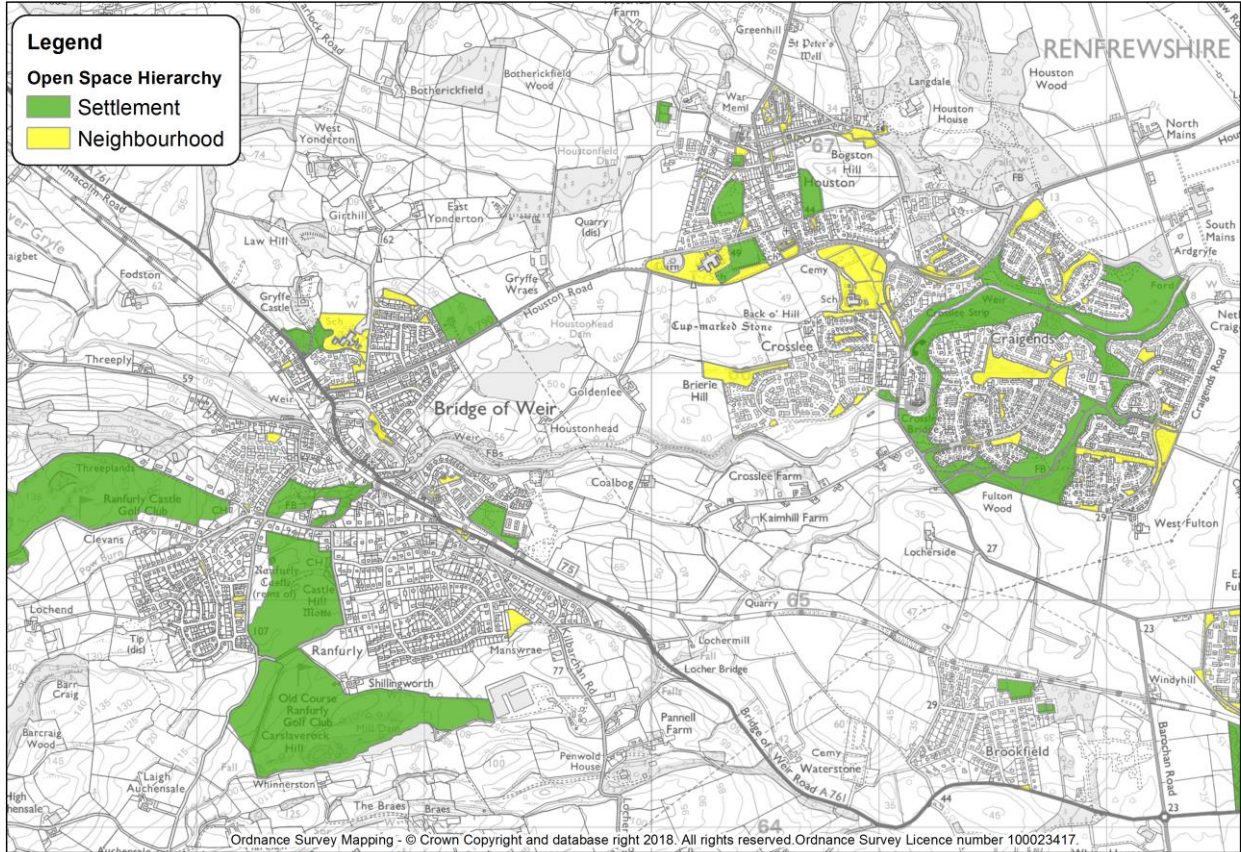
Paisley



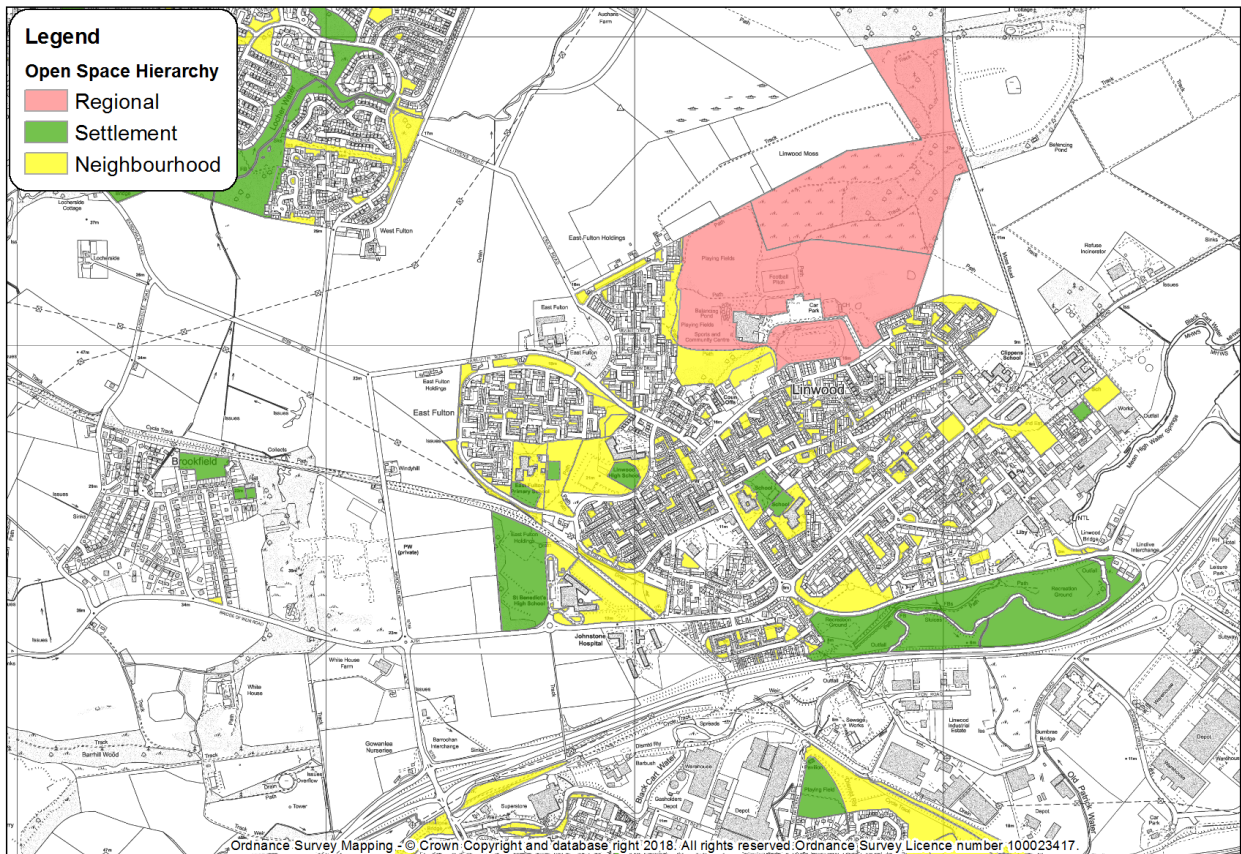
Renfrew



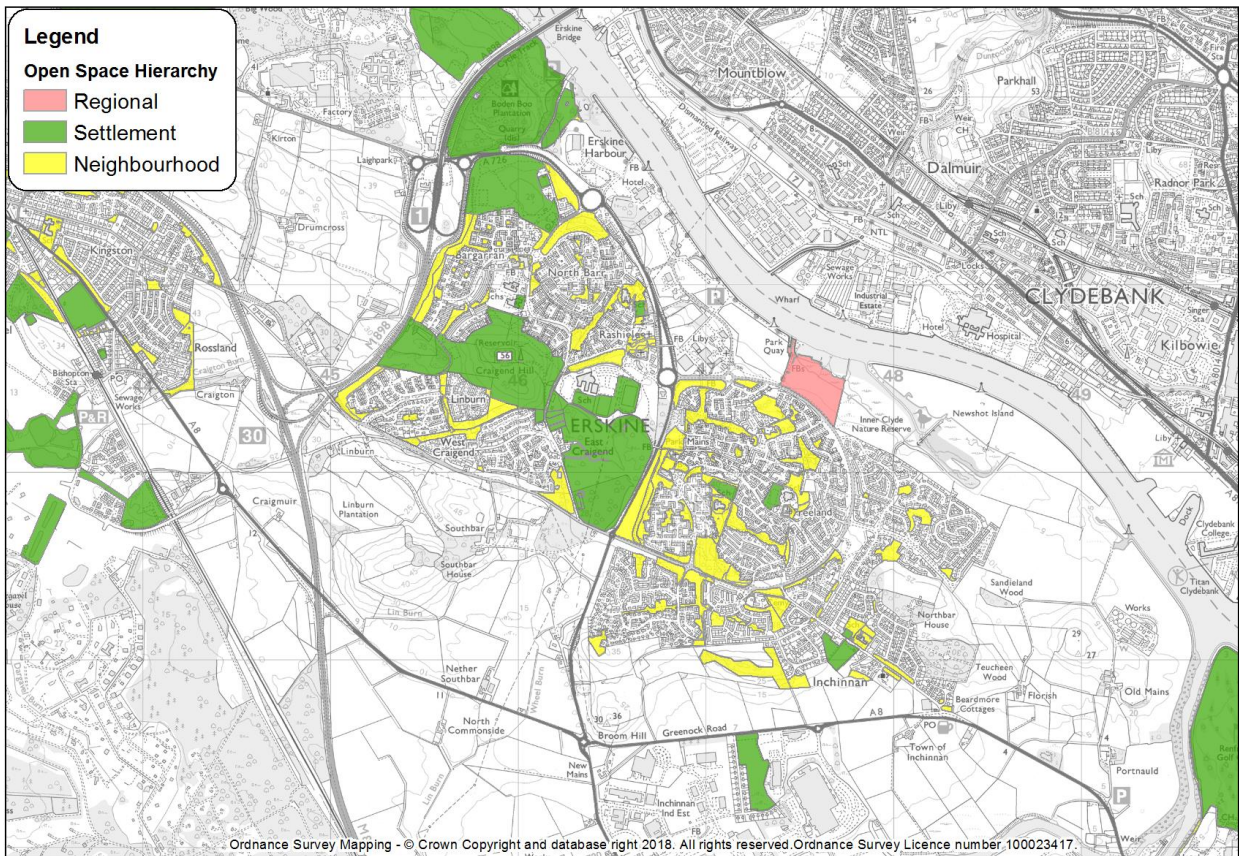
Bridge of Weir and Houston



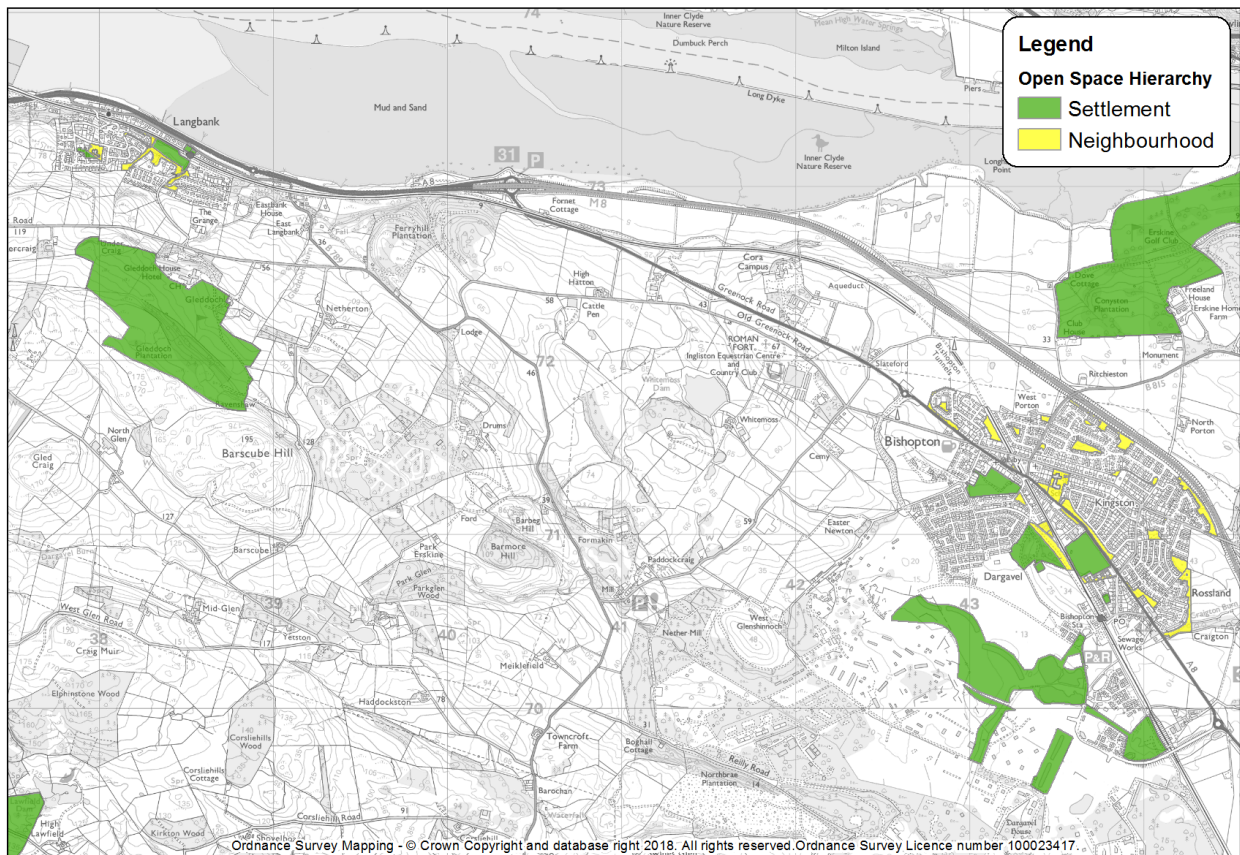
Linwood



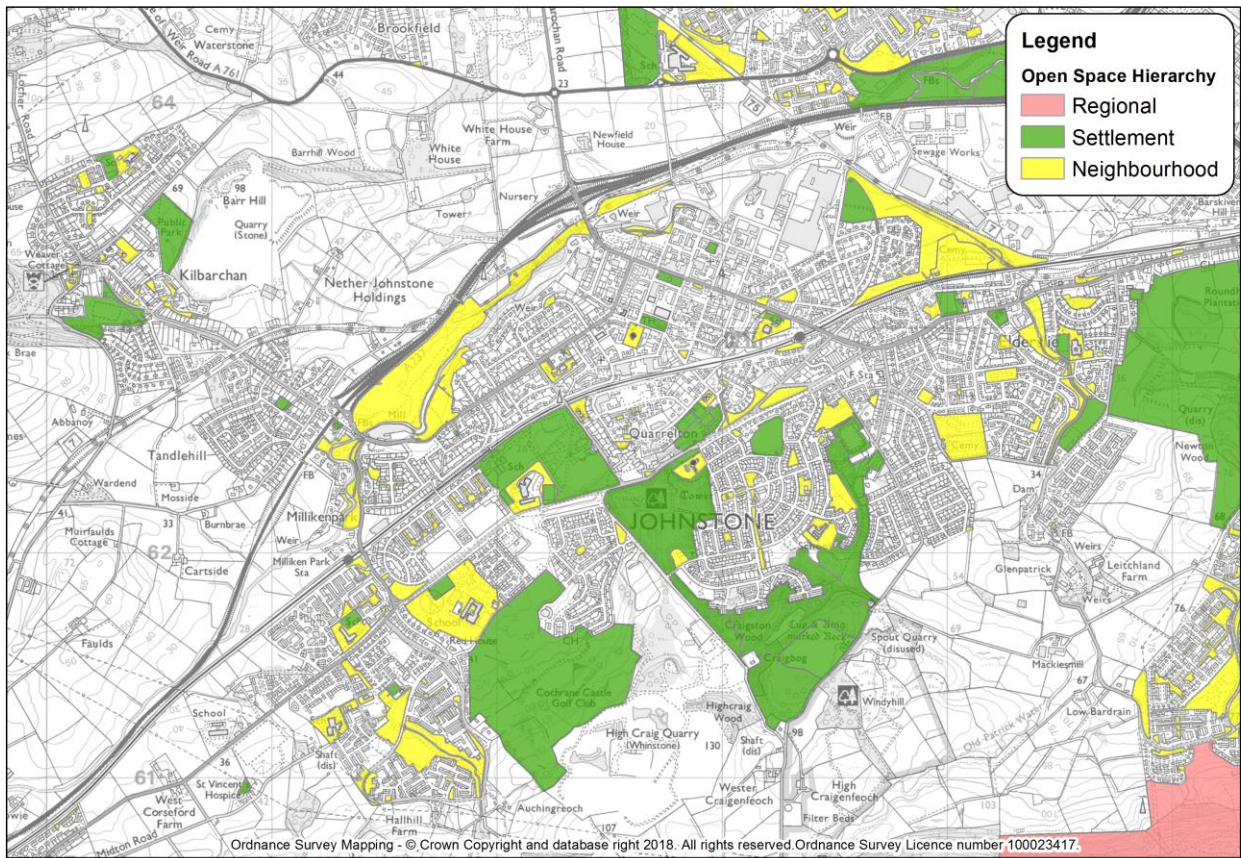
Erskine and Inchinnan



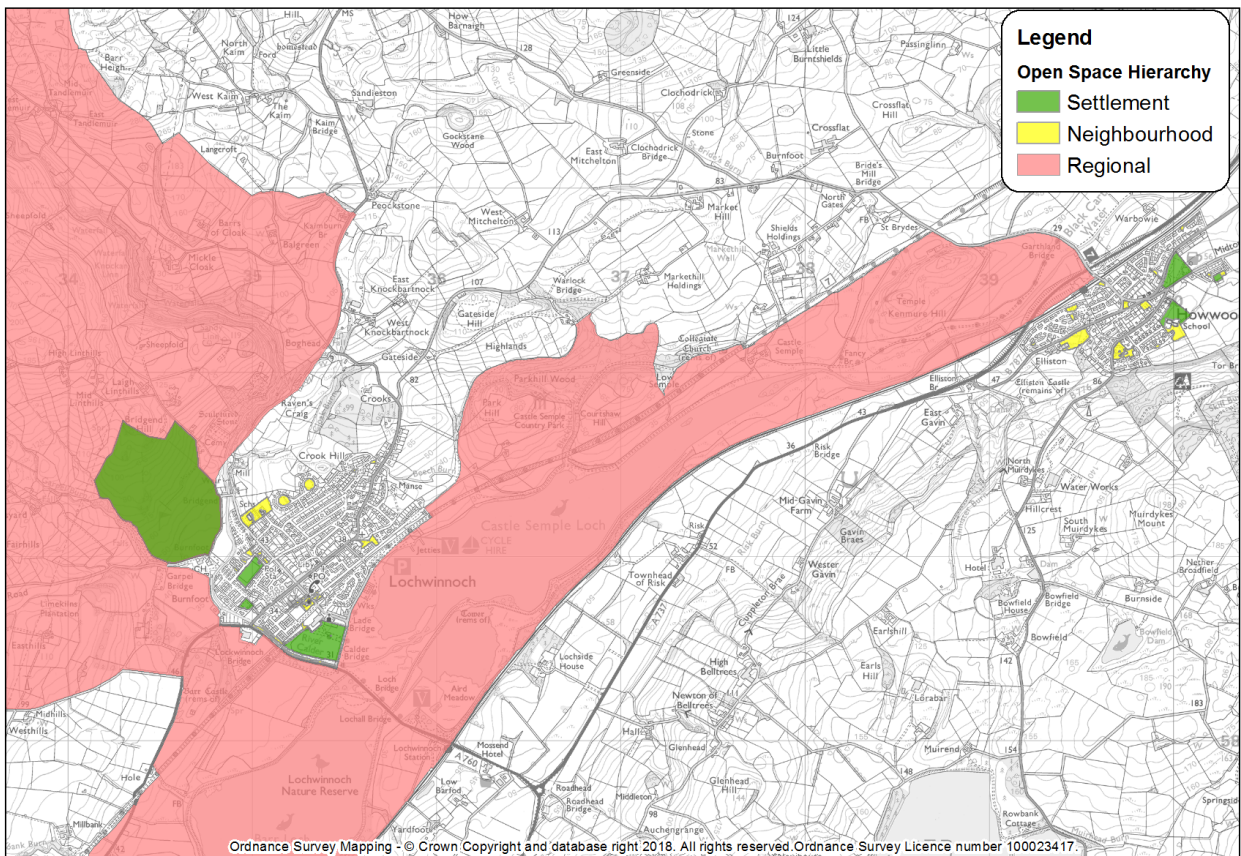
Bishopton, Dargavel and Langbank



Johnstone and Kilbarchan



Lochwinnoch and Howwood



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