

Recreation and Open Space (PPG17), provides a timely opportunity to support and advance local green space strategies, and promote networks of high-quality and sustainable green spaces¹².

165. We have been active in advising the DTLR on the green space aspects of the revision of PPG17. We have been most concerned that it should demonstrate the role and value of parks and green spaces in delivering an urban renaissance and the Urban White Paper's objectives for improving the quality of local environments.

We recommend

(R39) The Government should promote the strategic importance of parks and green spaces in improving the quality of urban life and urban environments by ensuring that their provision, protection and enhancement are key objectives in planning policy guidance (or the proposed series of planning policy statements (PPSs)).

(R40) That the Government should ensure that revised Planning Policy Guidance note 17: Sports, Recreation and Open Space (or new PPS) provides clear guidance on:

(i) the importance of strategic green space planning in developing and enhancing networks of urban green spaces;

(ii) protecting urban green spaces from development, especially incremental development in areas where local schools, people and communities, need them;

(iii) carrying out local assessments of the diverse requirements of people in urban areas, and audits of local green spaces;

deliver a better mix of green spaces, especially by maintaining and enhancing existing spaces.

(v) encouraging and assisting local authorities to develop local standards of provision, and to target new provision to areas where people do not have access to high-quality parks and green spaces; and

(vi) encouraging different kinds of local provision, exploring how to make better use of smaller spaces and those around housing estates.

6.3: BETTER QUALITY DESIGN

6.3.1: Places from spaces

166. Design should make places from spaces. A good park or green space will lift the spirits of visitors and create a sense of well-being in the community. Designing a park or a green space must begin by recognising what makes it a special place and what people want of it.

167. That in turn means engaging the local community throughout the design process, and understanding and meeting their aspirations. Methods such as planning for real or the Urban Design Alliance's *Placecheck Toolkit* provide practical tools which can be used to involve people from the start of a project, and help to make them feel that they own it. Landscape architects should help to raise expectations and broaden horizons by stimulating and challenging the common place off-the-shelf solutions. Inspiration should complement consultation.

¹² Consultation draft revised Planning Policy Guidance note 17: Sports, Recreation and Open Space. DTLR (2000)

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

RECOMMENDATION No. R (86) 11

OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS TO MEMBER STATES

ON URBAN OPEN SPACE

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 12 September 1986
at the 399th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe,

Considering that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose of facilitating their economic and social progress;

Considering that this aim may be pursued by exchanging information and experience amongst member states on topics of common interest;

Considering that the Council of Europe has established, through its European Campaign for Urban Renaissance and subsequent work programme on urban policies, a valid platform facilitating such a discussion between urban administrations of its member states;

Noting that the urban policies work programme concentrates above all on the illustration of strategies and policies that help to afford a broader human dimension in towns;

Considering that part of the quality of the urban environment depends on the type, scale, scope, accessibility and availability of open and public space;

Bearing in mind the reports presented at and the results of the seminars held at Norrköping (1-4 June 1981) as part of the European Campaign for Urban Renaissance and at Durham (20-23 September 1983) devoted to a discussion of the provision and better use of open space in towns;

Considering therefore that it would be opportune to draw up a recommendation to governments on this subject, in the belief that it will pave the way for positive tangible results, of use and value for the inhabitants of European towns;

Considering that what is required above all is a change of attitude on the part of public authorities rather than necessarily an absolute increase in resources;

Wishing in this recommendation to:

1. define open space, assert its values, identify the threats to it arising particularly from unresolved conflict of use;
2. indicate strategies for the provision, development and maintenance of open space;
3. underline the importance of co-operation, particularly at the local level in this respect,

Recommends that the governments of member states:

1. *Recognise and take into account the following considerations:*

- 1.1. Towns are not only buildings: open space forms a fundamental part of the urban environment and the historic heritage of a town;

- 1.2. Open space covers a wide range of public and private areas both in historic towns and new communities and provides a framework for various activities that may change with time and use;
 - 1.3. Open space is an essential part of the urban heritage, a strong element in the architectural and aesthetic form of a town, plays an important educational role, is ecologically significant, is important for social interaction and in fostering community development and is supportive of economic objectives and activities;
 - 1.4. The enjoyment of open space contributes to the legitimate aspirations of urban inhabitants for an improvement in their quality of life, as well as to increased social cohesion, feelings of security and supports in this way the protection of the rights of man in his built environment;
 - 1.5. The significance of open space is partially reflected in current social patterns and urban planning practice;
 - 1.6. Despite this realisation, there are still threats and risks to open space arising from unresolved conflicts in use, errors in planning and lack of co-ordination between and with different authorities;
2. *Take steps to ensure that the securing, provision and management of open space are an integral part of urban development and in particular:*
 - 2.1. To ensure that open space is adequately secured and protected;
 - 2.2. To encourage the provision of open space and in so doing to ensure that it reflects the real needs of inhabitants, respects the existing character of the urban "grain", uses all available resources, promotes social cohesion and results from adequate dialogue and co-ordination between all appropriate professionals, authorities and institutions;
 - 2.3. To manage and enhance open space through the identification and resolution of conflicts, the achievement and creation of accessibility and attractiveness and the encouragement of appropriate levels of use;
3. *Accept that the securing, provision and management of open space should be based on a number of approaches and in particular:*
 - 3.1. Close co-ordination of national policies;
 - 3.2. The recognition of the specific role of local authorities;
 - 3.3. The encouragement as far as possible of community and neighbourhood-based schemes;
 - 3.4. The encouragement of initiatives from the private sector and related agencies;
 - 3.5. Significant emphasis on education and information;
4. *In implementing this recommendation take into account the points, relating to paragraphs 1 to 3 above, set out in the appendix hereto.*