

Rethinking urban green spaces: acceptable and feasible landscape management practices for 21st century parks

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Abstract

Today, there is increasing recognition of the importance of urban green space for our health and wellbeing. However, funding and budgets to manage urban parks are under threat in the UK and subject to significant reductions. On the other hand, these difficulties are being met through innovative practices which include naturalistic planting, income generation and community food, among others. Such practices reflect a shift in responsibility for park management involving multiple stakeholders who share responsibility.

However, we know little about the perceptions of users and residents in relation to this variety of landscape management practices. How acceptable and feasible are such innovative practices in urban parks? What effect will this have on users and their propensity to spend time in urban parks?

The aim of this research is to understand stakeholders' perceptions of current and future landscape management scenarios in six urban parks in the city of Sheffield to explore their acceptability and feasibility from the perspective of different stakeholders. This research explores different landscape management practices by examining stakeholders' perceptions via interviews (local authority stakeholders, Friends/ community groups, consultants and academics), focus group (park officers and managers) and visualisation-based questionnaires (users and local residents). The sites are selected according to indicators of deprivation, urban park type and size, involvement of friends or community groups, and geographical spread across the city. This paper will call on initial findings of the ongoing research to shed light on the feasibility and acceptability of different landscape management practices in urban parks. This will help the team to propose future strategies for urban landscape management which is based on an in-depth understanding of stakeholders' perceptions.

Introduction

If built environment is an organism, it is so by virtue of human intervention: people imbue it with life and spirit of place. As long as they are actively involved and find a given built environment worth renewing, altering, and expanding, it endures. (Habraken, 1998, p. 7)

Today, more visits to parks or green spaces and increasing users' demands would claim higher quality management with settings of improved skills, capacity and budgets. We have so far thought as to how to make places, little considering as to how to keep the places. The *place-keeping* is long-term and responsive management which ensures that the social, environmental and economic quality and benefits a place brings can be enjoyed by present and future generations (Dempsey and Smith, 2014, p. 13). In times of authority, funding and budgets to manage parks have been cut as well. On the other hand, these difficulties meet practical alternatives, being considered stakeholders' involvement and

sharing responsibility. There has been a shift in responsibility for open-space management which involves multiple stakeholders who have agreed to share responsibility (Dempsey, Smith and Burton, 2014, p.14). In landscape management empowered stakeholders have been generally involved in solving social issues and adding financial enhancement. A lot of landscape management practices introduced in landscape contexts have contributed itself to society, economy and environment. However, there is little evidence on acceptability and feasibility of these practices in an understanding of different stakeholders' perceptions.

Green spaces management from place-keeping perspective

Place-making has long taken centre stage in urban planning and design, where capital funding is spent on the shaping and making of high-profile places in towns and cities all over the world (Roberts, 2009, cited in Dempsey & Burton, 2012). Through *place-making* with huge amount of funding spent on creating such places high quality spaces are built and contribute to positively beneficial for people' quality of life and well-being. However, this interpretation would overlook following-up management as to how to keep the places. In a landscape context the definition of landscape widely includes the actions of development, planning and maintenance in many different activities (Jedicke, 1996; Randrup et al., 2009; Jansson et al., 2012). In addition, landscape management has emphasized long-term planning (Hitchmough, 1994; Codham, 1997) and on-going functions (Pryce, 1989) over last 20 years, extending high quality and remaining sustainability.

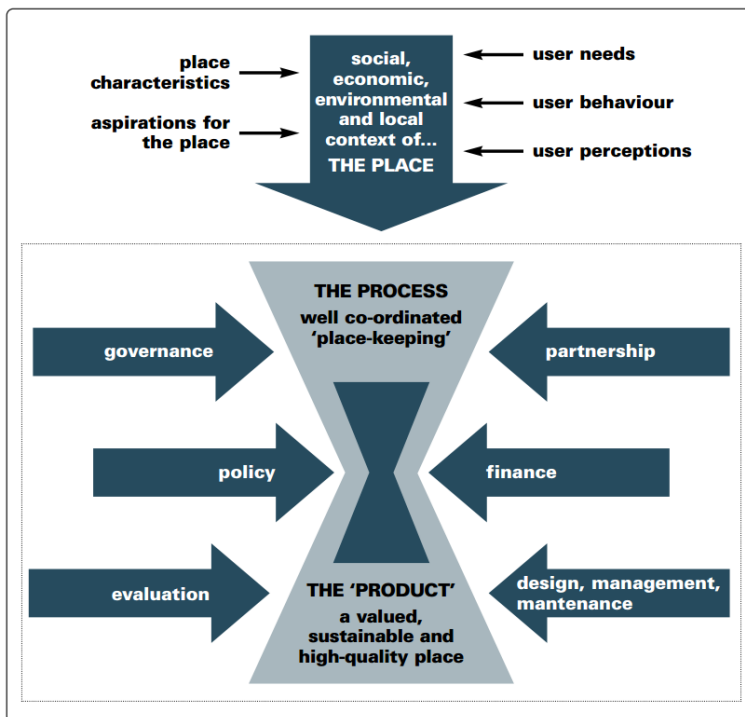


Fig 1. The dimensions of place-keeping (resource from Dempsey& Burton, 2012).

This paper underlines long-term management to appreciatively keep the places where benefits of green spaces are long lasted. Long-term management is highlighted by the term '*place-keeping*' which is defined as the concept first coined by Wild et al. (2008), which ensures that the social, environmental and economic quality and benefits the place brings can be enjoyed by future generations. Without *place-keeping*, public spaces can fall into a downward spiral of damage, disrepair and inadequate maintenance (Dempsey & Burton, 2012). This can potentially make unwanted spaces to residents or derelict sites which bring about serious anti-social behaviours and vandalism e.g.) 'Broken Window Syndrome'. The fundamentals of *place-keeping* are clear: the

overriding goal is to create a high-quality, sustainable space which is valued by users who want to visit it again and again (Dempsey & Burton, 2012). The *place-keeping* would be associated with a lot of considerations such as stakeholders' participation, their perceptions, funding/budget, management practices and among others. We hardly know about these considerations to keep the places for people from the *place-keeping* perspective.

Emerging stakeholders' involvement in park management

The early 1980s highlighted shifting economic growth by encouraging competitive market-based formations and entrepreneurial activities. This new emphasis on international competitiveness, marketization and economic growth has affected on the relationships between local economy, societies and different groups within city (Larner, 2009. p.385). Regarding this emergence, the term neoliberalism was ideologically introduced to new forms of urban networks involving market-based formations. Neoliberalism is argued as the most powerful ideological project in the wave of Keynesianism (McCarthy and Prudham, 2004 p.275), promoting marketization, competition and deregulation (Higgins et al., 2008) and aiming to subordinate public values to the market (Barnett, 2005, p.8). Peck and Tickell (2008) stated that neoliberalism seems to be everywhere in the mode of free market economy theory. More recently, neoliberalism in nature-related process underlines political-economic involvement in the growing role of civil society and market. These analyses, as Larner (2009)s argue, have ranged from the corporate business partners involved in public-private partnerships that provide infrastructural services, through to social movements who have become increasingly involved in social and environmental policies and service provision. Focusing on the primary audience of landscape decision-makers, including civil society groups, policymakers and business leaders, this interpretation is used as input to subsequent efforts to develop resources to support landscape stakeholder groups to develop market mechanisms within a landscape context (LPFN, 2013). It can be seen that market-based paradigm has emerged as promoting stakeholders involvement to acquire resources for growth and development in competitive processes with struggling other entities that pursue the same aims.

Today, more visits to parks or green spaces and increasing users' demands would claim higher quality management with settings of improved skills, capacity and budgets. However, funding and budgets to manage parks have been sadly cut. Regarding these issues, landscape management may request more participation along with financial enhancement and management capacity. Stakeholder participation in landscape management has been increasingly enlarged, differentiating past decision-making which only practitioners or historically landowners took part in. The word "stakeholder" originates from seventeenth century (Ramírez, 1999) and public participation is coming increasingly embedded in national and international environmental policy, as decision-makers recognise the need to understand who is affected by the decisions and actions they take, and who has the power to influence their outcome, i.e. the stakeholders (Freeman, 1984). In addition, Reed et al., (2008) stated that disillusionment has been growing amongst practitioners, stakeholders and the wide public, who feel let down when these claims are not realised.

There are many associated groups relating to decision making within stakeholders contexts. According to Friedman & Miles (2006), the most common groups of stakeholders to be considered are shareholders, customers, suppliers and distributors, employees and local communities, including NGOs, government, policymakers, the media and academics. In practice, a wide range of stakeholders who could be city council, friends groups, local trust, user groups and academic groups widely take part in decision-making regarding landscape management (Sheffield City Council, 2009; Dunnnett et al., 2002).

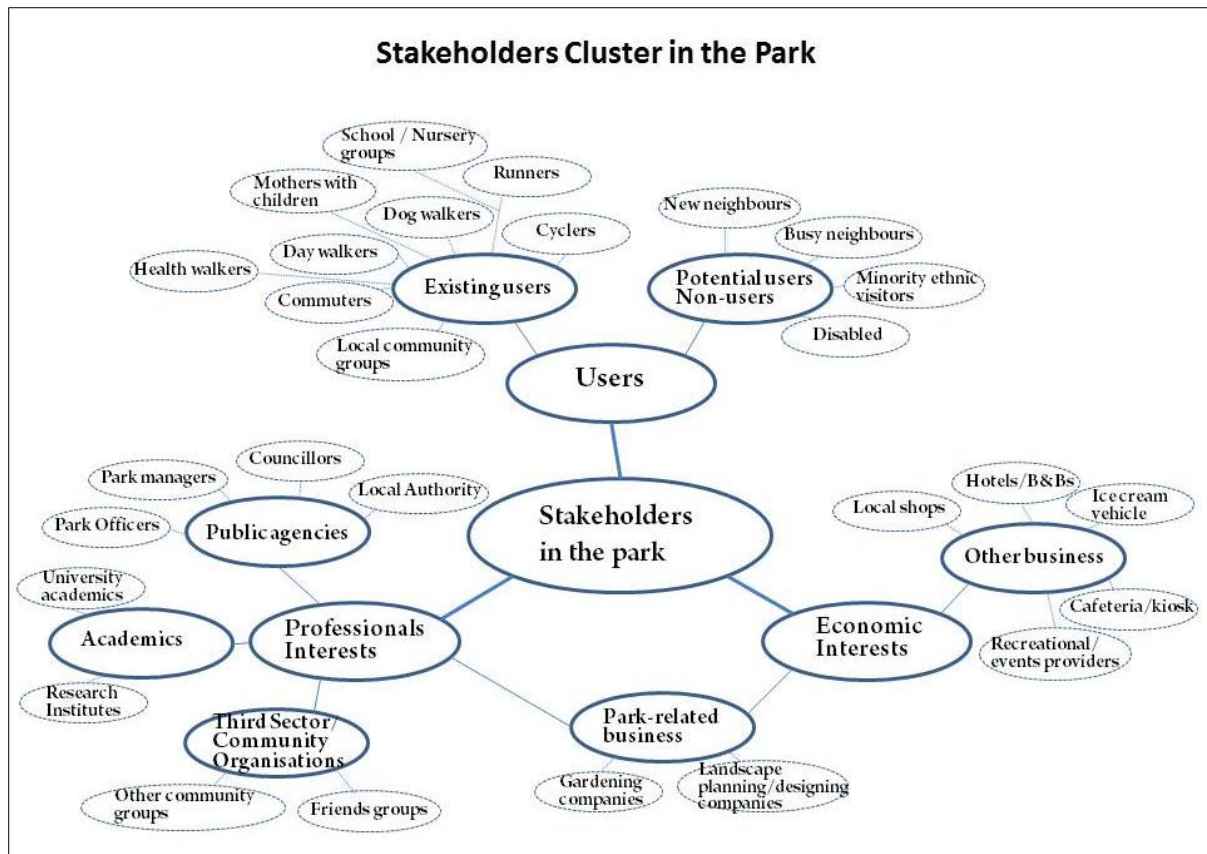


Fig 2. Stakeholders cluster in the park.

Who cares? Sharing responsibility

There has been a shift in the responsibility for open-space management which involves multiple stakeholders. The term ‘partnership’ describes an association of two or more partners who have agreed to share responsibility (Dempsey and Smith, 2014, p.14). Sharing responsibilities could motivate each stakeholder to participate actively as a partner. In addition, it provides valuable opportunities that could connect sharing responsibilities to participating activities with their capacity in collaboration and partnership network. Private sector involvement in the management of open spaces has increased through the public sector’s practice of contracting out services and through partnership approaches (Smith et al., 2014, p.60). Open space management responsibilities are increasingly being placed on communities and volunteers (Smith et al., 2014, p.60) and community capacity consists of the networks, organisation, attitudes, leadership and skills that allow communities to manage and sustain community-led development (Cavaye, 2000, p.2). Community-based organisations (CBOs) link to groups that are organised specially around the management of open spaces, such as the ‘Friends of’ organisations in the UK and the ‘third’ or non-government sector in wider conceptualisation as ‘civil society’ (Smith et al., 2014, p.61). Likewise, each stakeholder links to another stakeholder, and collaboration and partnership between stakeholders would be emphasised in sharing responsibility and capacity.

Stakeholder capacity could affect the decision-making processes. In landscape management empowered stakeholders have been generally involved in solving social issues and adding financial enhancement. In practice, professionals need to take time and care to communicate local authority processes and procedures, and translate technical details and professional jargon into everyday language (Burton and Mathers, 2014). Today, the collaboration between stakeholders has been a requirement for decision-making moving away from only decision-making by professionals. In recent

years, the quality of urban parks is in decline, fuelled by falling maintenance budgets and increasing concerns over public safety (Speller & Ravenscroft, 2005). However, stakeholders capacity relating to involvement with open and green spaces occur at multiple stages within the design (Mathers et al., 2011) and management stages and has been seen to lead to a reduction in vandalism and anti-social behaviour (Herzele & Denutte, 2003; Ohmer et al., 2009). Mathers et al., (2012) suggested that place-keeping partnerships, such as friends of groups, can survive with reduced support.

Community involvement can help facilitate funding which is a light relief from public funding cuts (Jones, 2002; Moskell, 2010). Considering the importance of funding in landscape management, funding bodies (e.g., the Civic Trust, Heritage Lottery Fund) increasingly require local authorities to facilitate the formation of friends groups in order to develop a meaningful relationship with the users of such spaces (Speller and Ravenscroft, 2005). Further, revised criteria e.g. the award (Green Flag Award from the Civic Trust) stipulate that local communities should be involved directly in the management and decision-making process relating to parks (Speller & Ravenscroft, 2005). In an unstable financial climate, forming a partnership is a prerequisite to access many funding sources such as EU structural funds and Lottery funded open space development in the UK (Burton and Mathers, 2014, p.77). In addition, stakeholder collaboration leads to financial contribution, promoting commitment, skill base development, motivational drive, communication and political influence (Mathers et al., 2012). Significantly, the extent and strength of a partnership's networks is an important factor in the ability of partnership to deliver aims, to help give legitimacy to its action and to manage time in acting as a resource (Holt et al., 2012). In contrast, considering cost-effectiveness of decision making, stakeholders' participation process, as Beierle (2002)'s argue, was credited with increasing costs more than an expert-only process. More importantly, there have been risks to stakeholder participation such as expensive processes, time consuming processes, potential stakeholder frustration, identification of new conflicts and involvement of stakeholders who are not representative. Nevertheless, collaboration and partnerships in decision-making could be stressed again such as the term 'MSI (Multi-Stakeholder Involvement)' that is defined as a harmonic collaboration among actors which will/can be influenced by urban green space development to pursue perceived goals (Azadi et al., 2010).

Different landscape management practices

A large number of landscape management practices have been introduced and their focus has mostly been on contributing environment, society and economy in the common thread of better landscape and people's life. This research introduces three different landscape practices which are naturalistic planting, food growing and income generation. These practices have fundamentally contributed better environment, society and economy. However, each practice highlights a special purpose in different weighted value. Naturalistic planting, food growing and income generation tend to focus on environment (eco-friendly), society (community participation) and economy (fundraising) respectively. In addition, there is understandably an action gap to manage parks between landscape practices. This gap could affect different type of maintenance, staff organisation, budget and people's perceptions. However, we know little about stakeholders' perceptions on these practices and acceptability in the 21st century parks.

Naturalistic planting has been involved in the interest sweeping across Europe in the development of nature as increasing amount of landscape development in urban areas the last 30 years (Özgüner et al., 2007). However, the use of the word 'naturalistic' can be seen as a subject of controversy in its definition. The early proponents of naturalistic planting, such as Capability Brown, merely included native species as an element in an artistic composition (Kendle and Forbes, 1997. p.110). On the other hand, in a modern landscape context, naturalistic planting respects diversity of species and a focus on biodiversity, structure and appearance of vegetation as well as the promotion of ecological processes

relating to human intervention and the urban context (Özgüner, et al., 2007; Dunnett and Hitchmough, 2004. p.9). Importantly, the use of exotic species should be considered with inherent ecology in context of the country (Hitchmough and Dunnett, 1997). It can be seen that the use of native and non-native species could provide more opportunities to make greater urban areas in naturalistic communities. In common, naturalistic styles in the natural settings of management of urban parks or open spaces could be involved with great values socially, economically and environmentally. Socially, there are numerous evidences that support psychological benefits with naturalistic landscapes or styles. Naturalistic or natural settings provide stress reduction (Ulrich, 1983; Hartig et al., 2003), increasing focus attention (Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989), restorative effect (Kaplan and Kaplan, 1989; Laumann et al., 2001), lower mental fatigue (Kuo, 2001) and rising life satisfaction (Kaplan, 1993). A shift to a more naturalistic management may alter the nature of the maintenance tasks and this can increase the opportunities for making use of voluntary help and community involvement (Lickorish et al., 1997). Kuo et al., (1998) stated that natural setting offer strong social ties. In addition, naturalistic styles contribute to higher sense of safety and adjustment (Kuo et al., 1998) and fewer crimes (Kuo and Sullivan, 2001). Economically, the ongoing decline of public landscape maintenance and realisation of funding cut have initiated a search for new planting styles that should be have relatively low-maintenance costs, be as sustainable as possible and support as much wildlife as possible over the past couple of decades in Britain and other western countries (Dunnett and Hitchmough, 2004 p1-2). Dunnett and Kingsbury (2004) mentioned that extensive management and other ways of reducing maintenance costs could therefore do much to strengthen the hands of those who wish to see ecological plantings used more often. However, Kendle and Forbes (1997) stated that if the patterning of naturalistic style is complex and the management operations are unusual, costs can still be high. Environmentally, naturalistic planting is claimed to encourage natural regeneration of spontaneous vegetation on site and allow distinctive urban common vegetation to development (Dunnett and Hitchmough, 1996). Furthermore, naturalistic designs contribute to sustainability as they are better associated with community participation in design process, flexibility over final use and the use of locally derived materials while reducing labour input (Dunnett and Clayden, 2000). However, there is little evidence that naturalistic planting is acceptable and feasible from park management perspective in 21st century parks and different stakeholders' perceptions support this practice.

Community food growing-related projects or schemes have rapidly been spreading with more active community participation and funding supporting since the beginning of 21st century. Community food growing is to get together to manage a community growing space (CCB, 2013), defined as the cultivation of land by groups based on residential estates, faith premises, places of employment, schools or within neighbourhoods (Sustain, 2014). Overwhelming purposes for promoting food growing projects may be to let more communities participate in landscape management practices. Representative food growing project 'Incredible Edible' has now spread across the globe. A £59.8 million funding programme contributes money from Big Lottery Fund (BIG) to a variety of food-related projects to help make locally grown food accessible and affordable to communities, encouraging the development of projects (Kirwan et al., 2013). Some possible land sources for community food growing could be communal land on a housing estate, waste ground and derelict sites, land within existing parks and recreation grounds, land awaiting development, rooftops, hospital grounds, old churchyards and cemeteries, school grounds and allotments plots. Whereas, there are some difficulties before using these lands that community food growing projects may need to negotiate for a site with the landowner (CCB, 2013). However, parks and green spaces as public sites opening to all could be better opportunity for this project. Currently, the spaces of some parks are shared for this project managed by community groups such as friends, local and voluntary groups.



Fig 3. Representative community good growing projects. (Incredible Edible in Todmorden (left) and Abundance in Sheffield (right): resources from Incredible Edible and Abundance websites assessed 23rd May 2015).

Wiltshire (2010) stated that by providing a positive planning framework encouraging community food growing, planning can help achieve wider local authority objectives, including sustainable development, carbon reduction and climate change adaption, provision of green regeneration. The aims of community food growing are to provide benefits socially, economically and environmentally.

Socially, Mind (2013) described eco-therapy as an intervention that improves mental and physical health and wellbeing by supporting people to be active outdoors; doing gardening, food growing or environmental work. In addition, a benefit of food growing includes mental and physical health, from eating more fresh food and being physically active outdoors (Bragg et al., 2012). Community cohesion is one of benefit coming from community food growing because food growing sites can bring diverse groups of people together around a common interest (Sustain, 2014). Social benefits from community food growing can include improved health through healthier eating, increased exercise and reduced exposure to hazardous chemicals for workers and consumers. Diets which are more ‘climate friendly’ can also be good for you, e.g. eating more vegetables (Scottish Government, 2011). Other social benefits are amenity through places for outdoor relaxation and play (Sustain, 2014), learning environment, where young and old can learn about food growing, biodiversity, sustainable development and develop transferable skills that increase skills and employability (Natural England, 2009), community cohesion and inclusion by providing opportunities for social interaction and active leisure (Sustain, 2014).

Economically, growing more food locally creates jobs and helps boost the local economy. For example, farmers’ markets are generally welcomed by existing retailers who find that their business increases due to the extra shoppers (Scottish Government, 2011). Other economic benefit includes the potential for economic development, through learning new skills and exploring commercial options for dealing with surplus produce and the provision of social services (Sustain, 2014).

Environmentally, community food growing spaces contribute to mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change and other sustainability priority (Sustain, 2014). Urban food growing spaces help achieve sustainable development (Natural England, 2009) that regards reducing food miles and improving air quality (Scottish Government, 2011), reducing urban heat island effect with vegetated open spaces, sustainable drainage, climate change adaption e.g. flood alleviation and cooling urban heat island (Sustain, 2014). Other environmental benefits of food projects can include enhancing the

amenity value of waste or under-utilised land for allotments, and helping to reduce the amount of space taken up by landfill sites (Scottish Government, 2011).

Income generation practice in a landscape management context has been an inevitable challenge in times of authority. Landscape management associated costs or funding to cover all activities in landscape areas (Naidoo et al., 2006; Naidoo & Ricketts, 2006; Dempsey, 2012; Grunewald et al., 2012). However, Funding for public parks and urban green spaces was significantly reduced between 1979 and 2000, losing an estimated £1.3 billion in total (Green Space, 2001) and an average of 10.5% from 2010 to 2012 (Policy Exchange, 2014). More seriously, most managers expect capital will be cut further over next three years (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2014). In spite of increasing the member of friends and user groups, funding cut could cause dramatically declining quality and condition of many parks (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2014). Many parks have faced and will face pressure on budgets and it makes another risk and inevitable changes. Directly, visiting users as one of funding resource will also face burdening cost to use parks. According to Heritage Lottery Fund (2014), 83% of managers reported increasing fees for such facilities as sports pitches, car parks, allotments and the hire of grounds or buildings for private events. This links to staffing reduction being able to deteriorate parks condition and quality, not taking account of qualifying management and maintenance skills. As supporting evidence, CABI (2006) stated parks sector was suffering not only from an ageing workforce and a shortage of horticultural skills, but also from a critical lack of management, promotional, presentational and interpersonal skills. Indirectly, 45% and 19% of local authorities are considering disposing of some green spaces and parks respectively (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2014). This brings about continuing changes of management and maintenance arrangements and transferring management of parks to community groups. In fact, there has been a significant rise in the number of membership of park friends groups with park managers reporting a 30% increase in groups over the last years, contributing to funding rise (Heritage Lottery Fund, 2014). Considering funding enhancement to reduce these risks, future park management may be inevitably required some changes to better manage or maintain urban parks.



Fig 4. Income Generation models in the park (resource from CABI, 2006).

There are a wide range of approaches that fund to manage or maintain parks and green spaces. Under getting declining funding cut, these approaches struggle to fund with considering funding based strategies. To date, funding resources have been from public sectors such as local authorities, government departments and agencies for the delivery of projects. These funding bodies have contributed to stable source of funding, support mutual goals leading to efficiency savings, encourage the formation of partnership, secure reliable from dedicated local tax (CABI, 2006) and increase

property values from creating tax revenue (CABE, 2004). At the same time, these have faced various barriers or limitations that are financial uncertainty, an inability to think long-term, non-statutory status, high competition for resources from other areas and limited autonomy to impose additional local taxes (CABE, 2006). In spite of some opportunities to be provided steady funding, this planning also encounters susceptible to competition and use only for new development (CABE, 2006). As another funding strategy from private sector and users, income-generating has been alternatives to fund through revenue income such as licensing and franchising, sponsorship, entree fee and fines (CABE, 2006) and other unique schemes joining community groups such as the Treasury/Gift Aid, Spacehive and Subscription Crowdfunding(Policy Exchange, 2014). In empirical researches Weaver and Lawton (2011) stated that existing users are willing to pay a higher entrance fee with mean 3.10 in a 5-point scale. In contrast, not many respondents are willing to pay for wilder parks with several reasons which are enough pay in taxes, not worth an entrance fee, suspicious entrance fee delivery, not afford to pay and stereotype on free of charge (López-Mosquera and Sánchez, 2014). However, the results on willing to pay entrance fees are always not consistent, being influenced by variables such as loyalty and greens space types. Today, voluntary and community sector involvement has been emphasised on enhancing funding for park management. Organisations called Not-for-profit, voluntary and community groups can bring tax-relief benefits, increasing opportunities for accessing lottery and regeneration funding (CABE, 2006). Even though income generation strategies could support to fundraising, the proposed strategies would coexist with expected or unexpected barriers and limitations. These strategies could be reluctant agreement to payers or refused by them. There is anecdotal evidence that they are willingness to pay or not in their perceptions and stakeholders' participation could contribute to better urban parks as a cornerstone to appeal to funding resources.

Aims and objectives

The main aims of this research are to understand urban green spaces from *place-keeping* perspective: acceptable and feasible landscape management practices for 21st century parks by:

- exploring *place-keeping* perspective and landscape management practices in the UK context of urban parks
- reviewing critically stakeholder involvement in landscape management practices and strategies
- assessing the feasibility and acceptability of landscape management practices according to different stakeholders
- exploring the extent of variation of perceptions of current and future landscape management scenarios in different socio-economic contexts across a city
- proposing future strategies for urban landscape management based on an understanding of stakeholder perceptions

Methodology

The aims of this research are to understand urban green spaces from the *place-keeping* perspective: acceptable and feasible landscape management practices in district parks located in different deprived areas in Sheffield, UK. It will investigate the impacts of stakeholders' participations on future landscape management in a selection of urban parks. It is a prerequisite that are comprehended the notion of landscape management, stakeholder participation and relevant concepts as discussed earlier. Hence, this study will focus on three ways to ascertain the research aims; in-depth interviews, focus group meetings and self-completion questionnaire.

Interviewees will be asked to discuss a number of questions (sent to interviewees by email at least two weeks prior to the interview) who will be councillors, planners, academics, consultants and other experts. The questions will be around landscape management practices in the UK context of urban parks and they will be asked to comment on park management changes e.g.) practices, funding/budget,

stakeholder involvement and potential barriers last 10 or 20 years. Additionally they will be asked opinion on their feasibility and acceptability.

Focus group meetings will target to park managers, officers and Friends/ community groups of the selected parks. They will be asked to debate a number of questions that focus on acceptability and feasibility of the proposed landscape practices, the contribution of stakeholders' involvement and a gap in differing experience of landscape.

Visualisation-based questionnaires will be employed in the features of selected sites. The selected six sites will be re-illustrated by landscape management strategies and photo-based visualisation with manipulation. Three different scenarios in each site will be developed to illustrate the possible future management changes with photorealistic visualisation employing computer-generated manipulation. The validity of questionnaire will be verified by the conduct of a pilot test. The participants (n=50) will be asked prior to the actual test. This pilot test will examine the clarity of each question and the applicability of the questionnaire in a pilot site, Bolehill Recreation Ground in Sheffield, UK. The results of the pilot test will find out some problems of questionnaire and then the problems will be improved by revising wording, ambiguous and academic jargon. Following the pilot study, the questionnaire will be conducted on drop-collection basis with 600 participants (existing and potential or non-users), (100 per site) at the six survey sites.

Sites selection

Data for this research will be gathered in district parks in Sheffield, UK. These district parks will be chosen as they better represent typical parks of the city through their various management strategies or practices, engaging community groups. Sheffield is one of England's largest cities, with a population of approximately 552,700 (SCC, 2014). Sheffield contains a varied range of landscapes, and a substantial green space network, but that now also includes an extensive system of publicly provided spaces, both planned and unplanned (Beer, 2005). District parks located in Sheffield's district sites provide quality green spaces, good accessibility, possibly opportunities for catering, outdoor events and indoor attractions, as a local site for their local communities and maintenance to appropriate quality standards (SCC, 2000). Six district parks are selected for this study under different socio-economic areas in Sheffield. Furthermore, site selection will consider park size, involvement of the park friends or community groups and geographic spread across city. The selection criteria are to determine about applicability of different landscape management which could not be contemplated in city parks (too big profile) or local parks (too small). The site selection criteria will include:

- Different Socio-economic areas distributed by Indices of Deprivation 2010-Sheffield
- District parks in Sheffield categorised by Sheffield Categorisation Strategy
- Comparable park size
- Friends or community groups in active participation
- Geographical spread across city

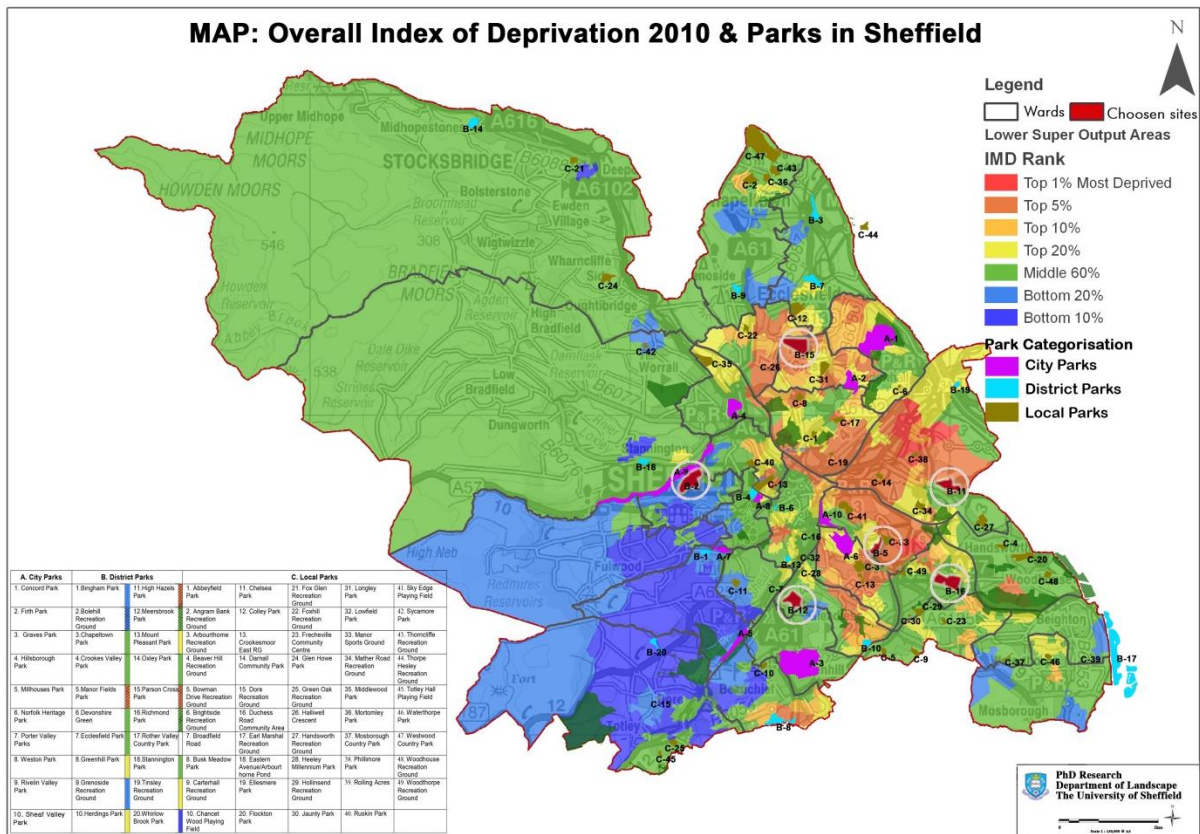


Fig 5. Selected six district parks in Sheffield, UK based on criteria.

Analysis

In-depth interviews and Focus group meeting; The analysis of in-depth interviews and focus group meeting will follow three phases of data reduction, data display and drawing conclusions (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The efficiencies afforded by software release some of the time used to simply manage data and allow an increased focus on ways of examining the meanings of what is recorded (Bazeley and Jackson, 2013, p2). This analysis will use Nvivo as qualitative data analysis computer software. Nvivo is the most widely used in most social sciences disciplines (Punch, 2014, p 199). Nvivo will be used to give rigour to the analysis: to store the “primary textual data and to assist in coding, sorting and organising the text” (Veal, 2005, p. 299).

Self-completion questionnaire; The perceptions to landscape scenarios will be analysed using a one-way ANOVA with stakeholder groups (residents, friends or community groups and practitioners). The perceptions of user groups in socio-economy status to landscape scenarios will also be analysed. The results will employ the statistical package for social science (SPSS V.21) to analyse the collected data.

Conclusion and discussion

To date, some actions on design and planning processes have underlined place-making concepts for better places. However, we need to rethink about how to keep the places for people’s quality of life and well-being. Place-keeping perspective highlights long-term management which includes sustainability of funding/ budget with supporting policy to long last adequate places. More active stakeholders in different experience are getting involved in park management, contributing to fundraising, maintenance and decision-making. This paradigm in a landscape context leads a shift in responsibility for park management. Nevertheless, place-making based schemes may have overlooked about stakeholders’ contribution to park management. More visits to parks and urban green spaces and increasing users’ demands would claim higher quality management and diverse experience.

Landscape management practices (Naturalistic planting, food growing and income generation) have challenged for better places and users' experience. However, we know little about the perceptions of stakeholders in relation to this variety of landscape management practices. How acceptable and feasible are such innovative practices in urban green spaces? This paper will call on initial findings of the ongoing research to shed light on the feasibility and acceptability of different landscape management practices in urban parks. This will help the team to propose future strategies for urban landscape management which is based on an in-depth understanding of stakeholders' perceptions.

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