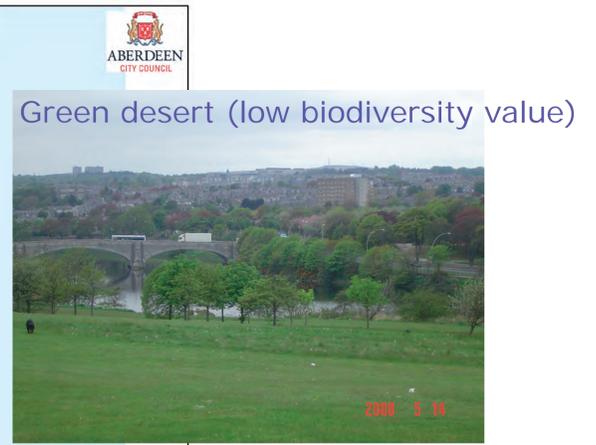
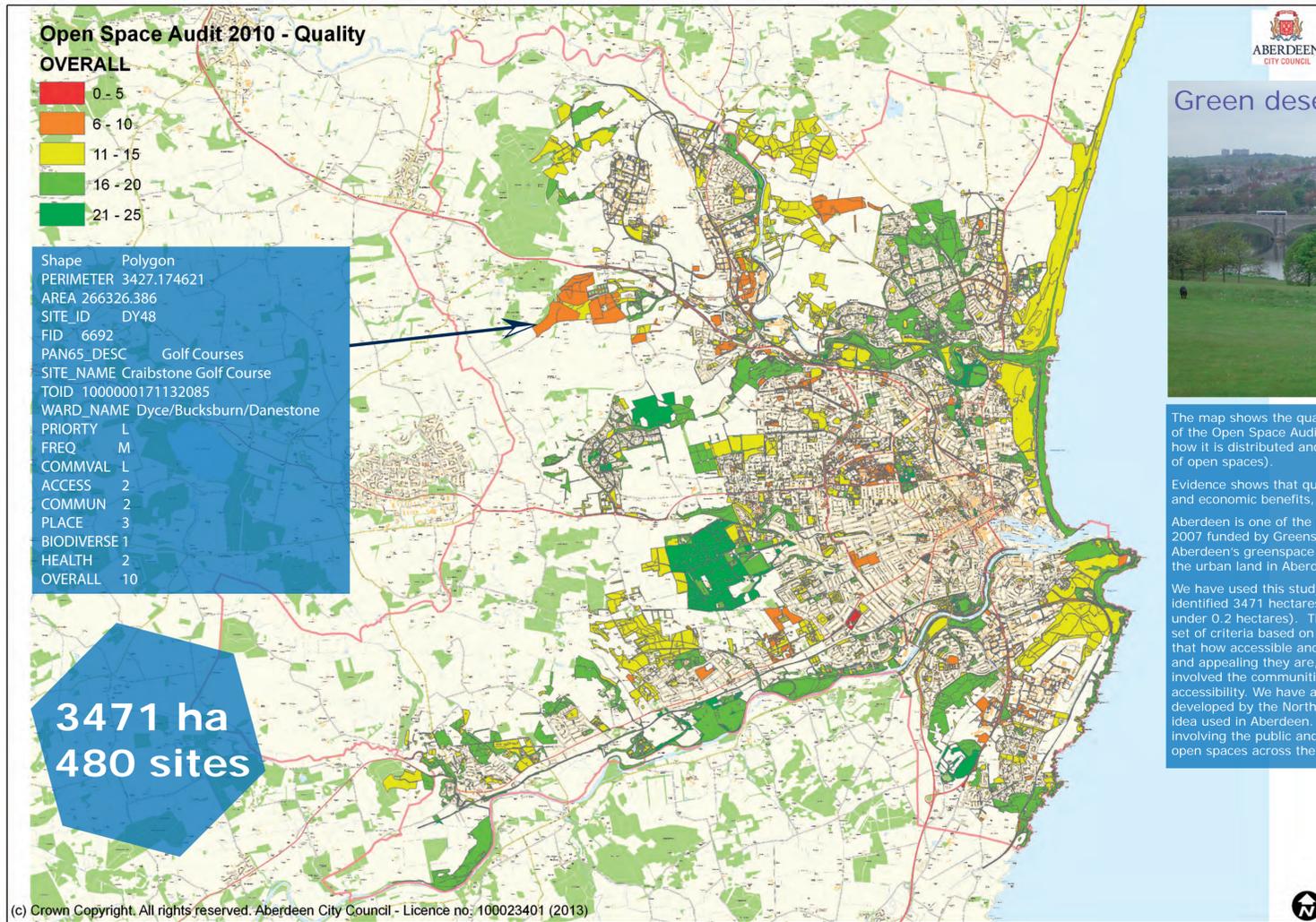


Aberdeen City Open Space Quality

Local Government and Citizens



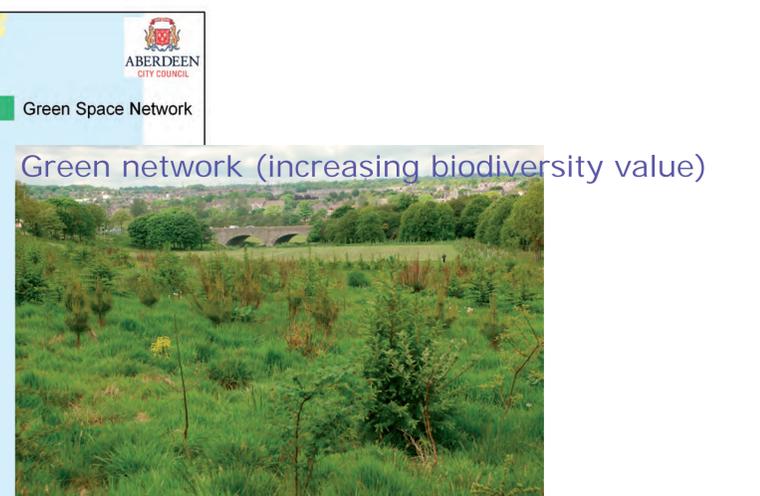
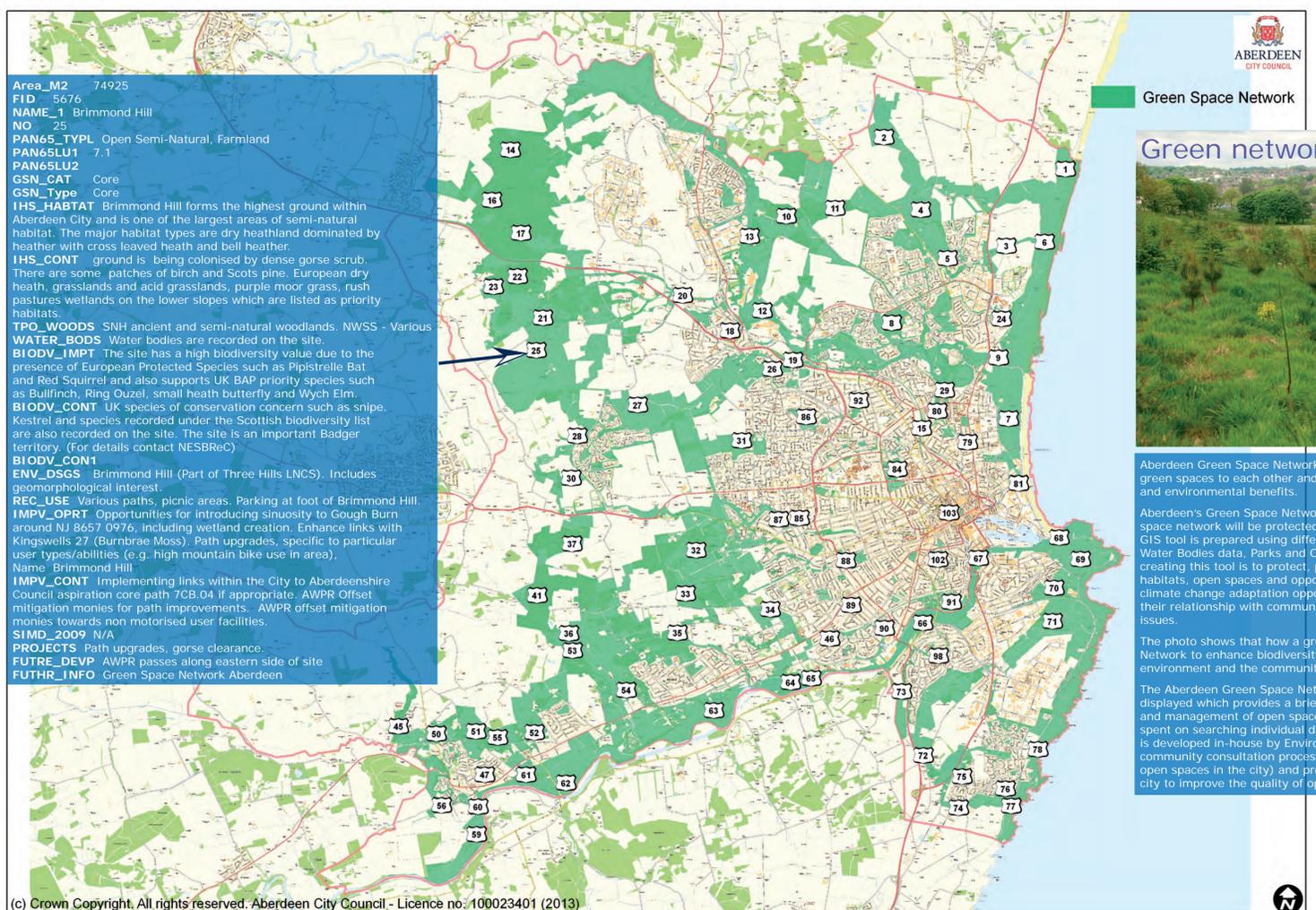
The map shows the quality of open spaces across the city. This information is collected as a part of the Open Space Audit. (An open space audit is an assessment of how much open space exists, how it is distributed and how accessible it is to the communities around it and measures the quality of open spaces).

Evidence shows that quality, accessible open space delivers a wide range of social, environmental and economic benefits, which are priorities for communities, the Council and the government.

Aberdeen is one of the pilot cities in conducting a Greenspace Characterisation & Mapping Study 2007 funded by Greenspace Scotland. We developed a comprehensive digital map of all of Aberdeen's greenspace analysing aerial photographs and identifying the land use categories of all of the urban land in Aberdeen plus a 500 metre buffer around the built up areas.

We have used this study to conduct an extensive open space audit across the City. The audit has identified 3471 hectares of open space comprising 480 sites (not including private gardens or sites under 0.2 hectares). The quality of each of Aberdeen's open space sites has been assessed using a set of criteria based on guidance from Greenspace Scotland. The assessment is based on the criteria that how accessible and well connected these open spaces are to the communities, how attractive and appealing they are, how they support active health and well being for the community. We involved the communities and the public to capture their views on open space provision, quality and accessibility. We have also added a biodiversity value to each of these open spaces on a criteria developed by the North East Scotland Biological Records Centre (NESBREC). This is an innovative idea used in Aberdeen. The open space audit results were used to prepare the Open Space Strategy involving the public and the partners. The Strategy sets a strategic vision to improve the quality of open spaces across the City.

Aberdeen City Green Space Network and an Innovative GIS Tool for Planning & Management of Green Spaces



Aberdeen Green Space Network is a strategic network connecting various habitats and species, urban and rural green spaces to each other and the communities around them. It offers a wide range of social, health economic and environmental benefits.

Aberdeen's Green Space Network is identified in the Local Development Plan (Policy NE1) explains how the green space network will be protected and enhanced through the planning process. The Geographic Information System GIS tool is prepared using different datasets for example Integrated Habitat Survey (IHS) data, Access Paths data, Water Bodies data, Parks and Open Spaces data, Social data and a range of other data sets. The basic purpose of creating this tool is to protect, promote and enhance designated natural heritage sites, connectivity between habitats, open spaces and opportunities for physical activity and access to the outdoors. It also takes into account climate change adaptation opportunities and flood risk or alleviation, the distribution of existing open spaces and their relationship with communities, development opportunities, health and deprivation information and transport issues.

The photo shows that how a green deserts (large grass cut areas) in Aberdeen City has been converted into a Green Network to enhance biodiversity value of open spaces and making the place more meaningful for the benefit of the environment and the community.

The Aberdeen Green Space Network is divided into different sites. By clicking on each site the information is displayed which provides a brief information on the site justifying its rationale. This information is used for planning and management of open spaces and any improvements works required to enhance the network. This saves time spent on searching individual data sets and provides all the necessary information at one place. This innovative tool is developed in-house by Environmental Policy Team of the Aberdeen City Council. The information gathered during community consultation process in conducting the Open Space Audit (baseline information on quality and quantity of open spaces in the city) and preparing the Strategy based on evidence helped in developing a shared vision for the city to improve the quality of open spaces across the City.