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**BlueHealth Environment Assessment Tool**

**Professional Version Guidance**

**(Terrestrial Steps)**

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**Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge**

Health, demographic change and wellbeing

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# Introduction

This document is intended to provide guidance to surveyors on how to complete a BlueHealth Environmental Assessment (BEAT) and what specific factors should be looked at when evaluating each domain and aspect. It has been extensively piloted and tested as part of the development of the BEAT itself.

Each assessment should be completed by at least two surveyors acting independently and their scores agreed or averaged. The scales of 1-5 are therefore intended to be assessed subjectively first by individual surveyors after which the databases of each surveyor can be normalised and amalgamated to form a final agreed score which is then used to generate the graphical outputs and report.

Surveyors should practice the assessment and, if need be, training can be provided on the use of the BEAT by someone with more experience (or one of the team who devised it). It is a good idea to carry out a test assessment and to discuss and agree how the instructions and guidance should be interpreted. The tool should be applicable in any blue space of any scale but if there are conditions which it does not cover then please use your own judgement.

The BEAT is applied via the web-interface which can be used on a laptop, tablet or smartphone (you need a data download facility or WIFI available). Within the web-interface the specific guidance text for each section can be opened and read in conjunction with the recording boxes, for ease of reference and for checking but it is essential that you read this guidance first.

Make sure all sections are completed and then the system will allow you to amalgamate scores and one finalized report can be generated as the final output, in pdf format. As you proceed it is also possible to look at the results of each before moving on to the next section.

The assessment process has four distinct steps, an off-site pre-survey section and three on-site survey sections. The first step, the pre-survey, is intended to provide important contextual information which is unlikely to change, while the further three steps of the on-site survey may be repeated, for example after a site intervention, in order to record changes and establish if the intervention met its objectives.

### STEP 1

### Preliminary data about the site

Most of this information can be obtained from a desk study but it should be as accurate as possible. It may be necessary to consult a range of sources in order to obtain all the necessary information – such as demographic data on residents of surrounding areas, nature protection status, climate or historical information. It is important to obtain a good quality map of the area under assessment which also covers the surrounding areas to at least a 1km radius from the site boundary, in order to show sufficient context. This map may be used in several ways (see below). A scale of 1:500 or 1:1000 may be a suitable scale for recording key aspects.

### Location

In this box record the following:

Name of site: use the accepted name or the official name, if the site has one. If the name is vague or not agreed, then a description of its location may be added.

Survey grid reference/GPS coordinates: record a survey reference point using the national standard survey system; if it is intended to make a live link via GPS then this needs to be added and checked on site with a GPS-enabled device (could be the tablet of smartphone to be used for the on-site survey). Use an easily identifiable, fairly central point as the reference location, so that other people can find it easily on a map or in e.g. Google Earth.

Area (ha)/length (m or km): If the site is a fairly regular shape, for example up to twice as long as it is wide, then calculate the overall area to the nearest 0.01 ha (unless it is a very small feature) basing this on the legal or physical boundaries (follow the water’s edge or include water areas where these incorporate facilities such as boat docks or swimming piers and include the area of water features completely enclosed by the site such as ponds or small streams); if its length is more than twice the width, measure the length in addition to the area, to the nearest metre or 0.01km; if it is a very narrow site, such as a water’s-edge path (less than 10m wide zone) do not measure area but only length, to the nearest metre or 0.01km. Measure the length along the water’s edge (or embankment edge) from both extremities of the site.

The accompanying diagrams show how the area and length measurements should be calculated. (diagrams to be added)

#### Climatic zone and climate trends

Refer to the Köppen-Geiger system for the climatic zone of the site and make additional notes on local climatic features (such as windiness, shelter, sun exposure) and add anything known about expected climatic trends in the region (such as warmer winters, hotter summers, rainier autumns etc.) due to climate change

### Blue space type(s)

In this box record the relevant blue space types using the classification provided (need a link here). If the site is large enough to encompass more than one type, then divide the area into the relevant ones, record them on the map and measure the proportions of each as necessary, using approximate percentages. Note which is the primary type and then add secondary ones until the entire site is accounted for. In case the type is not clear use the nearest type which fits (all potential types for Europe should have been accounted for in the classification). For particularly large sites with large subdivisions this will be used for separate assessments later on in the process.

### Site Context

In this set of boxes write short sections to describe the site context which will help in understanding how the site fits into the overall urban structure and its connectivity. Use the base map to record the different features (or several maps, one for each category). You may need several maps in layers.

#### Brief description of the site, its current uses and general setting

Write a few sentences explaining:

* What and where is the site?
* What are its current use or uses?
* How does it fit into the urban setting?
* How it is connected with the water?
* Is it in and industrial, residential or mixed use location?

#### Historical information about the site

This section is particularly important if the site has changed or had a number of uses in the past.

* Are there cultural heritage aspects to be protected or incorporated in future plans?
* Are any problems eg due to pollution?
* Can you find old maps or to find historical photos?
* Are there local amateur historians who you can talk to?
* Is there any heritage protection on the area?

Record all of this on the map.

#### Nature protection status, if any (Natura 2000 etc)

If it is protected in any way – it may be the land, waters’ edge, the water areas or a combination, then it is likely to be a sensitive site. Make notes on:

* Why is it protected?
* What are the important habitats or species?
* Are their seasonal restrictions about human use to avoid disturbing nesting birds, for example?

Mark up the map with the boundaries and identify on it any specific habitats.

#### Symbolism and memory associated with the area

Identify any specific aspects of the site which evoke symbolic associations or particular memories for people:

* Is it associated with historical events?
* With places where many people used to work?
* With creating a sense of identity for local residents?

It may be necessary to do some research for this through local history or by speaking to local knowledgeable people.

#### General description of the surrounding landscape and setting

This section should be used to describe in more detail the structures located in the immediate vicinity of the site:

* Buildings,
* Green features,
* Open spaces,
* Industrial or dock sites,
* Topographic features (slopes, cliffs),
* The setting in relation to the waterbody,
* Main views and any eye-catching or dominating features visible nearby, such as tall buildings.

Identify these on the map and mark it up with the different zones, edges, eye-catching features, focal points etc

#### General description of the waterbody

Make notes about:

* How is the waterbody connected to the hydrological system (inflows and outflows)?
* What is the character of the waterbody, such as tidal, slow or quick flowing, turbulent or smooth, calm and whether clear or turbid, generally clean or polluted?

 Mark different aspects and flow patterns on the map.

### Accessibility to the site (terrestrial and water-borne)

This section is all about how people can get to the site from nearby or further afield by a range of different transport. Use the map to mark up the main access features, directions from which access may be obtained, location of different kinds of routes, bus stops, jetties and so on.

#### Road connections

Make notes on:

* How do people get to the site by car?
* What are the main arterial connections?
* Are there one-way streets?
* Are there bottlenecks causing traffic problems?
* Do actual or potential visitors mix with industrial road traffic?

#### Car access and parking

Make notes on:

* Is there car access into the site and if so how does it work?
* Is access controlled by barrier or tickets?
* If parking is provided, how many spaces are there?
* Can buses park?
* Is parking free or controlled/paid for?
* If there is no access into the site by car, where can people park in nearby streets or parking areas?
* How is off-site parking organised and controlled?
* Is parking paid for? Is it free?

Public transport (terrestrial and water)

Make notes about:

* What pubic transport options are there for people to reach the site?
* Consider all types, such as train, tram, light railway, metro, bus, waterbus, ferry, hydrofoil, etc. mark up a map with the routes, bus stops, tram stops, metro stations, quays etc.
* Does the public transport provide local connections or access from further afield direct to the site?

#### Pedestrian access

Make notes on:

* How easy is it for people to walk to the site?
* Consider the street network surrounding the site, footpaths and pavements, road crossings, places from where people might want to walk (residential areas, schools, public transport interchanges, shops, more distant car parking etc.
* Where are the site access points for pedestrians?

Mark up the map with the routes, kinds of pavement, road crossings, access points etc.

#### Cycle access

Make notes about:

* How easy is it for people to cycle to the site?
* Are there segregated cycle routes or lanes?
* Do cyclists mingle with the other traffic?
* Where are the site access points for cyclists?

Mark up the map with cycle routes, access points, parking racks etc.

### Residential character of the neighbourhood

If the site is located in a residential or primarily residential neighbourhood then information about the people who live there, as actual or potential users of the site, is important.

#### Property types and ownership

Look at the following:

* What of kinds of properties are found in the surrounding area?
* Are they flats, single family houses or something else?
* Are they privately owned or rented and if so, are they public or private rentals?
* Do they have gardens?

This information may be available from the municipality/local authority or it can be found out by asking people or from observation of the area. Mark up the map with the main categories.

#### Population within 100m, 500m, 1km

How many people live within the actual or potential local catchment of the site? It should be possible to find out approximately how many people live within different radii around the site boundaries by examining census data, for example. Since recreational areas are far more likely to be used if they are within a short distance of where people live, this information is potentially very valuable, if it can be obtained, even as an estimate. Draw the three radii around the site boundary on the map and make the best estimate of total population within each.

#### Socio-economic status

What is the socio-economic mix in the population living around the site? Are they generally well-off? Are there deprived people living there? Are there many unemployed people? Are they retired? Is it mixed? This information may also be available from census data, depending on the jurisdiction, or it can be estimated by observation. If socio-economic status is associated with certain districts, then these should be marked on a map.

#### Ethnic composition

As it is well known that different ethnic groups use green and public spaces in different ways, it may be important to have some estimate of the main ethnic groups found in the local population, using the classification applied in the appropriate census (which may be the origin of the data if it is available). Do not attempt to do this from observation.

#### Age structure

People tend to use green, blue and public spaces differently depending on their age and/or life stage. Thus information on the age composition can be important and may be extracted from local census data (as for the other factors noted above). Is the surrounding area made up mainly of families with young children, single young adults, retired people or a mix (for example)?

#### Other green/blue spaces within 100m, 500m, 1km

How does the site under assessment fit into a structure or pattern of other spaces found locally? Make some notes about all other green or blue spaces and mark each on the map and note what are the main characteristics of each and what recreational opportunities they offer.

#### Tourism and recreational infrastructure and attractions within 1km of the site

If there are other tourist attractions or recreational infrastructure, such as play areas, museums, visitor centres, activity parks, marinas, sport centres etc, then these will impact the use of the assessed site. Identify each, make some notes and mark up their locations on the map.

## STEP 2

## General site description

The next information is concerned with recording a general description of the site under assessment, comprising a site map marked with different sections according to different land cover types (using a standard legend – see worked example) and calculated as percentages of the site area. This should be a combination of desk study (including consulting maps, charts and aerial photographs) and a preliminary site visit to obtain first impressions. Make notes about each element If it is present on the site).

### Water elements

Note the main features of the waterbody or bodies associated with the site:

#### Water type

* Is it fresh, salt or brackish water?
* Is it tidal or non-tidal? If tidal, what is the tidal range?
* Is it running (flowing) or still water?
* What is the water depth near the shoreline and further out?
* If depth information is available draw a cross-section showing profiles at different points to illustrate the sub-surface structure.
* Are there any particular currents (undertows etc.) which may be hazardous?
* If the site is subject to flooding, what are the characteristics (how high does it flood, how regularly, for example).

#### Riparian/water margin structure

What is the character of the interface between land and water?

* Is it a vertical wall? A slope of a certain angle?
* An embankment?
* A gently sloping beach?
* What is the first impression of the overall condition?
* Is there erosion or damage?

#### Water edges

* What is the type of water edge zone (the area between land and water including some of both)?
* Trees, reed beds, grass, water weeds, shingle, sand, concrete walls, stone walls, rip-rap?
* What is the first impression of the overall condition?
* Is there erosion or damage?

### Terrestrial land cover

Note the areas on land of different vegetation and surfaces found on the site

#### Vegetation

Note:

* Areas of grass (mown, rough, wildflower meadows);
* Shrubs (conifer, broadleaves, evergreen, deciduous, native or introduced etc);
* Woodland (conifer broadleaves, native or introduced and of what general age etc);
* Are there any invasive species present?

#### Hard surfaces

Mark up and describe:

* Paths and other hard surfaces such as tarmac, asphalt, gravel, concrete, cobbles/setts, unsurfaced etc;
* Facilities such as benches, water fountains, retaining walls, steps;
* Water access facilities such as jetties, quaysides, launching ramps etc;
* Buildings.
* What is the general condition as you first see it?

### Condition and activities at the time of survey

Make a general overview assessment of the general condition of each element at the time of survey and from this write a short section describing an overview of the whole site and the first impressions.

## STEP 3

## On-site survey

The main part of the assessment is where evaluation of all aspects under the set of different domains occurs. It takes place on site after the initial walk around and first impressions have been made. A minimum of two people should complete this independently, as noted above. This survey can be repeated, for example before or after an intervention or at different seasons. Each domain has a specific sets of aspects to be assessed and ways of assessing them.

Many of the aspects require a score of quality based on The factors described in the guidance. A score of 0 means that the factor or element is not present on the site; 1 means poor quality, 3 means average quality and 5 means excellent quality. This is where the two scores of the assessors need the most calibration or normalisation.

### Social domain

This domain includes who is using the site and what activities they undertake as well as informational, education and safety and security aspects. It relies heavily on seeing who is using the site at the time of assessment but this may be supplemented by other information and if need be extra surveys can be conducted using a different approach (go to section on behaviour mapping).

#### Aspect 1: Use of the site

Activities taking place at the time of the visit on land and on or in the water based on direct evidence at the time of survey should be noted using a standard list. Walk around the site first in order to gain a picture of which are the most common activities and note these first, then add the next most popular and so on. If there is an activity not on the list, then add it. It is a good idea to try to time this part of the assessment when there are likely to be plenty of people about (such as weekends).

If the site is quiet when the assessment takes place then you may also use indirect evidence of activities on land and on or in the water (traces left behind such as tyre tracks, footprints) or from talking to the people on site.

Negative or uncivil activities if seen should also be recorded in the relevant section (such as rubbish, fly tipping, vandalism, fireplaces, alcohol bottles, syringes, dog fouling or graffiti).

Try to count or estimate how many and what kind of people are using the site (age, gender but not ethnicity) at the time of the visit.

Note which parts of the site are used for what activity (simple observation mapping or additional application of a special observation mapping method – see link here). You will need a map for this (either paper or digital – if using a tablet then it is possible to use a system such as QGIS)

*NB: Repeated visits across the year will reveal much more about the patterns of use.*

#### Aspect 2: Information and educational aspects

This section contains several factors which may not be present on the site but when they are they should be assessed for the quality of the content of the information, its accuracy and the way it is presented using the suggested criteria.

Presence, and usefulness of information such as signs about site layout and orientation, information on activities:

Look for the location of signs (if present) and consider:

* Are they in the right place near the entrances?
* Is the information clearly presented? Is it readable?
* Are maps clear and understandable?
* Is the information up to date?
* Is it accurate?
* Does it help orientate the visitor?
* Is it in good condition?
* Are the sign structures attractive and in good condition?

Presence and functionality of waymarking or directional signs:

If present, consider:

* Do they direct the visitor to the main features?
* Are they clear and visible?
* Are they accurate?
* Are they legible?
* Are they in good condition?

Presence and clarity of codes of conduct/rules and regulations:

If present, consider:

* Are rules and regulations clearly presented and easy to understand?
* Are codes of conduct well-presented?
* Are they accurate and up to date?

Interpretive structures giving information of value to visitors of a cultural, historical or environmental nature:

If present, consider:

* Are these well located?
* Are they clear and informative?
* Do they use a good variety of communication methods (maps, diagrams, illustrations, photos, interactive elements)?
* Are they accurate?
* Are the structures suitable for the site (size, design, colours etc)?
* Are they in good condition?

Accessibility of information for people with different types of disability:

If present, consider:

* Is text large and with a good contrast with the background?
* Is there braille text or tactile maps?
* Is there information which can be listened to?
* Is there extensive use of symbols and illustrations instead of text?

Presence of information in a range of languages:

If present, consider:

* What are languages most useful in the area eg by different ethnicities (if known) or tourist markets?

#### Aspect 3 Safety and security

This section covers a range of safety and security issues. Many factors are more perceptual while others are practical and physical.

Physical safety and security against traffic and along water edges:

If present, consider:

* Are there barriers or fences to prevent people straying into dangerous traffic or falling off steep cliffs, banks or dock edges, for example, if such elements are a feature of the site?
* They may be made of steel, concrete, timber or comprise vegetation such as hedges.
* Are water edges, if not provided with railings, shallow or with gentle slopes?
* Are the barriers in good condition?
* Are they maintained?
* Do they meet the relevant codes (eg for height, distance between railings etc)?

Presence of water safety equipment and lifeguards:

In places where there is a lot of water activity combined with deeper water, currents, tides or waves there should be some safety equipment or lifeguards.

* Is there static provision of life rings, floating boards, ropes etc?
* If so is it accessible in anemergency?
* Is it intact?
* Are there instructions on use and telephone numbers for emergency services?
* In busy seasons are there lifeguards?
* If so, are they located so as to see the whole area?
* Are they supplied with equipment?

Presence and functionality of lighting:

If present,

* Does it cover all main paths and entrances as well as eg toilets or shelters?
* Are there any dark corners?
* Do all the lights work?

Sense of general security against crime or anti-social behaviour:

* Is the site self-policed by the continual presence of other users?
* Is it open and visible eg from a nearby road?
* Is it possible to see entrances and exits for escape?
* Is it likely that people nearby could hear cries for help?

Presence of vandalism or damage signalling lack of security:

* Does the site contain parts or elements which have been damaged and which do not appear to have been mended?
* Are parts of the site overgrown and hiding rubbish?
* Are there other signs of neglect or damage?

Presence of threatening people:

* Are there any drunk, drugged or rowdy people on the site?
* Any noisy loitering groups where they should not be?
* Is loud music playing against the rules?
* Is anyone misusing facilities or equipment?
* Are there signs that any of the above has taken place recently?

Signs of alcohol or drug use:

* Are there intact or broken remains of alcohol bottles (especially spirits) lying around?
* Are there any needles to be seen?
* Any condoms lying in the bushes etc?

### Aesthetic domain

#### Aspect 1: Visual condition of the surroundings of the site

This section does not consider aesthetic aspects of the site itself but of those surroundings which are visible from it, line the edges or are experienced immediately around the entrances and main access routes.

Visual quality of buildings and other structures visible along the site boundaries (land side):

* Are buildings attractive or unattractive in terms of the overall mix – for example is there a rather chaotic mix of styles, forms, colours, materials, heights etc,
* Are the buildings forming a complete ensemble and have similar forms, styles, colours, use of materials?
* Are the buildings and structures looking well-maintained or in poor condition?
* Are they clean or covered in graffiti?
* Are fences, parking areas, bridges or other structures in good condition?

Screening of off-site eyesores by trees and vegetation:

* If there are unattractive buildings or structures around the site are the visible from within the site or has vegetation been used (or happens to be there) which effectively screens off these eyesores from most views?

Quality of views out from the site across the water:

* When standing on the water’s edge are the views looking towards attractive features, natural elements, historic structures or the open horizon, for example?
* Are there features such as derelict sites, unattractive buildings or buildings in poor condition clearly visible?

Sense of openness and scale of water views:

* Are the views over the water broad and open, perhaps out to the horizon, or limited in breadth and contained by land or buildings?
* Do open views provide a sense of freedom from the urban setting and a glimpse of the forces of nature?
* Are views limited to an urban setting?

Presence of focal points visible from the site:

* When looking out from the site, whether over land or water, are there any eye-catching focal points which help with orientation, identity and give the place a strong character?
* This could be a large crane, a church tower, a bridge, an island, a cliff etc.

Visual pollution such as garish advertising:

* Are there elements around the site which stand out as being especially visually distracting, such as large advertisements and which draw attention in an especially negative way?

#### Aspect 2: Visual quality of the site

This section considers the visual quality of a range of aspects within the site itself.

Quality of views within the site:

* Are views from one section of the site to another forming attractive vistas, enclosing spaces, providing internal focal points and screening off site features such as car parking?

Quality of views to the site from the water:

* On approaching the site or viewing it from water, does the edge and features along the waterfront appear in harmony, fit the landscape character, use materials and colours which fit with natural and/or constructed features?
* Do elements (built forms or trees, for example) form a unified vista or a chaotic assemblage or mismatched features?
* Do the views also include the surroundings lying behind the site and if so do they look good together?

Visual quality of built structures within the site:

* Do buildings, walls, jetties, steps etc look in keeping with the rest of the site, harmonious or unified by materials or colours?
* Are the buildings or structures a chaotic mix of styles, colours and materials?

Attractiveness of vegetation on the site:

* Are trees, shrubs, flowers, grass etc forming an attractive assemblage with harmonising forms, colours and textures?
* Are trees well-formed, healthy and positioned in a way to create spaces and masses in a structured way?
* Are flowers well-tended and beds filled with healthy plants?
* Are grass areas intact of patchy and worn?
* Are there any signs of dead or unhealthy plants (thin crowns, yellowing foliage, gappy beds, stunted growth)?

Light pollution at night:

* If the site is well-lit for functional and safety reasons at night, do the lights only illuminate the necessary areas or does the light spill out and ad to the light pollution common in urban areas?
* Is it possible to look over the water and see stars on a clear night?

Sense of wildness:

* Is the site totally enclosed by an urban character and only features constructed elements and planted vegetation?
* Does it incorporate natural and wild elements such as cliffs, natural beaches, natural vegetation along the shoreline or behind it?
* Do the views together with the site features convey a sense of being in a natural or wild environment?
* Does the weather and water movement (wind, waves, storms etc) contribute to a feeling of wildness?

#### Aspect 3 Non-visual aesthetic aspects

This aspect considers sensory aesthetics which are obtained by senses other than sight.

Smells and olfactory pollution:

* Are there any pleasant scents associated with the site?
* From vegetation such as pine resin, flowers etc?
* Food?
* Fresh sea air?
* Unattractive smells such as rotten fish or seaweed?
* Sewerage?
* Diesel or other fumes or pollution?

Sounds and noise pollution:

* Are there any pleasant sounds such as waves landing on rocks, lapping water, wind in trees, birdsong?
* Unattractive sounds such as vehicle engines, industrial or port equipment, loud horns or sirens, ghetto blasters?

Sense of atmosphere:

* Wind, moist air etc.: the feeling of warm sun on the skin?
* Cool breezes?
* Burning heat of the sun?
* Stinging rain or snow?
* Freezing air on the skin?

Feeling of tranquillity or calm:

* Does the combination of harmonious sights smells, sounds etc gives the site a tranquil atmosphere which induces a feeling of calm?
* A combination of eg cacophonous noises which cause feelings of stress?

### Physical domain

This domain covers the terrestrial part of the site and includes all constructed elements, if present (their absence is not necessarily a negative factor.

#### Aspect 1: Access and circulation within the site

This aspect considers all the means of access within the site, their functionality and condition as part of the layout or design.

Access roads within the site:

If present, consider:

* Are they located for easy access?
* Do they dissect the site and reduce spatial connectivity?
* Are they laid out logically to reach the necessary parts of the site?
* Do they permit emergency vehicles to reach places where potential accidents could occur?
* Are they easy to follow intuitively as part of a design?
* Are they incorporated into the landscape with vegetated edges, trees and other elements to help them to blend in?
* Is the surfacing intact?
* Are they full of potholes and puddles?

Onsite car parking and its functional accessibility:

If present consider:

* Do parking areas have sufficient capacity?
* Are they laid out with clear and logical circulation?
* Can buses, vehicles with boat trailers and other larger vehicles navigate and park?
* Are there designated spaces for disabled people to park?
* Are markings or space dividers visible and functional?
* Are any edge defining elements such as bollards, earth mounds, rocks or logs suitable for the surroundings and incorporated into the landscape?
* Is the surfacing material suitable for the location?
* Is the surface intact and in good condition or damaged, eroded or potholed?
* Does the car park present a simple, unfussy and clean appearance which is unified into the site?
* Is there shelter and shade provided by trees or vegetation and screening of the parking from elsewhere in the site?

Boat launching access and ramps:

If present, consider:

* Are they located and accessible for easy access to water?
* Do they relate to the vehicular access pattern and parking?
* Are they constructed of materials which fit the site (eg local stone)?
* Are they intact and well maintained?
* Eroded and damaged?
* Undercut by waves or currents?
* Do they look simple, tidy and well fitting into the landscape (colours and textures)?

Footpath network and its functional accessibility:

* Is the path network laid out to provide easy and intuitive connectivity around the site?
* Does it offer alternative routes?
* Are there signs that people have made their own desire line paths instead of using those provided?
* Do the paths look attractive and welcoming to walk along (tidy edges, materials fitting into the landscape, routes aligned to work with the contours, lines leading the eye towards the destination)?
* Are they well-constructed and maintained (not badly eroded, puddles, patched, potholed or muddy)?
* Are they provided with benches at suitable intervals?
* Are benches designed to fit the location, easy to sit down on or to get up from?
* Are benches damaged or well maintained?

Cycle path network and its functional accessibility:

* Is the cycle path network laid out to provide easy and intuitive connectivity around the site?
* Does it offer alternative routes?
* Are the cycle paths separated from walking paths in some way?
* Are there signs that people have made their own desire line routes instead of using those provided?
* Do the paths look attractive and welcoming to cycle along (tidy edges, materials fitting into the landscape, routes aligned to work with the contours, no sharp angles or turns)?
* Are they well-constructed and maintained (not badly eroded, puddles, patched, potholed or muddy)?
* Are there cycle racks at suitable locations?

Path construction and use of materials:

* Are all paths well-constructed?
* Are they designed for easy drainage and provided with the means of draining water and preventing erosion of unsealed surfaces?
* Are materials appropriate for the site (eg use of local stone, exposed aggregate concrete, wooden decking, spray and chip surfacing on asphalt)?
* Are the edges intact or breaking up?
* Is wooden decking showing signs of rot or planks coming loose?
* Do the path colours and textures fit the palette found in the local landscape or on site?

#### Aspect 2 Accessibility for disabled people

In this section a number of different factors which affect accessibility by people with different classes of disability are considered. Note that people may have more than one disability and that older people and parents with young children eg in pushchairs of buggies may suffer many of the same barriers as those with recognised disabilities. This section gives a general assessment; it is no substitute for a proper accessibility audit which should be carried out by a trained auditor.

Physical disabilities:

* Are the paths generally level or gently sloping (around 1:16 or 1:12 maximum gradient) along the route direction and without a slope across the path?
* Do any ramps have level sections to break the slope?
* Are surfaces compact, firm and well-drained?
* Are there any obstacles such as large stones (more an 50mm diameter), tree roots protruding from the surface or wide gaps from drainage features (eg water bars)?
* Do steps form a barrier or are there alternative routes around them?
* Are there handrails alongside steep edges, steps and alongside ramps?
* Are there benches whose seat is high enough for older people to rise from?
* Are benches regularly placed and in locations with views (eg every 100m on average)?

Blind and partially sighted:

* Are paths level or gently sloping and free from surface obstacles which may pose a trip hazard?
* Are path edges well-defined by edging or vegetation?
* Are surfaces smooth and compact?
* Are their possibilities to use a white stick (eg a tapping rail)?
* Do surface changes (possibly use of raised ridges or blister paving) provide any signals about things coming up such as road crossings, gates, benches?
* Do wooden decks have gaps which may trap a stick or crutch?
* Do step edges have contrasting colours to enhance visibility?
* Do steps and ramps have handrails alongside?
* Can two people walk abreast along all paths? Is there a clear walking tunnel unobstructed by eg tree branches?

Deaf and hearing impaired:

* Are path surfaces level or gently sloping and free from surface obstacles?
* Are they compact and firm?
* Are junctions, road or cycle path crossings clearly visible before reaching them?
* Are paths well signposted?

Mental and learning disabilities:

* Are path surfaces level or gently sloping and free from surface obstacles?
* Are they compact and firm?
* Are paths signed using bold symbols?

#### Aspect 3: Terrestrial recreation structures

In this section all the built structures provided for recreation on the site are assessed. Not all are likely to be found on every site and many factors are common to most or all of them, such as the location, visual appearance and relationship to other elements of the site and its layout. In some cases, a single building may house a restaurant, toilets, café, shop and safety or first aid centre, in which case consider the functionality etc. of the constituent parts and the building as a whole.

Toilets:

If present, consider:

* Are the toilets well signposted so people can find them?
* Are they functionally related to the layout of the rest of the site, eg. easy to get to from all parts of the relevant section of the site?
* Have they sufficient capacity for the level of use of the overall site (there may be queues on busy days)?
* Are they accessible by disabled people (unisex or within male and female sections? wide doors, wheelchair ramps or level floors, correct hand rails, taps, colour contrast inside etc)?
* Are there facilities for baby-changing?
* Are they clean, well-maintained and ventilated (free of smells)?
* Is the design of the building (if a separate toilet unit) appropriate for the location (eg style, use of local materials, form, colours, textures etc)
* Is the building well maintained inside and out?

Any signs of vandalism, graffiti, uncivil activities taking place? Is it open all year round?

Changing rooms:

If provided, consider:

* Are they well-located for ease of use in relation to a beach, water access or sunbathing area?
* Are they divided into male and female or unisex (eg. with separate cubicles or lockers)?
* Have they sufficient capacity for the level of use of the overall site (there may be queues on busy days)?
* Are they accessible by disabled people (unisex or within male and female sections? wide doors, wheelchair ramps or level floors, suitable benches etc)?
* Are they equipped with showers or washing facilities?
* Are they clean and well maintained?
* Is the design of the building (if a separate changing unit) appropriate for the location (eg style, use of local materials, form, colours, textures etc)
* Is the building well maintained inside and out?
* Any signs of vandalism, graffiti or uncivil activities taking place?
* Are they open all year round?

Changing cubicles:

If provided, consider:

* Are they well-located for ease of use in relation to a beach, water access or sunbathing area?
* Are they divided into male and female or are they unisex?
* Have they sufficient capacity for the level of use of the overall site (there may be queues on busy days)?
* Are they accessible by disabled people (wide doors, level floors, internal bench etc)?
* Is the design of the cubicle appropriate for the location (eg style, use of materials, form, colours, textures etc)
* Is it well maintained inside and out?
* Any signs of vandalism, graffiti or uncivil activities taking place?

Cafe/restaurant:

If provided, consider;

* Is it well-located near a beach, waterfront or sunbathing area?
* Does it offer views over the water? Is it useable all your round (eg with outdoor patio in summer)?
* Is it connected to the access road system with good accessibility for deliveries and emergency vehicles?
* Is the building part of a complex with other functions – if so, how does these relate to one another?
* Is the design of the building (if a separate restaurant or cafe) appropriate for the location (eg style, use of materials, form, colours, textures etc)
* Is the building well maintained inside and out?
* Any signs of vandalism, graffiti or uncivil activities taking place?

Fountain:

If a fountain is present:

* How is it located within the overall design of the site?
* Does it form a key element giving the site its special character?
* Is it purely an ornamental feature or can people interact with it?
* Is the water clean and free of litter and rubbish?
* Is it functioning properly and well maintained?
* Any signs of vandalism, graffiti or uncivil activities taking place?
* Is it active all year round or closed for the winter (depends on location and climate)?

Art installation:

If present:

* How is it located within the overall design of the site?
* Does it form a key element giving the site its special character?
* Is it purely an ornamental feature or can people interact with it?
* Does it reflect or make use of cultural heritage, former uses, old equipment etc?
* Is it well maintained?
* Any signs of vandalism, graffiti or uncivil activities taking place?

Children’s play area:

If play facilities are present:

* Do they provide for a range of types of play: (motor play; social play; cognitive play)?
* Are the facilities aimed at different age groups (toddlers and infants; 5-8 year olds; 8-12 year olds; 12-15 year olds;)?
* Are the facilities appropriate for the setting (materials, use of landform, use of natural materials etc)?
* Is any equipment well designed and constructed (use of local materials, use of vegetation, natural materials etc)?
* Is it safe and well-maintained (signs of breakage, wear and tear on moving parts?
* Can the equipment be used by children with disabilities?

Safety equipment store:

If provided, consider:

* Is it located for ease of access to all risk areas and is it accessible by emergency vehicles?
* Does it contain the necessary equipment such as life rings, rescue boards, life-jackets, medical supplies (first aid, defibrillator etc);
* Does it have communication equipment?
* Is it clean and well maintained?
* Is the design of the building (if separate) appropriate for the location (eg style, use of local materials, form, colours, textures etc) Is the building well maintained inside and out?
* Any signs of vandalism, graffiti or uncivil activities taking place?
* Is it open all year round and if not what happens out of season?

Observation tower:

If provided, consider:

* Is it located to give good views of the landscape, water areas, wildlife etc.
* Does it form an integral part of the site layout with good connections into the path network?
* Is it accessible to people with disabilities (not necessarily fully accessible)?
* Is the design of the tower appropriate for the location (eg style, use of local materials, form, colours, textures etc)
* Is the tower well maintained?
* Any signs of vandalism, graffiti or uncivil activities taking place?

Observation deck:

If provided, consider:

* Is it located to give good views of the landscape, water areas, wildlife etc?
* Does it form an integral part of the site layout with good connections into the path network?
* Is it accessible to people with disabilities?
* Is the design of the deck appropriate for the location (eg style, use of local materials, form, colours, textures etc)?
* Is the deck well maintained?
* Any signs of vandalism, graffiti or uncivil activities taking place?

Food and ice cream stall:

If provided, consider:

* Is this (or are these) well-located near a beach, waterfront or sunbathing area?
* Is the design of the stall(s) (if a building or mobile unit) appropriate for the location (eg style, use of materials, form, colours, textures etc)?
* Is the stall (are the stalls) well maintained? Any signs of vandalism or graffiti?

#### Aspect 4: Water access and recreational structures (visual quality functionality, condition)

In this section all the built structures provided for recreation related to water access are assessed. Not all are likely to be found on every site and many factors are common to most or all of them, such as the location, visual appearance and relationship to other elements of the site and its layout.

Boat slipway:

If present, consider:

* Does this have a functional connection to the road access?
* Does it allow boats to enter or be pulled out of the water effectively and easily?
* Is it constructed of materials which fit the site (eg local stone)?
* Is it intact and well maintained?
* Eroded and damaged?
* Undercut by waves or currents?
* Does it simple, tidy and well fitting into the landscape (colours and textures)?

Jetty: If present, consioder:

* Does this enable boats to tie up and passengers to disembark/embark with ease and in safety?
* Is it connected to the pedestrian path network?
* Is it constructed of materials which fit the site (eg local stone, timber, steel and timber)?
* Is it intact and well maintained?
* Eroded and damaged?
* Undercut by waves or currents?
* Affected by ice in winter?
* Does it look simple, tidy and well fitting into the landscape (colours and textures)?
* Are there handrails along hazardous edges (not interfering with boating activity)?
* If a floating structure does it respond to tides and other level fluctuations? Is it well-secured?

Pier:

If present, consider:

* Does this enable boats to tie up and passengers to disembark/embark with ease and in safety?
* Is it connected to the pedestrian path network?
* Is it constructed of materials which fit the site (eg local stone, concrete)?
* Is it intact and well maintained?
* Eroded and damaged?
* Does it look simple, tidy and well fitting into the landscape (colours and textures)?
* Are there handrails along hazardous edges (not interfering with boating activity)?

Dock edges:

If present, consider:

* Are these intact and stable?
* Are there handrails along hazardous edges (not interfering with boating activity)?
* Are they intact and well maintained?
* Eroded and damaged?
* Undercut by waves or currents?
* Affected by ice in winter?

Marina:

If present, consider:

* Does this enable boats to tie up and passengers to disembark/embark with ease and in safety?
* Is it connected to the pedestrian path network?
* Is it constructed of materials which fit the site (eg local stone, timber, steel and timber)?
* Is it intact and well maintained?
* Affected by ice in winter?
* Does it look simple, tidy and well fitting into the landscape (colours and textures)?
* Are there handrails along hazardous edges (not interfering with boating activity)?
* If a floating structure does it respond to tides and other level fluctuations? Is it well-secured?

Harbour or other retaining walls:

If present, consider;

* Are these intact and stable?
* Are there handrails along hazardous edges (not interfering with boating activity)?
* Are they intact and well maintained?
* Eroded and damaged?
* Undercut by waves or currents?
* Affected by ice in winter?

Bridge:

 If present, consider:

* Does this (or do these) connect well with the vehicular, cycle or pedestrian circulation patterns of the site?
* If an old structure, is it in good repair, intact and stable?
* Are abutments affected (eg undercut) by water currents?
* If new, is it constructed of materials which fit the site (eg local stone, timber, steel and timber)?
* Is it intact and well maintained?
* Affected by ice in winter?
* Does it look simple, tidy and well fitting into the landscape (colours and textures)?
* Are there handrails for safety which meet the correct standards?

Lock: If present (part of a canal or harbour water level control), consider:

* Is it in good repair and fully functional?
* Is it safe to use?

Paddling pool:

If present, consider:

* Is it well-located within the site, visible from seating areas and close to other water features?
* Is the water clean and hygienic?
* Is the structure, the water and the surroundings well maintained and free from rubbish or dead leaves?
* Is it used all year round or seasonal – and if the latter, is it protected over the winter?
* Are there any signs of vandalism, graffiti or uncivil behaviour?

Swimming pool:

If present, consider:

* Is it well-located within the site, visible from seating areas and close to other water features?
* Is the water clean and hygienic?
* Is the structure, the water and the surroundings well maintained and free from rubbish or dead leaves?
* Is it used all year round or seasonal – and if the latter, is it protected over the winter?
* Are there any signs of vandalism, graffiti or uncivil behaviour?

#### Aspect 5: Management and maintenance

This section considers all factors concerning management and maintenance. Management refers primarily to activities which keep the site, its structure, quality and functions at the right level over time by specific interventions while maintenance refers to the daily, weekly or otherwise regular cleaning and repair of all elements.

Maintenance of hard surfaces:

* Are hard surfaces generally intact, free of mud, water, sand, dead leaves and other accumulated rubbish?
* Are they free of potholes, broken patches, plants growing in cracks etc?

Management of vegetation:

* Are grass areas kept cut (not necessarily like a lawn but well-trimmed at least on some occasions per year)?
* Are grass edges along paths and roads trimmed?
* Are flower beds weeded and kept trim?
* Are shrubs pruned to maintain their form but prevent them becoming overgrown, blocking paths and appearing too dense?
* Are trees kept pruned as necessary (removal of dead or broken branches, maintaining and open space beneath the canopy if needed, trimming of branches growing across paths)?

Maintenance of site furniture:

* Are benches, railings, picnic tables, signs, lighting, litter bins and other furniture elements in good repair?
* Are the immediate surroundings clean, intact and free of mud, sand, litter etc?
* Is vandalism and graffiti repaired or cleaned regularly?

Site maintenance in general:

* Can the site (including all terrestrial and water areas) be considered free of rubbish, dog mess, broken bottles, debris, fly tipping, flotsam and clearly well-maintained in general?

Maintenance of play areas:

* Are play areas in good condition including the play surfacing (sand, bark chippings, gravel, rubber mats etc), static equipment and moving equipment (including ropes, chains, pulleys, wheels, cables etc).
* Is it inspected regularly and are records of maintenance and repair kept?

Maintenance of safety equipment:

* Are life ring stands, lifeguard stations and other elements kept intact?
* Are all life rings and other flotation aids, ropes, information signs, first aid kits and any other equipment, if present, in good condition?
* Is there any sign of vandalism or damage not repaired or replaced?
* Are records kept of maintenance checks?

# Outputs

The web-interface system produces outputs which can be used in a report and any presentations your group might wish to make to set out the main findings and conclusions in support of a renovation project, for example.

The scores made using the 0-5 scale for all each subject within a domain are presented as spidergrams. These make it easy to see where there are especially good or poor features. When combined with the comments you recorded in the text box at the end of each aspect section they form a very useful report.