and unkempt' (Urban Task Force 1999: 115). They contrasted this with the fact that more than 90 per cent of the urban fabric will be with us in 30 years time, and it is therefore in these areas that the real 'urban quality' challenge lies, rather than with the much smaller proportion of newly designed areas created each year.

A flurry of initiatives from Government and other organisations followed, and led to an unprecedented array of research, reports and policy statements on public space (Urban Parks Forum 2001, Fabian Society 2001; DTLR 2002a, 2002b; Audit Commission 2002a; CABE and ODPM 2002; CABE 2002; Institution of Civil Engineers 2002; ODPM 2002; DEFRA 2002; London Assembly 2002; Civic Trust 2002; Improvement and Development Agency 2003; ODPM 2003a; ODPM 2003b; ODPM 2004; CABE Space 2004a; CABE Space 2004b; House of Commons 2004). Space does not permit an exposition of the detailed content of these reports. However, a range of common management solutions can be identified and classified into eight key types:

1 explicit public space management strategies, aiming to establish and deliver a clear vision for public space and its management
2 cross-departmental working structures and initiatives, aiming to better integrate public space management services – restructuring, coordination, devolution, champions
3 initiatives aimed at better liaising with and involving a wider range of stakeholders – public, private and community – in the management of public space
4 approaches aiming to redefine the standards required of public space management efforts – targets, guidelines, performance standards, specifications, training, award schemes
5 attempts to attract more resources to the public space management agenda, both public (i.e. regeneration) and private (i.e. sponsorship, planning gain, business contributions)
6 schemes aimed at establishing and setting long-term delivery standards, through exemplar projects that build in long-term maintenance regimes, or though taking new powers (i.e. new byelaws), or better using existing powers (i.e. enforcement powers)
7 initiatives that respond to the challenges of particular contexts, through dedicated area management regimes, personnel or designations
8 investment in monitoring public space changes and initiatives, in order to better focus resources and better enforce decisions – audits, indicators, health-checks, peer reviews.

Many of the themes were picked up and summarised in perhaps the most important document, the policy statement *Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener* (ODPM 2002). This laid out a series of Government intentions and initiatives to tackle the problems associated with the decline of public space. The document argued that 'achieving high-quality spaces will require new thinking that better integrates the ways we design, create, manage and maintain our public realm'; and picked out four main challenges: 'public space is not a single definable service; local environmental problems can feed off each other; problems need to be tackled where they are worst; and circumstances can change quickly' (ODPM 2002: 12). It established a 'cleaner, safer, greener' agenda:

- cleaner – by improving how streets and public spaces are maintained and how services are management and delivered;
- safer – by improving how they are planned, designed and looked afte
- greener and healthier – by ensuring access to high-quality parks and green spaces.

A pragmatic delivery agenda

The policy agenda has since taken shape in a variety of national policy initiatives that have attempted to address the issues of public space and the quality of its management. These encompass: changes in legislation giving local authorities formal responsibility for environmental quality through their new powers to promote community well-being; the creation of an Urban Green Spaces Task Force to report and advise on green spaces; a public-funded organisation to champion good design and the management of public spaces (CABE Space); the adoption of auditing regimes for local authorities' street-related services, with rewards offered to those performing well; the institution of funding programmes to support community-based management of public spaces in deprived areas; the introduction of business improvement district (BID) legislation; and so forth.

Two things underpin and unify most of these initiatives. The first is a gradual shift in emphasis from a concern with initial design and implementation, to more attention to the life-cycle of public spaces in which long-term management and maintenance are seen as paramount (see for instance Audit Commission 2002a). Second, a widening of the definition of urban public spaces to encompass also the ordinary streets and squares that make up the living spaces of communities and neighbourhoods (CABE and ODPM 2002; Audit Commission 2002a).

The government argued that five components stand out as key factors in much of the work being undertaken concurrently on the management