

HERTSMERE BOROUGH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE STUDY

STANDARDS PAPER

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QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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OPEN SPACE STANDARDS PAPER**

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the Open Space Standards Paper prepared by Knight, Kavanagh & Page (KKP) for Hertsmere Borough Council (HBC). It follows on from the preceding Open Space Assessment Report. Together, the two documents provide an evidence base to help inform the future decision-making process for provision of open spaces across Hertsmere.

This study is intended to assist in the Council's process of creating a new Local Plan for the area. Given the potential scale of growth in the area, and the implications such growth may have on existing provision, it is important for the Council to have clarity over existing levels of open space and what types of provision should be delivered.

This document helps identify the deficiencies and surpluses in existing and future open space provision. In addition, it should help inform an approach to securing open space facilities through new housing development and help form the basis for negotiation with developers for contributions towards the provision of open spaces.

Scope

The table below details the open space typologies included within the study:

Table 1.1: Open space typologies

Typology	Primary purpose
Parks and gardens	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.
Natural and semi-natural greenspaces	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.
Amenity greenspace	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.
Provision for children and young people	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, MUGAs, skateboard areas and teenage shelters.
Allotments	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.
Cemeteries and churchyards	Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

This study should be read in conjunction with the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) which is also being updated by KKP (provided in a separate report). The associated PPS covers the provision and need of formal outdoor sports. The PPS is undertaken in accordance with the methodology provided in Sport England's Guidance 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance' for assessing demand and supply for outdoor sports facilities (October 2013).

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Overview

Audit Assessment

All known open space sites (including provision for children and young people) are identified and mapped. Each site is classified based on its primary open space purpose, so that each type of space is only counted once. A total of 175 sites are identified equating to over 315 hectares of open space.

Within Hertsmere, there is a total of approximately 315 hectares. The largest contributor to accessible provision is parks and gardens (109 hectares); accounting for 35%.

Table 1.2: Overview of open space provision

Open space typology	Number of sites	Total amount (hectares)*
Park and gardens	9	109
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	22	81
Amenity greenspace	67	73
Provision for children & young people	53	6
Allotments and community gardens	13	19
Cemeteries	11	27
TOTAL	175	315

A total of 173 sites have been assessed and receive a quality and value score. One allotment site and one play site do not receive quality and value scores.

Table 1.3: Quality scores for assessed open space typologies

Typology	Threshold	Scores (%)			No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Parks and gardens	60%	67%	75%	86%	0	9
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	45%	25%	49%	69%	6	16
Amenity greenspace	50%	30%	52%	90%	33	34
Provision for children and young people	60%	36%	63%	84%	18	34
Allotments	45%	20%	43%	67%	6	6
Cemeteries	45%	25%	46%	59%	4	7
TOTAL		20%	-	90%	67	106

There is generally a reasonably good level of quality across most open space sites. This is reflected in nearly two thirds (61%) of sites scoring above their set threshold for quality.

* Rounded to the nearest whole number

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Table 1.4: Value scores for assessed open space typologies

Typology	Threshold	Scores			No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	<20%	>20%
Park and gardens	20%	55%	63%	73%	0	9
Natural & semi-natural greenspace		16%	32%	50%	1	21
Amenity greenspace		21%	32%	60%	0	67
Provision for children & young people		29%	42%	54%	0	52
Allotments		22%	27%	33%	0	12
Cemeteries		27%	31%	39%	0	11
TOTAL		16%	-	73%	1	172

Only one site rates below the threshold for value; Richfield Road. The sites overall appearance, access and use are questionable. All other sites rate above the threshold for value, reflecting the role and importance of open space provision to local communities and environments.

A high value site is considered to be one that is well used by the local community, well maintained (with a balance for conservation), provides a safe environment and has features of interest; for example, good quality play equipment and landscaping. Sites that provide for a cross section of users and have a multi-functional use are considered a higher value than those offering limited functions and viewed as unattractive.

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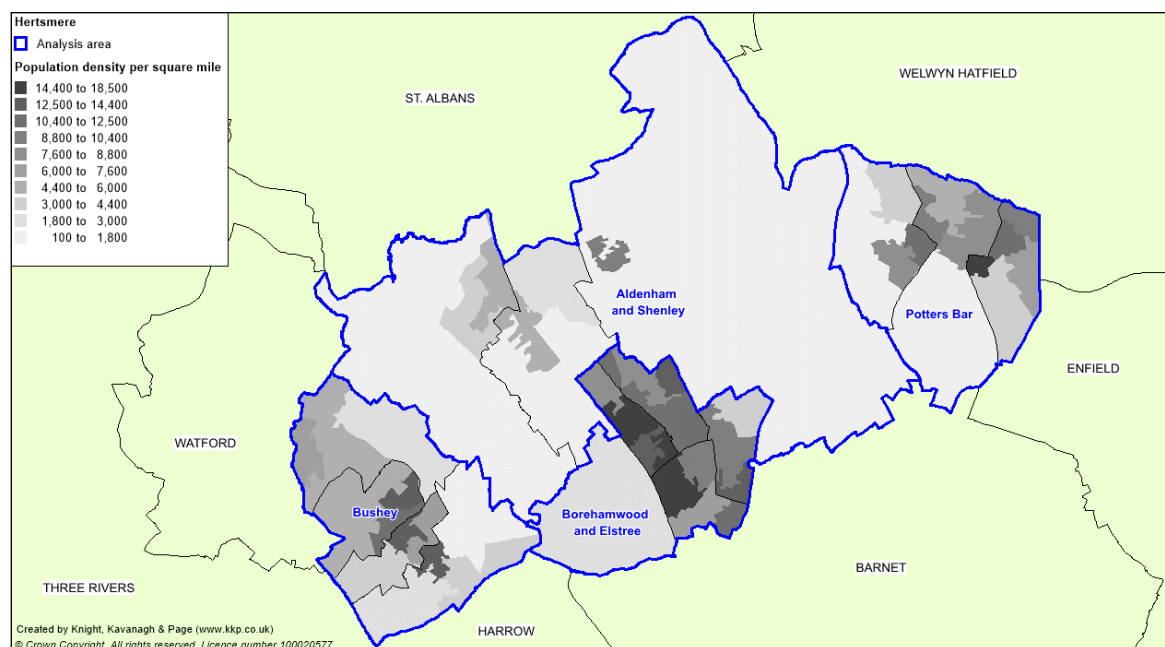
Analysis areas

For mapping purposes and audit analysis, Hertsmere has been divided into four analysis areas. These allow more localised examination of open space surpluses and deficiencies. Use of analysis areas also allows local circumstances and issues to be taken into account. The analysis areas and their populations are shown in the table below.

Table 1.5: Population by analysis area

Analysis area	Population (2017)*
Aldenhams & Shenley	15,280
Borehamwood & Elstree	38,900
Bushey	26,931
Potters Bar	22,727
Hertsmere	104,031

Figure 1: Analysis areas



* ONS Mid-Year Estimates 2017

PART 2: ASSESSMENT REPORT SUMMARY

A summary from the Assessment Report on a typology by typology basis is set out below.

2.1 Parks and gardens

- There are nine sites classified as parks totaling over 109 hectares.
- FIT suggests a standard of 0.80 hectares per 1,000 population. Hertsmere meets this with an equivalent to 1.05 hectares per 1,000 population. Hertsmere is above this suggested standard. This is predominantly due to Aldenham Country Park (at 68 hectares).
- If Aldenham Country Park is omitted, Hertsmere has 0.39 hectares per 1,000 population.
- Mapping demonstrates that a gap in catchment areas is noticeable to Borehamwood & Elstree.
- All park and garden sites rate above the threshold for both quality and value.
- All assessed sites score highly for value, with the important social interaction, health benefits, ecological value and sense of place sites offer being recognised.

2.2 Natural and semi-natural greenspace

- There are 22 natural and semi-natural greenspace sites covering over 81 hectares.
- FIT suggests a standard of 1.80 hectares per 1,000 population. Hertsmere, as a whole, does not meet this with 0.78 hectares per 1,000 population.
- A total of 73% of sites rate above the threshold set for quality. Six sites rate below the threshold mainly due to a lack of ancillary features.
- Nearly all sites rate above the threshold for value. This demonstrates the added benefit natural and semi-natural greenspaces can provide especially in terms of contributing to flora and fauna. Larger sites may also provide a good level of recreational offer.

2.3 Amenity greenspace

- There are 67 amenity greenspace sites equating to over 73 hectares.
- FIT suggests a standard of 0.60 hectares per 1,000 population. Overall, Hertsmere is above this with 0.70 hectares per 1,000 population.
- Mapping shows that all analysis areas in Hertsmere are generally well served by amenity greenspace provision.
- Nearly half (49%) of assessed amenity sites rate above the threshold for quality. The majority of sites to score lower for quality are observed as being basic, small pockets of green space and lack ancillary features.
- In addition to its multifunctional role, amenity greenspace makes a valuable contribution to visual aesthetics for communities – hence all sites rate above the value threshold.

2.4 Provision for children and young people

- There are 53 play sites identified; a total of over five hectares.
- Fields In Trust (FIT) suggests 0.25 hectares per 1,000 population as a guideline quantity standard. Overall, Hertsmere has a current provision level of 0.06 hectares per 1,000 population.
- The mapping highlights that nearly all analysis areas across the Borough have access to at least one form of play area but there are gaps in provision in the Bushey Analysis Area and Potters Bar Analysis Area.
- A greater proportion of play sites (65%) rate above the threshold for quality. Lower quality scoring sites tends to reflect a lack in and/or range of equipment and/or its general condition.
- All play provision rates above the threshold for value; reflecting the social, healthy and developmental benefits provision can provide.

2.5 Allotments

- There are 13 allotments sites: equating to nearly 19 hectares.
- Current provision of 0.18 hectares per 1,000 population is below the NSALG recommended amount (0.25 hectares per 1000 people).
- Six sites rate below the quality threshold and are identified as having in general poorer maintenance levels and fewer features.
- All allotments rate above the threshold for value. This reflects the associated social inclusion and health benefits, amenity value and the sense of place offered by provision.

2.6 Cemeteries

- There are 11 cemeteries and churchyards, equating to over 27 hectares.
- The largest site is Bushey Jewish Cemetery (16.2 hectares)
- No standards are set for cemeteries. The need for additional cemetery provision should be driven by the requirement for burial demand and capacity.

PART 3: SETTING PROVISION STANDARDS

3.1 Developing and setting standards

The following section details the proposed standards for Hertsmere Borough Council. It also sets out how current provision levels identified as part of the assessment compare to existing standards such as national benchmarks.

It is important to recognise that there are no prescribed national standards for open space provision. In general, very little guidance is offered at a national level for quality with benchmarking of standards focusing on quantity and accessibility levels. Subsequently the following approach has been used to set and apply standards for Hertsmere Borough Council.

An overview of the proposed standards in terms of quality, accessibility and quantity is set out below. Further information on the evidence used to inform these standards is provided in the associated Assessment Report. The proposed standards are then used to determine deficiencies and surpluses for open space in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility (as recommended by best practice).

No quantity or accessibility standards are suggested for cemeteries. Provision of this type should be informed by information such as burial demand.

3.2 Quality

To determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by guidance); the results of the site assessments are colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The primary aim of applying a threshold is to identify sites where investment and/or improvements are required. It can also be used to set an aspirational quality standard to be achieved at some point in the future and to inform decisions around the need to further protect sites from future development (particularly when applied with its respective value score in a matrix format).

The baseline threshold for assessing quality can often be set around 66%; based on the pass rate for Green Flag criteria (site visit criteria also being based on Green Flag). This is the only national benchmark available for quality of parks and open spaces. However, the site visit criteria used for Green Flag is not appropriate for every open space typology as it is designed to represent a sufficiently high standard of site. Quality thresholds are, thus, adjusted to better reflect average scores for each typology. In our experience this works effectively as a locally reflective method to distinguish between high and low quality sites. Consequently, the baseline threshold for certain typologies is amended to better reflect this.

Sites are also allocated a value score. Quality and value are fundamentally different and can be unrelated. For example, a high-quality space may be inaccessible and, thus, be of little value; while, a poor quality space may be the only one in an area and thus be immensely valuable. As a result, quality and value are also treated separately in terms of scoring.

For value there is no national guidance on the setting of thresholds. The 20% threshold applied is derived from our experience and knowledge in assessing the value of sites.

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Whilst 20% may initially seem low, it is a relative score - designed to reflect those sites that meet more than one aspect of the criteria used for assessing value.

Table 3.2.1: Quality benchmark standards

Typology	Quality threshold	Value threshold
Parks and gardens	60%	20%
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	45%	20%
Amenity greenspace	50%	20%
Provision for children and young people	60%	20%
Allotments	45%	20%
Cemeteries	45%	20%

3.3 Accessibility

Accessibility catchments for different types of provision are a tool to identify communities currently not served by existing facilities. It is recognised that factors that underpin catchment areas vary from person to person, day to day and hour to hour. For the purposes of this process this problem is overcome by accepting the concept of 'effective catchments', defined as the distance that would be travelled by the majority of users.

Guidance on walking distance and times is published by Fields In Trust (FIT) in its document *Beyond the Six Acre Standard* (2015). These guidelines have been converted into an equivalent time period.

FIT also offer appropriate accessibility distances for children's play provision. These vary depending on the type of play provision (children's play or older age ranges).

These are presented in Table 3.3.1 and are applied to help inform deficiencies in each form of open space provision.

Table 3.3.1: Accessibility catchments

Open space type		FIT guideline	Time equivalent
Parks & Gardens		710m	9-minute walk time
Natural & Semi-natural Greenspace		720m	9-minute walk time
Amenity Greenspace		480m	6-minute walk time
Play areas & provision for young people	LAP	100m	1-minute walk time
	LEAP	400m	5-minute walk time
	NEAP	1,000m	12.5-minute walk time
	Youth	700m	9-minute walk time
Allotments		n/a	n/a

For the purposes of this study, using the accessibility catchments suggested by FIT is recommended as the most up to date form of benchmarking.

3.4 Quantity

Quantity standards can be used to identify areas of shortfalls and help with setting requirements for future developments.

To set a quantity standard it is useful to compare existing levels of provision identified as part of the assessment against national benchmarks. The current provision levels are initially detailed in the Assessment Report.

It is useful to compare existing levels of provision identified as part of the assessment against national benchmarks. The current provision levels are initially detailed in the Assessment Report.

Table 3.4.1 sets out the quantity figures for current provision levels identified and the national benchmarks.

Table 3.4.1: Comparison of current provision and national benchmarks

Typology	Hectares per 1,000 population	
	Current provision levels	National benchmarks
Parks & gardens	1.05	0.80
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	0.78	1.80
Amenity greenspace	0.70	0.60
Provision for children & young people*	0.06	0.25
Allotment	0.18	0.25

Guidance on quantity levels is published by Fields In Trust (FIT) in its document *Beyond the Six Acre Standard* (2015). The guidance provides standards for three types of open space provision; parks and gardens, amenity greenspace and natural and semi-natural greenspace. The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) offers guidance on allotments. FIT also suggests 0.25 hectares per 1,000 population of equipped/ designated playing space as a guideline quantity standard for play provision.

The national standards are regarded by the Council as still representing an informed view towards provision levels. Consequently, these are proposed for use as the minimum quantity standards for Hertsmere.

* FIT also suggests a standard of 0.30 hectares per 1,000 population for other outdoor provision (MUGAs/skate parks). However, current play provision (including MUGAs/skate parks) is already well below the FIT levels. Consequently it is not considered to be used as an additional provision requirement.

PART 4: APPLICATION OF PROVISION STANDARDS

The provision standards used to determine deficiencies and surpluses for open space are set in terms of quality, accessibility and quantity.

4.1: Quality and value

Each type of open space receives a separate quality and value score. This also allows for application of a high and low quality/value matrix to further help determine prioritisation of investment and to identify sites that may be surplus as a particular open space type.

There is a need for flexibility to the enhancing of sites within proximity to sites of low quality. In some instances, a better use of resources and investment may be to focus on more suitable sites for enhancement as opposed to trying to enhance where it is not appropriate (due to management/ownership) or cost effective. Appendix One details the matrix results.

Quality and value matrix

Assessing the quality and value of open spaces is used to identify those sites which should be given the highest level of protection, those which require enhancement and those which may no longer be needed for their present purpose. The high/low classification gives the following possible combinations of quality and value:

High quality/low value

The preferred policy approach to a space in this category should be to enhance its value in terms of its present primary function. If this is not possible, consideration to a change of primary function should be given (i.e. a change to another open space typology).

High quality/high value

All open spaces should have an aspiration to come into this category and the planning system should then seek to protect them. Sites of this category should be viewed as being key forms of open space provision.

Low quality/low value

The policy approach to these spaces or facilities in areas of identified shortfall should be to enhance their quality provided it is possible also to enhance their value.

For open spaces in areas of sufficiency a change of primary typology should be first considered. If no shortfall of other open space typologies is noted than the site may be redundant/ 'surplus to requirements'.

If there is a choice of sites of equal quality to declare surplus, and no need to use one or part of one to remedy a deficiency in some other form of open space or recreation provision, it would be best to consider the one of lowest value to be more disposable.

Low quality/high value

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The policy approach to these spaces should be to enhance their quality to the applied standards. Therefore, the planning system should initially seek to protect them if they are not already so.

4.2: Accessibility

Accessibility catchments for different types of provision are a tool to identify communities currently not served by existing facilities. It is recognised that factors that underpin catchment areas vary from person to person, day to day and hour to hour. For the purposes of this process this problem is overcome by accepting the concept of 'effective catchments', defined as the distance that would be travelled by the majority of users.

FIT guidance on walking distances and times have been used to set initial accessibility catchments. These are presented in Table 4.2.1 and are applied to help inform deficiencies in each form of open space provision.

Table 4.2.1: Accessibility catchments

Open space type		FIT guideline	Time equivalent
Parks & Gardens		710m	9-minute walk time
Natural & Semi-natural Greenspace		720m	9-minute walk time
Amenity Greenspace		480m	6-minute walk time
Play areas & provision for young people	LAP	100m	1-minute walk time
	LEAP	400m	5-minute walk time
	NEAP & Youth	1,000m	12.5-minute walk time
Allotments		n/a	n/a

Identifying deficiencies

If an area does not have access to the required level of provision (consistent with the catchments) it is deemed deficient. KKP has identified instances where new sites may be needed, or potential opportunities could be explored in order to provide comprehensive access to this type of provision (i.e. a gap in one form of provision may exist but the area in question may be served by another form of open space).

The following sections summarise the deficiencies identified from the application of the accessibility standards together with the recommended actions. Please refer to the associated mapping data to view site locations.

In determining the subsequent actions for any identified catchment gaps, the following key principles are adhered:

- ◆ Increase capacity/usage in order to meet increases in demand, or
- ◆ Enhance quality in order to meet increases in demand, or
- ◆ Commuted sum for ongoing maintenance/repairs to mitigate impact of new demand

These principles are intended to mitigate for the impact of increases in demand on existing provision. An increase in population will reduce the lifespan of certain sites and/or features (e.g. play equipment, maintenance regimes etc). This will lead to the increased requirement to refurbish and/or replace such forms of provision. Consequently, the

recommended approach is to increase the capacity of and/or enhance the existing provision available.

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Aldenham and Shenley

Table 4.2.2: Aldenham and Shenley Accessibility Summary

Typology	Catchment gap	Action
Parks and gardens	◀ No significant gap in 710m catchment	n/a
Amenity Greenspace	◀ No significant gaps in 480m catchment	n/a
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	◀ No significant gaps in 720m catchment	n/a
Provision for children and young people	◀ No significant gaps in catchments	n/a

Borehamwood and Elstree

Table 4.2.3: Borehamwood and Elstree Accessibility Summary

Typology	Catchment gap	Action
Parks and gardens	◀ Gaps in 710m catchment in densely populated areas to south	◀ Gaps are served by other forms of provision such as Kenilworth Park, Ripon Park and Shakespeare Drive
Amenity Greenspace	◀ Minor gap in 480m catchment in densely populated area to west	◀ Gap served by other forms of provision such as Aberford Park
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	◀ Minor gaps in 720m catchment	◀ May be served to some extent by other forms of provision such as Kenilworth Park, Maxwell Hillside Park and Ripon Park ◀ Opportunities to enhance/expand natural features at such sites could be explored
Provision for children and young people	◀ No significant gaps in catchment mapping	n/a

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Bushey

Table 4.2.4: Bushey Accessibility Summary

Typology	Catchment gap	Action
Parks and gardens	◀ Minor gap in 710m catchment in densely populated area to north of Bushey	◀ Gap served by other forms of provision such as Moatfield Recreation Ground
Amenity Greenspace	◀ Some minor gaps in 480m catchment in densely populated area to east of Bushey	◀ Gap served by other forms of provision such as King George Recreation Ground and Mary Forsdyke Garden
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	◀ Minor gap in 720m catchment	◀ Gap served by other forms of provision such as King George Recreation Ground
Provision for children and young people	◀ No significant gaps in catchment mapping	n/a

Potters Bar

Table 4.2.5: Potters Bar Accessibility Summary

Typology	Catchment gap	Action
Parks and gardens	◀ Gap in 710m catchment in densely populated areas to west	◀ Gap may be served by other forms of provision such as Furze field.
Amenity Greenspace	◀ Minor gaps in 480m catchment in densely populated area	◀ Gap served by other forms of provision such as Oakmere Park and Parkfield, Potters Bar
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	◀ Gaps in 720m catchment in densely populated areas to east	◀ Gap may be served to some extent by other forms of provision such as Oakmere Park and Parkfield, Potters Bar ◀ Opportunities to enhance/expand natural features at such sites could be explored
Provision for children and young people	◀ No significant gaps in catchment mapping	◀ n/a

4.3: Quantity

Quantity standards can be used to identify areas of shortfalls and help with setting requirements for future developments.

Setting quantity standards

The setting and application of quantity standards is necessary to ensure new developments contribute to the provision of open space across the area.

Shortfalls in quality and accessibility standards are identified across the Borough for different types of open space (as set out in Parts 4.1 and 4.2). Consequently, the Council should seek to ensure these shortfalls are not made worse through increases in demand as part of future development growth across the Borough.

The FIT quantity standards are currently used by HBC and viewed as representing good practice by the Council:

Table 4.3.1: Proposed quantity standards

Typology	Proposed HBC Quantity Standard (hectares per 1,000 population)
Parks & gardens	0.80
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	1.80
Amenity greenspace	0.60
Provision for children & young people	0.25
Allotment	0.25

Implication and recommendations

The current provision levels can be used to help identify where areas may have a shortfall against the proposed HBC quantity standards. Table 4.3.2 shows the position for each sub-area as to whether it is sufficient or identified as having a shortfall against the proposed HBC quantity standards for each type of open space.

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Table 4.3.2: Current provision against proposed HBC quantity standards

Analysis area	Parks and gardens		Natural & Semi-natural (Hectares per 1000 population)		Amenity greenspace		Allotments	
	0.80		1.80		0.60		0.25	
	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -
Aldenham and Shenley	0.68	-0.12	0.67	-1.13	0.56	-0.04	0.28	+0.03
Borehamwood and Elstree	1.94	+1.14	1.02	-0.84	1.08	+0.48	0.09	-0.16
Bushey	0.36	-0.44	0.82	-0.91	0.45	-0.15	0.21	-0.04
Potters Bar	0.62	-0.18	0.42	-1.38	0.55	-0.05	0.22	-0.03
Hertsmere	1.05	+0.25	0.78	-1.02	0.70	+0.10	0.18	-0.07

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All analysis areas are observed as having shortfalls in some form of open space. Against the recommended standards, Potter Bar and Bushey analysis areas are identified as having quantity shortfalls in all types of provision. Borehamwood and Elstree is the only analysis area sufficient in parks and gardens provision.

Provision for children and young people

Table 4.3.3 shows the position for each sub-area as to whether it is sufficient or identified as having a shortfall against the proposed standard in terms of provision for children and young people.

Table 4.3.3: Current play provision against recommended quantity standard

Analysis area	Hectares per 1000 population	
	Current provision	Sufficiency/deficiency against proposed 0.25 standard
Aldenham & Shenley	0.11	-0.14
Borehamwood & Elstree	0.06	-0.19
Bushey	0.04	-0.21
Potters Bar	0.03	-0.22

Each of the Hertsmere sub analysis areas are identified as having a shortfall against the proposed quantity standard for play.

Identifying priorities

The focus for areas identified as being sufficient against the existing quantity standards will be for priorities to ensure quality and accessibility standards are being met. Table 4.3.2 and 4.3.3 also highlights those areas of the Borough with shortfalls in open space provision.

The proposed quantity standards should also be used to determine the open space requirements as part of new housing developments. In the first instance, all types of open space provision should look to be provided as part of new housing developments.

If this is not considered viable, the column signalling whether an analysis area is sufficient or has a shortfall against the recommended quantity standards may be used to help inform the priorities for each type of open space within each analysis area (i.e. the priorities will be where a shortfall has been identified).

For example, in the Aldenham & Shenley area, shortfalls are highlighted in parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural and amenity greenspace provision. On this basis, these open space types should be identified as a priority for new forms of provision. If not feasible, then ensuring contributions to enhancing the quality and accessibility of existing open space provision will be necessary.

PART 5: POLICY ADVICE AND STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Strategic recommendations

The following section provides a summary on the key findings through the application of the quantity, quality and accessibility standards. It incorporates and recommends what the Council should be seeking to achieve in order to address the issues highlighted.

Recommendation 1

- ◀ *Explore low quality sites and their prioritised for enhancement*

The policy approach to these sites should be to enhance their quality to the applied standards (i.e. high quality) where possible. This is especially the case if the site is deemed to be of high value to the local community. Therefore, they should initially be protected, if they are not already so, in order for their quality to be improved.

Identified low quality sites (p25-32) should be given consideration for enhancement if possible. Priority sites should be those highlighted as helping or with the potential to serve gaps in provision (see Recommendation 2)

Recommendation 2

- ◀ *Sites helping or with the potential to serve areas identified as having gaps in catchment mapping should be recognised through opportunities for enhancement*

The implications summary for the accessibility catchment mapping (p12-13) highlights those sites that help or have the potential to serve gaps in provision. Furthermore, there are some sites across Hertsmere with a multi-functional role which may serve (to some extent) the wider areas of the Borough.

The Council should continue to ensure the role and quality of these multi-functional sites through greater levels and diverse range of features linked to those types of open space. This is in order to provide a stronger secondary role as well as opportunities associated with other open space types. This may also help to minimise the need for new forms of provision in order to address gaps in catchments or as a result of potential new housing growth developments. This may particularly be the case in areas where the space to create new forms of provision is not a viable option.

Recommendation 3

- ◀ *Recognise areas with sufficient provision in open space and how they may be able to meet other areas of need*

If no improvements can be made to sites identified as lower quality (p25-32), then a change of primary typology should be considered (i.e. a change of role).

If no shortfall in other open space types is noted (p15-16), or it is not feasible to change the primary typology of the site, only then the site may be redundant/ 'surplus to requirements'.

5.2 Implications

The following section sets out the policy implications in terms of the planning process in Hertsmere. This is intended to help steer the Council in seeking contributions to the improvement and/or provision of any new forms of open space.

How is provision to be made?

The requirements for on-site or off-site provision will vary according to the type of open space to be provided. Collecting contributions from developers can be undertaken through the following two processes.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Planning Obligations are the two main mechanisms available to the Council to ensure future development addresses any adverse impacts it creates. If required, Planning Conditions can be used to ensure that key requirements are met.

Planning obligations

Planning Conditions and Obligations (often known as Section 106 Agreements) require individual developments to provide or pay for the provision of development specific infrastructure requirements. They are flexible and deliver a wide range of site and community infrastructure benefits.

A development should make appropriate provision of services, facilities and infrastructure to meet its own needs. Where sufficient capacity does not exist, the development should contribute what is necessary either on-site or by making a financial contribution towards provision elsewhere.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The CIL is a method of requiring developers to fund infrastructure facilities including open spaces. Charges are based on the size and type of new development. It will generate funding to deliver a range of local authority wide and local infrastructure projects that support residential and economic growth.

CILs are to be levied on the gross internal floor space of the net additional liable development. The rate at which to charge such developments is set out within a council's Charging Schedule. This will be expressed in £ per m².

More recently, in tandem with the Housing White Paper, an update to the DCLG consultation on CIL proposes an overhaul of the current system.

Seeking developer contributions

This document can inform policies and emerging planning documents by assisting in the Council's approach to securing open spaces through new housing development. The evidence should form the basis for negotiation with developers to secure contributions for the provision of appropriate facilities and their long term maintenance.

The wider benefits of open space sites and features regardless of size should be recognised as a key design principle for any new development. These features and elements can help to contribute to the perception of open space provision in an area, at the same time as also ensuring an aesthetically pleasing landscape providing wider social, environmental and health benefits. Sport England's Active Design looks at the opportunities to encourage sport and physical activity through the built environment in order to support healthier and more active lifestyles. It is therefore important for planning to consider the principles of Active Design.

In smaller, infill, development areas where open space provision is identified as being sufficient in terms of quantity and subsequently, therefore, provision of new open space is not deemed necessary. It may be more suitable to seek contributions for quality improvements and/or new offsite provision in order to address any future demand.

Off-site contributions

If new provision cannot be provided on site, it may be more appropriate to seek to enhance the quality of existing provision and/or improve access and linkages to existing sites. In some instances, a development may be located within close proximity to an existing site. In such cases, it may be more beneficial for an offsite contribution to avoid creation of small incremental spaces so close to existing sites.

Standard costs for the enhancement of existing open space and provision of new open spaces should be clearly identified and revised on a regular basis.

Maintenance contributions

There will be a requirement on developers to demonstrate that where onsite provision is to be provided it will be managed and maintained accordingly. In some instances, the site may be adopted by the Council, which will require the developer to submit a sum of money in order to pay the costs of the site's future maintenance. Often the procedure for councils adopting new sites includes:

- ◆ The developer being responsible for maintenance of the site for an initial agreed establishment period.
- ◆ Sums to cover the maintenance costs of a site (once transferred to the Council) should be intended to cover a period of at least 15 years, ideally 20 or 25.

Calculations to determine the amount of maintenance contributions required should be based on current maintenance costs. The typical maintenance costs for the site should also take into consideration its open space typology and size.

5.3 Approach to developer contributions

KKP advocates the requirement for open space should be based upon the number of persons generated from the net increase in dwellings in the proposed scheme. We also promote the use of quantity provision standards (in hectares per 1,000 population) in calculating the open space requirements of new housing development.

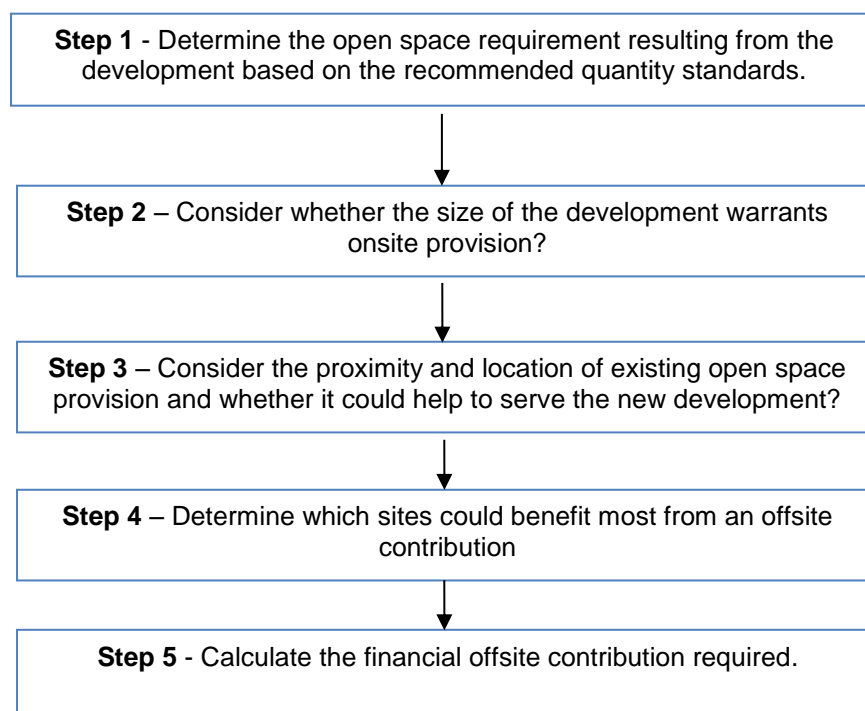
Flexible approach

A focus of this study has been to recognise the role quality and accessibility has in terms of open space provision. Future need should not just centre on quantity requirements of new residential developments. For instance, a new residential development may not warrant onsite provision but contribution to an existing site within close proximity could be.

The flowchart (Figure 5.3.1) sets out the process that should be considered when determining contributions in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility. For larger scale developments, the provision standards should be used to help determine the requirements for open space provision as part of a development.

The figure below sets out the processes that should be considered when determining developer contributions towards open space provision.

Figure 5.3.1: Determining developer contributions



Determining onsite or offsite contributions

The requirement for on or off-site provision should be undertaken in conjunction with the accessibility and quality of existing open space provision. For instance, if an existing form of open space is located within access to the development there may not be a requirement to provide onsite provision. However, provision may still need to be made in locations where the nearest existing open space site is deemed too far away or considered to be operating at its maximum capacity.

Small sized onsite contributions should be avoided on developments smaller in size where necessary. It is recognised that open spaces of a particular small size hold less recreational use and value. The presence of additional smaller sites will also add to the existing pressures of maintenance regimes and safety inspections. It is therefore suggested that a minimum threshold is used to determine if provision should be provided on or off site.

Both the GLA and FIT offer some guidance to the potential minimum threshold size of sites (Table 5.3.1). New open space provision should look to be provided as offsite contributions if the calculated open space requirement for the proposed development falls below the size threshold. If the requirement is above the threshold, it should look to be provided onsite as part of the development.

Table 5.3.1: Minimum size threshold for contributions:

Classification		Minimum site size
Allotments		0.4 ha (0.025 per plot)
Amenity greenspace		0.4 ha
Natural and semi natural		0.4 ha
Parks and gardens		2 ha
Play areas *	LAP	0.01 ha
	LEAP	0.04 ha
	NEAP/Other (e.g. MUGA, skate park)	0.10 ha

Source: GLA Open space strategies: Best practice guidance (2009)

Using the proposed HBC quantity standards, the following levels of population would result in the minimum site size being met and an onsite contribution being sought. Developments with populations lower than those in Table 5.3.2 could seek offsite contributions

The equivalent population levels to consider as a ‘trigger’ for onsite provision being sought (in Table 5.3.2) are calculated by using the suggested minimum site sizes and the proposed HBC quantity standards:

$$\text{Minimum site size} / \text{proposed HBC quantity standard} \times 1,000$$

* Minimum recommended size for play areas by Fields In Trust

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Table 5.3.2 demonstrates that using this approach means onsite provision of certain types of open space such as parks and allotments will be warranted for larger scale developments.

Table 5.3.2: Minimum size threshold and equivalent populations for contributions:

Classification		Minimum site size	Equivalent population to 'trigger' onsite provision
Allotments		0.4 ha	1,600
Amenity greenspace		0.4 ha	667
Natural and semi natural		0.4 ha	222
Parks and gardens		2 ha	2,500
Play areas	Equipped (i.e. LAP)	0.01 ha	40
	Equipped (i.e. LEAP)	0.04 ha	160
	Informal/casual (i.e. NEAP or other outdoor provision)	0.10 ha	400

Consideration to reviewing the existing contributions process is advised given the change in FIT standards and the proposed quantity standards within this document.

Play area recommendation

Residential developments should normally be required to meet the need for play provision generated by the development on site, as an integral part of the design. Where this is not feasible, payment of a development contribution will be used to install or upgrade play facilities in the vicinity of a proposed development.

A play area must be sited within an open space sufficient to accommodate the provision and its required buffer zone to ensure residential amenity is maintained. Buffer distances ensure that facilities do not enable users to overlook neighbouring properties, reducing possibility of conflict. Any play requirements should be counted as additional to any other onsite open space requirement (e.g. provision of amenity greenspace should not also be counted as informal play provision).

FIT offer guidance to the appropriate buffer zone areas dependent upon the type of play provision (i.e. the larger the scale of play provision, the greater the buffer zone recommended).

FIT also recommend minimum site areas for different levels of formal play; LAP (Local Area for Play) is approximately 0.01ha, or 100 sq. metres, LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) is approximately 0.04 hectares, or 400 sq. metres, and for larger forms of play i.e. NEAPs (Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play), FIT recommends an area of 0.10 hectares or 1,000 sq. metres.

On this basis, a development with a new population of 40 people would be required to warrant on-site provision of play equipment (equivalent to LAP). A development with 160 new people would warrant onsite provision of play equipment equivalent to LEAP. A development with 400 new people would warrant onsite provision of play equipment equivalent to NEAP and/or informal play provision.

PART 6: FUTURE GROWTH SCENARIO

Future need for open space will arise from the population increases from potential housing growth developments. The Council currently has three scenarios for estimating the potential future housing growth across Hertsmere:

- ◀ Scenario One: Using 2016 ONS projections
- ◀ Scenario Two: Using 2014 ONS projections
- ◀ Scenario Three: Using 15% increase on 2014

Each scenario uses a different per annum housing figure requirement (provided in terms of the number of dwellings). The indicative population figure per annum assumes that population growth will average 2.4* persons per dwelling. The table also shows the accumulative housing figures and populations up to 2036.

Table 6.1: Future growth scenarios summary

Scenario	Per annum housing	Per annum population	Accumulative housing up to 2036	Accumulative population up to 2036
2016 ONS projections	444	1,066	7,548	18,115
2014 ONS projections	714	1,714	12,138	29,131
15% increase on 2014	821	1,970	13,957	33,497

The proposed quantity provision standards for Hertsmere are applied in order to determine the requirement for open space provision if the current levels of provision are to be maintained.

On this basis, the following open space requirements are calculated as a result of future housing growth. These are presented for each scenario.

Scenario 1: 2016 ONS projections

The estimated additional population derived from housing growth scenario (from 2019 – 2036) is 18,115. This is based on 7,548 dwellings being delivered with an average of 2.4 persons per dwelling.

Table 6.2: Scenario 1 - open space requirement

Open space type	Quantity standards (per 1,000 population)	Future requirement (hectares)
Parks & gardens	0.80	14.49
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	1.80	32.61
Amenity greenspace	0.60	10.87
Allotment	0.25	4.53
Provision for children & young people	0.25	4.53

* Source: ONS Families and Households Release 2017

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Scenario 2: 2014 ONS projections

The estimated additional population derived from housing growth scenario (from 2019 – 2036) is 29,131. This is based on 12,138 dwellings being delivered with an average of 2.4 persons per dwelling.

Table 6.3: Scenario 2 - open space requirement

Open space type	Quantity standards (per 1,000 population)	Future requirement (hectares)
Parks & gardens	0.80	23.30
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	1.80	52.44
Amenity greenspace	0.60	17.48
Allotment	0.25	7.28
Provision for children & young people	0.25	7.28

Scenario 3: 2014 ONS projections

The estimated additional population derived from housing growth scenario (from 2019 – 2036) is 33,497. This is based on 13,957 dwellings being delivered with an average of 2.4 persons per dwelling.

Table 6.4: Scenario 3 - open space requirement

Open space type	Quantity standards (per 1,000 population)	Future requirement (hectares)
Parks & gardens	0.80	26.80
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	1.80	60.29
Amenity greenspace	0.60	20.10
Allotment	0.25	8.37
Provision for children & young people	0.25	8.37

The figures provide an initial indication to the levels of open space provision required as a result of new housing growth in order for the current levels of provision to be maintained. It should be treated as a starting point for further exploration and negotiation to ensure new populations are served by adequate open space provision.

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APPENDIX ONE: QUALITY AND VALUE MATRIX

The following tables are part of the application of the quality and value matrix as set out earlier in the report (Section 4.1).

Sites that are colour coded green represent scoring above the thresholds for quality and value. Conversely, red scoring sites are those which rate below the quality and value thresholds.

A1.1: Aldenham & Shenley Analysis Area Summary

A1.1a: Allotments

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Phillimore recreation ground allotments Green Street, Shenley	Letchmore Heath Cobden Hill
	Low		

A1.1b: Amenity Greenspace

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Grace Avenue Lauteral Green (Tykeside Gardens) London Road war memorial/pond Phillimore Place Square St Albans Road war memorial Station Road, Watling Street The Green, Letchmore Heath The Crescent, Aldenham	Andrew Close Canons Close Cockle Way Harris Lane Ribston Close Glebeland Williams Way
	Low		

A1.1c: Natural and semi-natural Greenspace

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Scrubbitts Wood (South) Brookside Wood and Meadow Hillcrest Road NSN Letchmore Heath pond Woodhall Lane Spinney	Fir Spring wood Scrubbitts Wood (North) Wellhouse Dell
	Low		

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A1.1d: Provision for children and young people

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Brookside Play Area Glebelands play area Newcome (Anderson) Road play area Phillimore play area Ridge play area Harris Lane play area Shenley Park play area Aldenham Country Park play area	Shenley Park play area 2 Greenwood Gardens play area Back Lane play area
	Low		

A1.1e: Cemeteries

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	St Giles' Church Shenleybury Cemetery St Margaret's, Ridge St John the Baptist, Aldenham	Watling Street
	Low		

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A1.2: Borehamwood Analysis Area Summary

A1.2a: Allotments

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Furzehill Road allotments	Allum Lane, Elstree
	Low		

A1.2b: Amenity greenspace

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Aycliffe Park Brook Meadow Clarendon Park Potterswood Park Farriers Way open space Haggerston Park Kelly Court (Studio Way estate) Kenilworth Park Lemsford Court Maxwell Hillside Park (North) Maxwell Hillside Park (South) Meadow Park Organ Hall open space Ripon Park Shakespeare Drive Shenley Road Tempsford Park The Champions Town Centre Garden	Ayot Path/Stapleton Road Cleveland Crescent Elstree Hill North war memorial Gateshead Road/Beech Drive Grantham Green Hunter Close Leeming Park Milton Drive (24-50) Shenley Road war memorial Tomkins Close/Bairstow Close Walshford Green Wetherby Road Wordsworth Gardens Composers Field Crown Road
	Low		

A1.2c: Natural and semi-natural greenspace

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Potters Wood Thirskcliffe nature park Composers Park Parkfields Woodcock Hill village green	
	Low		

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A1.2d: Parks and gardens

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Aberford Park	
	Low		

A1.2e: Provision for children and young people

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Aberford Park play area Aberford Park skate park Brook Meadow play area Byron Avenue MUGA Composers Park basketball Composers Park play area Potterswood Park play area Farriers Way play area Kelly Court play area Kenilworth Park play area Meadow Park play area 1 & 2 Organ Hall play area Parkfields play area Ripon Park play area Shakespeare Drive play area Winthorpe Gardens play area	Aycliffe Park exercise equip Byron Avenue play area Paxton Court play area Elstree Hill North play area Hackney Close MUGA Walshford Green football goals Eaton Way play area Parkfields MUGA Stanborough Avenue play areas Baker Court play area
	Low		

A1.2f: Cemeteries

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Allum Lane Cemetery	All Saints Graveyard St Nicholas' Church
	Low		

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A1.3: Bushey Analysis Area Summary

A1.3a: Allotments

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Windmill allotment gardens Finch Lane Allotments, Bushey Merryhill, Bushey	
	Low		

A1.3b: Amenity greenspace

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Boundary Green Millbrook Road (Forest Walk) Moatfield Recreation Ground Windmill Lane Recreation Ground	Prowse Avenue (22 and 24) Scottswood Close Sparrow Herne war memorial Bushey Grove Little Bushey Lane
	Low		

A1.3c: Natural and semi-natural greenspace

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Hillmead Nature Park Richfield Road Fishers Nature Reserve Fishers Park Hartspring Meadow Bushey Manor Field	
	Low		

A1.3d: Parks and gardens

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Bushey Rose Garden King George Recreation Ground Mary Forsdyke Garden	
	Low		

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A1.3e: Provision for children and young people

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Fishers Park play area Hartwood Close play area King George Recreation Ground play area King George Recreation Ground MUGA Moatfield play area (inc shelter) Park Avenue play area Three Valleys Way play area	Hartwood Close play area Windmill Lane Recreation Ground play area
	Low		

A1.3f: Cemeteries

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	St James' Church Bushey Jewish Cemetery	
	Low		

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A1.4: Potters Bar Analysis Area Summary

A1.4a: Allotments

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High		Aberdale Gardens allotments High View Gardens allotments Kimptons Mead, Potters Bar
	Low		

A1.4b: Amenity greenspace

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Elm Court Community Centre Furzefield	Abingdon Place Berkeley Close Cranborne Crescent Rushfield Willow Way Ashwood Road Church Road/Osborne Road
	Low		

A1.4c: Natural and semi-natural greenspace

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Furzefield Wood and Meadow Wash Lane Common Kimptons Mead Nature Area	
	Low		

A1.4d: Parks and gardens

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Oakmere (including War Memorial) Parkfield, Potters Bar	
	Low		

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A1.4e: Provision for children and young people

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	Furzefield play area Willow Way play area Oakmere Park play area 2	Furzefield skatepark Glebeland basketball court Oakmere Park play area
	Low		

A1.4f: Cemeteries

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High		Willow Way/Mutton Lane
	Low		

