

Open Space Study

March 2008

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1.0 Introduction

Open space is essential for our quality of life. It provides the setting for a wide range of social interactions and pursuits that support personal and community wellbeing. Open space allows individuals to interact with the natural environment and provides habitats for wildlife. It can also be important in defining the character and identity of settlements. New areas of open space of enduring quality and value have, however, been the exception rather than the rule and existing spaces are under pressure not just from physical development but also from over use and, in relative terms, reduced maintenance.

1.1 Purpose of study

The purpose of the study is to produce a comprehensive understanding of open space needs in the borough. It provides technical support for the preparation of the Local Development Framework. Recent reports and guidance stressing the importance of assessing recreational and open space requirements have prompted the study. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 on Sport, Open Space and Recreation, sets out central government's guidance on open space, and recommends that local authorities carry out studies of its availability. The study is set in this national and regional framework and aims to support, inform and help integrate the following local initiatives:

- local planning policies;
- management of public open spaces;
- funding bids and investment priorities.

1.2 Scope of the study

This study analyses the current provision of open space within the Borough. It focuses on the amount of open space per settlement, the quality of open space, and how accessible open spaces are. The study then looks to understand the needs of the community and make recommendations on the provision of open space within Dacorum.

It avoids replicating other work relating to outdoor sport covered in the Outdoor Sport Facilities Assessment Study, Strategy and Action Plan (October 2006), Urban Nature Conservation Study (March 2006) and work relating to community facilities covered in the Social and Community Facilities Background Study (January 2006).

1.3 Stakeholder Consultation

This study has been subject to selected stakeholder consultation, for checking the accuracy of the survey and its findings. All comments received have been summarised and can be found in appendix 14.

1.4 Definition of open space

The Government¹ defines open space as all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs, which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity.

1.5 Public Open Space is defined as public parks, commons, heaths and woodlands and other open spaces with established and unrestricted public access and capable of being classified according to an open space hierarchy, which meets recreational and non-recreational needs.

1.6 Private Open Space is defined as open space to which public access is restricted or not formally established but which contributes to local amenity or wildlife habitat or meets or is capable of meeting recreational or non-recreational needs, including school and private playing fields. Private residential gardens are not included for the purposes of producing an Open Space Strategy.

1.7 Formal Open Space is designed primarily for public access, recreation and events whilst providing areas for quiet contemplation and also contributing to the overall appearance of an area, town or residential area.

Formal Open Space provides a major contribution to public sports and recreation. It includes pitches (football, cricket, rugby - both league and union and hockey), greens, courts, athletics tracks and other miscellaneous sites e.g. training areas.

Outdoor sports facilities that are not, as a matter of policy and practice, available for public use, such as professional football arenas, are not included in the definition, but private sports clubs such as Hemel Hempstead Camelot are. Formal Open Space also excludes all golf facilities; water based recreational areas, indoor sports and leisure centres.

The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) has set a standard of 1.6 -1.8 hectares per 1000 population of adult and outdoor youth playing space. This standard should include within it a specific allocation of 1.2 hectares for pitch sports.

1.8 Informal Open Space is public open space, which can be used for recreational activity, including walking, sitting and informal games. Such areas can often be quite extensive, forming woodlands, village greens etc. Use may not be formally recorded, but such areas make an important contribution to the quality of life of residents in general and particularly children.

This category consists of casual or informal playing space within housing estates, including safe shared space such as play streets. It includes outdoor equipped play areas for children of all ages, and play facilities that offer specific opportunities for outdoor play, such as BMX tracks.

¹ Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Informal areas do not include sports pitches (Formal Open space), golf facilities, woodlands, parks, verges (Amenity areas), or water used for recreation except where it forms a play feature of an outdoor play area.

The National Playing Fields Association has set a standard of 0.6 - 0.8 hectares per 1000 population for Children's Playing Space (Informal Open Space). The Informal Open Space 2 Acre Standard is further split into 0.5 – 0.75 acres for outdoor equipped play areas for children of all ages and 1.0 – 1.25 acres for casual or informal play space within housing areas.

1.9 Amenity Green Space

Amenity areas are public open spaces that are there to improve and enhance the appearance of the local environment. Generally in Dacorum, amenity areas are either unsuitable for recreational use or recreational use is prohibited, and as a result they are distinct from Informal Open Space. They include amenity areas in housing developments.

1.10 Open space PPG 17 Typology



Parks and gardens including urban parks, country parks and formal gardens



Natural and semi-natural green spaces including woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, green spaces, grasslands (e.g. downlands, commons and meadows) wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land and rock areas (e.g. cliffs, quarries and pits)



Green corridors Including river and canal banks, cycleways and rights of way



Outdoor sports facilities including tennis courts, bowling greens, sports pitches, athletics tracks, school and other institutional playing fields, and other outdoor sports areas



Amenity green space including informal recreation spaces, green spaces in and around housing, and village greens



Provision for children including play areas, skateboard parks, outdoor teenagers basketball hoops, other informal areas (e.g. 'hanging out' areas, teenage shelters)



Allotments, community gardens, and city (urban) farms



Cemeteries and churchyards

1.11 Leisure space

Leisure space is an important aspect of a settlement; it provides opportunities for recreation and activity. The PPG 17 Typologies that make up leisure space are Children and Young People Facilities, Public Outdoor Sport Facilities, Private Outdoor Sport Facilities and Parks and Gardens.

2.0 Methodology

The starting point for the Open Space Study has been the Government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' (PPG17) and its companion guide "Assessing Needs and Opportunities". The phases it was produced in are outlined below:

2.1 Phase 1: Context

In Phase 1 a desktop study looked at the national, regional and local policies and initiatives and analysed the local context. Chapter 3 contains a review of the current national, regional and local strategies, guidance and initiatives.

2.2 Phase 2: Audit of Supply

In Phase 2 an audit of supply was carried out, looking at the quantity of the open spaces in the Borough.

The audit includes all open space, both public and private, except urban civic spaces.

Sites were identified from the following information sources:

- A review of the Council's adopted Local Plan Proposals Map;
- The Council's ground maintenance database
- A desk top assessment of aerial photography of Dacorum Borough

An audit of each site was undertaken. Information was gathered from site visits between the months of July and September 2004 and desk based analysis using the Council's Geographical Information System.

The requirements of the audit were:

- To identify the boundaries of each site so that they could be mapped on the GIS system, thus allowing a calculation of the amount of open space;
- To collect basic information so that an assessment of the quality of the open space could be made (A copy of the audit form is included in this study as Appendix 1) and;
- To enable a classification of open space according to local circumstances.

2.3 Phase 3: Assessment

In Phase 3 the information collected in the audit was analysed. The quantity, quality and accessibility of public open space are assessed.

2.4 Quantity

The study aims to establish if there are sufficient open spaces within the Borough overall and in individual settlements. Using the information collected in the audit, the sites have been categorised into their PPG17 typology, total areas calculated using a spreadsheet, and the amount per 1000 people

calculated using the 2001 Census. The amount of open space in each typology per 1000 is calculated for the Borough, and for settlements. This allows any shortfall or oversupply to be highlighted. The information is compared to the leisure space standards in Appendix 6 of the current Local Plan.

2.5 Accessibility

There are many different types of open space, of different sizes and serving different purposes with different catchment areas. Different types may be categorised within an open space hierarchy; this provides a framework within which open space can be classified; it allows for differentiation between the more strategically important open spaces, and those that are more local; and allows deficiencies of a particular type to be identified. Not all open space should be used to calculate existing and future provision because of the function it serves: therefore it should not be included in any hierarchy. Open spaces, that are non-hierarchical, include cemeteries, and allotments.

A few examples of hierarchies exist. Probably the best known is for London where the London Plan includes the London Public Open Space Hierarchy. Based on the London Plan hierarchy and on the audit open spaces, Dacorum Borough Council has also developed a hierarchy for open space. Whilst London's Public Open Space Hierarchy may be applicable for London it would not necessarily be appropriate to apply these standards to Dacorum, due to the relative size of the settlements and the open spaces. Therefore, a hierarchy was developed that was more suited to local circumstances. This has sites in the categories semi-natural green space, public outdoor sport, amenity green space and parks and gardens, and creates a more appropriate typology based on size, location and range of facilities, for Dacorum.

Table 2.1: Dacorum Borough Council Open Space Hierarchy

Open space categorisation	Size guideline Hectares (ha)	Suggested maximum distance from homes to open space	Distances refined to take into account barriers to access
Regional	Over 60 ha	3.2 km	
Borough	20-60 ha	1.2 km	
Local Parks	2-20 ha	400 m	280 m
Small Local Parks	0.4-2 ha	400 m	280 m
Pocket Parks	Less than 0.4 ha	400 m	280 m
Linear Open Spaces	Variable	400 m where feasible	280 m

The starting point in defining the pedestrian catchments of local parks is setting a 400 metre fixed radius catchment identified by the hierarchy. This is also done for Borough size parks using a 1.2km radius, and Regional size parks using 3.2 km radius. Measuring straight line distances in this way does not take account of the fact that individual open spaces may have larger or indeed smaller catchments depending on a number of other quality and

functional criteria, such as the actual walking route and point of access. The areas of deficiency highlighted by this approach should be viewed as indicative and thus be used as a guide to broadly identify those areas of the borough which are in need of additional public open space. No refined distance to take account of barriers was applied to Regional and Borough parks.

The catchment area at the local park level has been refined to 280 metres to take into account local barriers to accessibility, based on the London Planning Advisory Committee Hierarchy (1992) and advice from Natural England (Accessible Natural Green Space Standards in Towns and Cities: A Review and Toolkit for their Implementation). Barriers such as main roads, which would limit the catchment area, would extend the identified area of deficiency.

The accessibility maps illustrate Local, Borough, and Regional open space with their appropriate catchment buffers, so that areas deficient of open space can be identified. Smaller sites are illustrated without buffers. Smaller sites are part of the fabric of the settlements and contribute towards local character and distinctiveness, but their recreational value is dependent on their location and nature of surrounding uses, they may alleviate deficiency in certain locations.

Privately provided open space was considered in order to analyse all leisure space uses. However, these sites are more likely to attract users from a much wider area. They tend to be located at the edge of built-up areas and currently have little impact on areas of deficiency. They have been shown on maps without an accessibility buffer as they may have the potential to meet deficiencies. Other open land such as allotments and school playing fields and Local Plan Proposal Sites have also been shown.

2.6 Quality

The assessment aims to provide a picture of the quality of open spaces.

This will help to:

- recognise the benefits and value of particular open spaces;
- ensure a range of different types of open space and facilities is provided;
- and assist decision making on priorities for park improvements.

The study developed a 16 point framework to assess the open spaces. This was based on the Green Flag award (the national standard for quality parks and green spaces, which provides a benchmark against which the quality of freely accessible provision can be measured). Information collected from the audit and from the Leisure and Recreation Department was used to apply the criteria.

The criteria were applied to sites of public open space above the size of 2 hectares. Smaller sites are important, but due to their nature it was felt to be unrealistic to assess them individually in the same way as a larger park because the range of facilities they can provide is dependent on their location as well as size.

Following assessment of the 16 point framework each open space was given a green star rating, depending on the number of points it received. This is set out below:

Table 2.2 Green Star Rating

Points	Stars
0-2	No Stars
3-5	One Green Star ☆
6-8	Two Green Stars ☆☆
9-11	Three Green Stars ☆☆☆
12-14	Four Green Stars ☆☆☆☆
15-16	Five Green Stars ☆☆☆☆☆

The principle is comparable to that of hotels and guesthouses, which receive stars and rosettes. It is easy to understand and takes into account the facilities and their quality, rather than pigeon-holing sites good, average or bad. It is not simply appropriate for open spaces to have a large number of facilities: also relates to use, and character for example a woodland compared to an open park with gardens.

2.7 Phase 4: Identifying Local Needs

To ensure effective planning for open space, sport and recreation it is important that the wishes and needs of local communities are known. This was achieved by consulting the Citizens' Panel. This is a body of residents, reflecting the spatial demography of the Borough, who have expressed a willingness to give their views to the Council. The April 2007 Panel survey was used to review resident opinion on, amongst other subjects, the Council's Green Space Strategy. This survey comprised 929 members with 498 completed questionnaires (a response rate of 54%). A copy of the top line findings can be found in Appendix 13.

This component of the study has helped to shape recommendations on provision for particular categories of open spaces in the borough.

2.8 Phase 5: Standards

As a starting point the study assesses the amount of open space per 1000 population at the borough and settlement level.

Locally based standards of provision have been set for the following categories of open space:

- Parks;
- Leisure space (Provision for children and teenagers, Outdoor sports fields and playing field needs)
- Natural or semi-natural green space;
- Allotment provision.

It is not only important to consider the quantity, accessibility/distribution, and quality of the open spaces in the borough but there must be a clear understanding of the need in a given area before a provision is set.

Amenity green spaces were found to include a range of uses, varying from village greens with mostly passive recreation, to open grassland featuring occasional sports activities. The exact level and type of provision should be responsive to the nature of the development around it and the existing level and type of open space provision. Within certain areas of the Borough amenity green space and other forms of open space form an integral part of the fabric of the settlements and contribute towards local character and distinctiveness.

For this reason it is not appropriate to define a consistent quantity or access standards relating to such provision. Within areas with shortfalls in other forms of open space provision, these amenity spaces can be of particular value and represent possible opportunities for meeting local deficiencies.

2.9 Phase 6: Conclusions and recommendations

Finally, a detailed series of recommendations are made of improvements and policies, which could be made to open space provision in the Borough. These recommendations link to other technical studies such as the Urban Nature Conservation Study and Outdoor Sport Facilities Assessment Study, Strategy and Action Plan.

3.0 Context

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 introduced a requirement for the Council to introduce new planning documents including Development Plan Documents (DPDs).

The new DPDs will include a core strategy, development control policies and site allocations. These will need to be based on a sound collection of evidence on a range of topics. This study helps to provide that evidence.

The new DPDs will cover the period up to 2021 and act as the key planning considerations in this period and beyond. When considering the supply of open space facilities it is therefore important to take into account changing demographics, trends in facilities, use and demand as well as the policies of relevant providing organisations. New policies should accord with national and regional planning policy and co-ordinate with related projects in order to be sufficiently robust.

3.1 Demographic Trends

The population of Dacorum within the 2001 Census is some 137, 799 people. This represents an increase of 4.2% over the 1991 population (132,240) and forecasts indicate that this growth will continue.

The 2004 based long-term sub national population projections (published on 12 October 2006) project the 2004 mid year population estimates giving an indication of future trends in population for the next 25 years from 2004 to 2029.

It is important to note that these projections are trend based projecting population on a district level and do not take into account major development changes, which could be planned, at Hemel Hempstead by the Regional Plan.

The population of Dacorum is predicted to rise to 148,200 by 2029 (i.e. by 7.5%).

Chapter 11 considers the potential growth of Hemel Hempstead using population projections which informed EERA's response to the Regional Spatial Strategy and were produced using the Chelmer model.

The census indicates a relatively young population for Dacorum. 61% of residents are under the age of 45. The largest age group is 30-44, the second largest age group is 0-14. The high level of young people within the Borough requires an appropriate level of open space for recreation.

3.2 National Context

National planning policy is contained within Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance Notes and Circulars. Advice is also provided in the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan and from a number of Government agencies.

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

Sustainability is a core principle underlining the planning system. The basic concept is that development should meet the needs of future generations without compromising the needs of future generations. Planning will play a role by:

- facilitating development and promoting sustainable patterns of urban and rural development;
- making suitable land available for development in line with economic, social and environmental objectives to improve people's quality of life and;
- protecting and enhancing the natural and historic environment, the quality and character of the countryside, and existing communities.

Paragraph 20 encourages consideration of environmental issues such as the protection of the wider countryside and the impact of development on landscape quality; the conservation and enhancement of wildlife species and habitats and the promotion of biodiversity; the need to improve the built and natural environment in and around urban areas and rural settlements. This includes the provision of good quality open space; the conservation of soil quality; and the preservation and enhancement of built and archaeological heritage.

Paragraph 27 discusses the preparation of development plan documents. This study will supply evidence and help the formulation of policy upon the issue of open space. Paragraph 27 states:

"In preparing Development Plans, planning authorities should:

- (v) Provide improved access for all to jobs, health, education, shops, leisure and community facilities, open space, sport and recreation."

Policy Planning Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation.

PPG17 sets out the Government's policy on open space, sport and recreation, the main planning objectives being:

- **Promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion.** Well-planned and maintained open spaces, and good quality sports and recreational facilities can play a major part in improving people's sense of well being in the place they live. As a focal point for community activities, they can bring together members of deprived communities and provide opportunities for people for social interaction;

- **Health and well being.** Open spaces, sports and recreational facilities have a vital role to play in promoting healthy living and preventing illness, and in the social development of children of all ages through play, sporting activities and interaction with others;
- **Promoting sustainable development.** By ensuring that open space and sports and recreational facilities are easily accessible by walking and cycling, and that more heavily used or intensive sports and recreational facilities are planned for locations well served by public transport.

A requirement of PPG17 is to undertake a local assessment of existing open space provision and the setting of local provision standards to ensure that an adequate supply of high quality open space is provided.

PPG 17 recommends that existing areas of open space that are of high quality or valued by a community should be given protection and any development within them strictly controlled. Areas of particular quality may include:

- small areas of open space in urban areas that provide an important local amenity and offer recreational and play opportunities;
- areas of open space that provide a community resource and can be used for informal events;
- areas of open space that particularly benefit wildlife and biodiversity.

In terms of provision of new open space it is recommended that local authorities should:

- promote accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport, and ensure that facilities are accessible for people with disabilities;
- locate more intensive recreational uses in sites where they can contribute to town centre vitality and viability;
- avoid any significant loss of amenity to residents, neighbouring uses or biodiversity;
- improve the quality of the public realm through good design;
- provide areas of open space in commercial and industrial areas;
- add to and enhance the range and quality of existing facilities;
- consider security and personal safety, especially of children;
- consider the scope for using any surplus land for open space, sport or recreational use, weighing this against alternative uses;
- assess the impact of new facilities on social inclusion.

PPG17 states that provided that a local assessment has been undertaken and standards set, local authorities will be vindicated in seeking planning obligations where the quality of provision is inadequate, or where new development increases local needs.

The Companion Guide to PPG17 (paragraph 2.2) acknowledges that:
“Residents in rural areas cannot realistically expect to have the same level of access to the full range of different types of open spaces and sport and recreation facilities normally available in more densely populated urban areas.

This means that residents of rural areas usually have to travel further than most urban residents to some forms of provision.”

Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres

PPS 6 aims to promote high quality and inclusive design, improve the quality of the public realm and open spaces, protect and enhance the architectural and historic heritage of centres, provide a sense of place and a focus for the community and for civic activity and ensure that town centres provide an attractive, accessible and safe environment for businesses, shoppers and residents.

Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

PPS 9 seeks to promote sustainable development by ensuring that biological and geological diversity are conserved and enhanced as an integral part of social, environmental and economic development, so that policies and decisions about the development and use of land integrate biodiversity and geological diversity with other considerations.

Urban White Paper, Our Towns and Cities: the Future (2000)

The Urban White Paper recognises that well managed public open spaces improve the attractiveness of urban areas and help to promote a healthier lifestyle and highlights the need for improvements in their management and maintenance.

It recognises that there is a requirement to do more than halt decline in the quality of open spaces and identifies a requirement to find ways of improving the quality of parks, play areas and other open spaces and to make them cleaner, safer and better maintained places. The need for more imaginative thinking about open space planning and design is highlighted and three key areas of action are proposed:

- development of a shared vision for the future of our parks, play areas and open spaces;
- improved information on the quality and quantity of parks and open spaces and the way in which they are used and maintained;
- improved planning and design of new parks, play areas and public spaces and the management and maintenance of existing ones.

The Sustainable Communities Plan (2003)

The Government has demonstrated its support for public space by recognising it as a component of sustainable communities. It underlines the commitment to the ‘liveability’ agenda that includes open spaces and the public realm.

Green Spaces, Better Places (2002)

This report of the Urban Greenspace Taskforce² outlines current concerns about parks and green spaces nationally and sets out proposals to overcome them. The report sets out the need for a strategic policy framework within which decision-makers should operate.

It recommends that local authorities should:

- involve and support communities in green space service planning and delivery;
- promote and support partnership working for improving local green spaces;
- explore the potential for making greater use of local 'open space trusts' as an effective option for delivering improvements to green spaces and their management and maintenance;
- provide information and advice on available funding streams and opportunities for supporting local partnerships involving local resident, voluntary and business groups;
- provide effective leadership at the highest level within the council by designating an elected Member to champion and promote parks and green spaces;
- give greater weight to the contribution of local green spaces in improving the quality of people's lives;
- develop and implement a green space strategy;
- carry out design reviews for failing or unsatisfactory spaces;
- prepare a management plan for every major park, groups of smaller parks and types of open space such as allotments;
- undertake a Best Value review of their park and green space services.

3.3 Regional Context

Regional Plan³

Regional planning policy is currently contained in RPG 9. It is being replaced by the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the East of England, which provides the planning and development strategy for the region to 2021. The Regional Plan will establish the level of growth in the eastern region and amongst its objectives are provision of appropriate open space, sport and recreation use, including the potential for the use of the area surrounding the settlement for formal and informal recreation.

Draft Policy SS1 seeks to bring about sustainable development, ensuring a strong, healthy and just society. This elements contributing to the creation of

² Urban Greenspace Task Force is an offshoot of the Urban Task Force, which is charged with translating sustainable urban development principles into strategic advice on open space for planning authorities in England.

³ Based on Proposed Changes December 2006

sustainable communities includes active, inclusive safe (in terms of community identity and cohesion, social inclusion and leisure opportunities).

Policy SS8 Land in the Urban Fringe states that Local Development Documents will:

- ensure that new development in or near the urban fringe contributes to enhancing the character, appearance, and its recreational and /or biodiversity value;
- seek to provide networks of accessible green space linking urban areas with the countryside; and
- set targets for the provision of green space for planned urban extensions.

Para. 3.40 of the supporting text states that green space targets for urban extensions should have regard to local circumstances and take account of best practice advice, for example any provided by Natural England.

Policy LA2 on Hemel Hempstead, includes the need for:

- (4) Substantial improvement to the image and quality of the town's built fabric and public realm, including multi-functional green space.

Policy ENV1, Environmental Greenspace,

Areas and networks of green infrastructure should be identified, created, protected and managed to ensure that an improved and healthy environment is available for the benefit of present and future communities. This will be particularly important in those areas identified to accommodate the largest amounts of growth.

Local Development Documents will:

- define a multiple hierarchy of green infrastructure, in terms of location, function, size and levels of use, at every spatial scale and across all areas of the region based on analysis of existing natural, historic, cultural and landscape assets, including the identification of new assets required to deliver green infrastructure;
- identify and require the retention and provision of substantial connected networks of green space, in urban, urban fringe and adjacent countryside areas to serve the new communities in the sub-region by 2021; and
- ensure that policies have regard to the economic and social as well as environmental benefits of green infrastructure assets.

Paragraph 8.4 comments that green infrastructure is defined as the sub-regional network of protected sites, nature reserves, green spaces, and greenway linkages. By providing for multi-functional uses, i.e. wildlife, recreational and cultural experience, it contribute to liveability whilst also delivering ecological benefits. Green infrastructure will be particularly important in settlements and surrounding areas proposed for regionally or sub-regionally significant development, notably the Key Centres for

Development and Change (such as Hemel Hempstead). However, the provisions of policy ENV 1 apply region wide.

Paragraph 8.5 acknowledges that local development documents should set policies which respond to locally identified need, including any increased demand for recreational open space associated with planned development, and identify the scale and location of green infrastructure required to ensure that existing, extended, and new communities are attractive places to live and work.

Paragraph 8.6 notes provision should aim to extend and enhance existing infrastructure to create linked networks of green space. Any tensions between the multiple demands made on such infrastructure should be addressed. It will also be important to ensure that areas of green infrastructure are managed and maintained appropriately.

3.4 Local Context

Dacorum Borough Local Plan (Adopted 2004)

Current local planning policy is contained in the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011. This has a number of policies relating to the provision and protection of open space. It also contains policies on planning obligations, which are often used as a method for securing or funding improvements to open spaces. The following policies are particularly relevant:

Policy 9 Land use division in towns and large villages

The policy amplifies the development strategy in respect of locations in the Borough where most development opportunities will arise. The divisions establish the broad character and primary use of different parts of the towns and large villages. They give a broad indication of the areas available for housing, commercial and other development and for open uses for leisure and education.

Policy 72 Land for Leisure

The policy gives high priority to the provision of land for a wide range of leisure activities. This should enable the needs of all sections of the community to be met in appropriate locations.

Policy 73 Provision and distribution of leisure space in towns and large villages

In the towns and large villages, the provision of leisure space (public and private playing space including playgrounds) will be sought to a minimum of 2.8 hectares per 1,000 population. It should also be distributed so that all residential areas are within reasonable walking distance of facilities (meaning 400 metres by footpath without intervening barriers such as busy main roads, railway lines and industrial areas).

Policy 74 Provision of leisure space in other villages

This acknowledges that existing leisure space will be retained in villages. New leisure space will be created where identified needs and opportunities arise.

Policy 75 Retention of leisure space

This policy protects leisure space from being built on, unless the proposal is ancillary to the leisure use of the land; or a sufficient proportion of the site with appropriate facilities is retained in open use. Development may be permitted, if leisure space lost is replaced to an equivalent or better standard in an accessible alternative location, or there is an overall benefit to sport as a result, or there is a demonstrable surplus of sports pitches and informal leisure space.

Policy 76 Leisure space in new residential developments

This policy ensures new residential developments should be designed to meet the needs they generate for leisure space.

Policy 77 Allotments

This policy contains specific standards to protect allotments from development unless it can be demonstrated that there is a surplus. Conversion to leisure space is encouraged where appropriate. The establishment of new allotment sites will be encouraged where there is excess demand or a shortfall of allotment provision.

Policy 114 Historic parks and gardens

Development will not be permitted where it would result in the loss of any historic park or garden or harm its historic structure, character, principal components or setting.

Policy 116 Open Land in towns and large villages

Open Land forming part of the urban structure (which is defined on the Local Plan Proposals Map) will be protected from building and other inappropriate development. Any new development on Structural Open Land must be well related to the character of existing development, its use and its open land setting. Other urban open land is also vulnerable to development pressures, and can be especially valuable for informal recreation, or to the local environment. There is a need to assess the contribution made by such spaces

(including the potential for improvement) and weigh it carefully against demands for development.

Appendix 6 Open Space and Play Provision

This sets out the minimum level of open space provision for the Borough as a whole. It is assessed on the basis of 2.8 ha (7 acres) per 1,000 population for leisure space including playing fields, parks, children's play areas, etc, derived from the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) standard of 2.4 ha (6 acres) per 1,000 and a further 0.4 ha per 1,000 population for other leisure space, comprising mainly ornamental parks and gardens – this is an approach agreed within Hertfordshire.

The standard is broken down as follows:

Table 3.1 Dacorum Open Space Standard

Type of Leisure Space		Hectares per 1,000 people
Adult/youth play (public and private playing fields, pitches, courts, greens and miscellaneous facilities such as ski slopes, athletics tracks, pitch and putt courses)		1.6
Children's play -	For the over 5s	0.6
	For the under 5s	0.2 (minimum)
Other		0.4
Total		2.8

The NPFA part of the standard excludes school and other educational playing fields, 9 or 18 hole golf courses, large areas of water, woodlands, commons, verges, ornamental parks and gardens.

The 1.6 hectares adult/youth play component is considered to be of benefit to the community as a whole. Developers would normally only be expected to provide space for the remaining categories (Policy 76) at a rate of (1.2 ha) per 1,000 population or 5% of the development area, whichever is the greater. However if a development is of sufficient size and adds significantly to the overall demand for leisure facilities, a contribution toward new provision or the enhancement of existing urban parks and playing fields would be required.

Amenity space including greens and verges, primarily of visual value, and landscaped areas around buildings used by the public is also encouraged. There is no specific standard of provision, but inclusion of such space particularly in major development proposals will be an important consideration in assessing overall design. The appendix also provides advice regarding the design and management of new open spaces.

Open space provided with residential development should meet local needs. These vary according to local housing type.

Table 3.2: Open space required with housing type

Housing Type	Type of Open Space
Family housing	Play space for children and toddlers
Starter homes	General open space and toddlers' play space
Elderly persons Dwellings	Sitting-out areas

Source: Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 (adopted 21 April 2004)

For children's play space the following minimum National Playing Field Association standards should be met:

Table 3.3: Standards to assess the demand for children's play areas

Facility	Time to facility	Walking Distance	Radial (Straight Line) Distance	Min Size	Nearest Dwelling	Characteristics
LAP Local Area for Play	1 min	100m	60m	100m ²	5m from activity zone	Small low key games area
LEAP Local Equipped Area for Play	5 mins	400m	240m	400m ²	10m from activity zone	5 types of play equipment, to include a small games area
NEAP Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play	15 mins	1000m	600m	1,000m ²	30m from activity zone	8 types of play equipment, opportunities for ball games or wheeled activities

Source: National Playing Fields Association

The Hemel 2020 Vision

Consultation with local people found that residents want open spaces and recreational areas that are attractive, well used and valued. A strong characteristic and key factor in the planning of Hemel Hempstead New Town is the network of open space which creates opportunities for recreation, sport, wildlife, cycling and walking and helps shape neighbourhoods.

Hemel 2020 seeks to enhance open space and natural and historic environments and to open them up to wider public use. This in turn will raise the overall profile of the town and help attract new investment into the wider area.

Hemel 2020 seeks to:

- extend Bunkers Park, a country park on the south eastern edge of Hemel Hempstead, to introduce additional open space uses including sports

pitches. The aim is to enhance the park as a destination for residents and visitors.

- create a new urban park within the rivers and canal corridor in the heart of the town. This would incorporate the lakes at Two Waters and existing open spaces, potentially extending to the southern side of the town centre and linking thorough to Gadebridge Park.
- achieve quality-improved networks of open spaces with linking green corridors of footpaths and cycleways. These will create attractive travel options, define neighbourhoods, provide amenity and recreation and help promote wildlife.

The Dacorum Sustainable Community Strategy (Towards 2021)

The Dacorum Partnership sets out a number of aims that the Council wishes to meet. The relevant aims for open space are:

- to encourage all those who live, work and visit Dacorum to become involved in cultural activities that enhance social well-being, and enhance leisure, fun and enjoyment.
- to enable children and young people to feel healthy and happy and to live, learn and play in places that are safe and clean.
- to enable older people to live healthy, happy, dignified lives as active citizens.

Green Space Strategy

The Strategy is being researched and developed by the Council's Parks and Recreation Section following the guidance produced by CABI Space. It will provide a new vision for Dacorum's green spaces, standards will be identified for the quality, quantity and accessibility of green spaces for the residents of Dacorum, and guidance for the future open space planning, design and management. An action plan will be prepared to address deficiencies in existing provision, with a programme for improvement priorities. The Green Space Strategy focuses on the management and maintenance of publicly owned open space (current and future) and is building on much of the work of the Open Space Strategy.

Outdoor Sport Facilities Assessment Study, Strategy and Action Plan

Published in October 2006 and made up of three parts; the assessment report considers the supply and demand issues for outdoor sport facilities. The strategy sets out the vision for the next ten years in relation to the provision and improvement of outdoor sports facility sites and associated facilities. The Action Plan recommends a number of high priority projects for the Borough, which should be implemented over a five year period (2005-2010).

Indoor Facilities Assessment Report, Strategy and Action Plan

Published in March 2006 and made up of three parts; the assessment report considers the supply and demand issues for indoor sport facilities and their ancillary facilities, it evaluates leisure centres, community centres, village halls

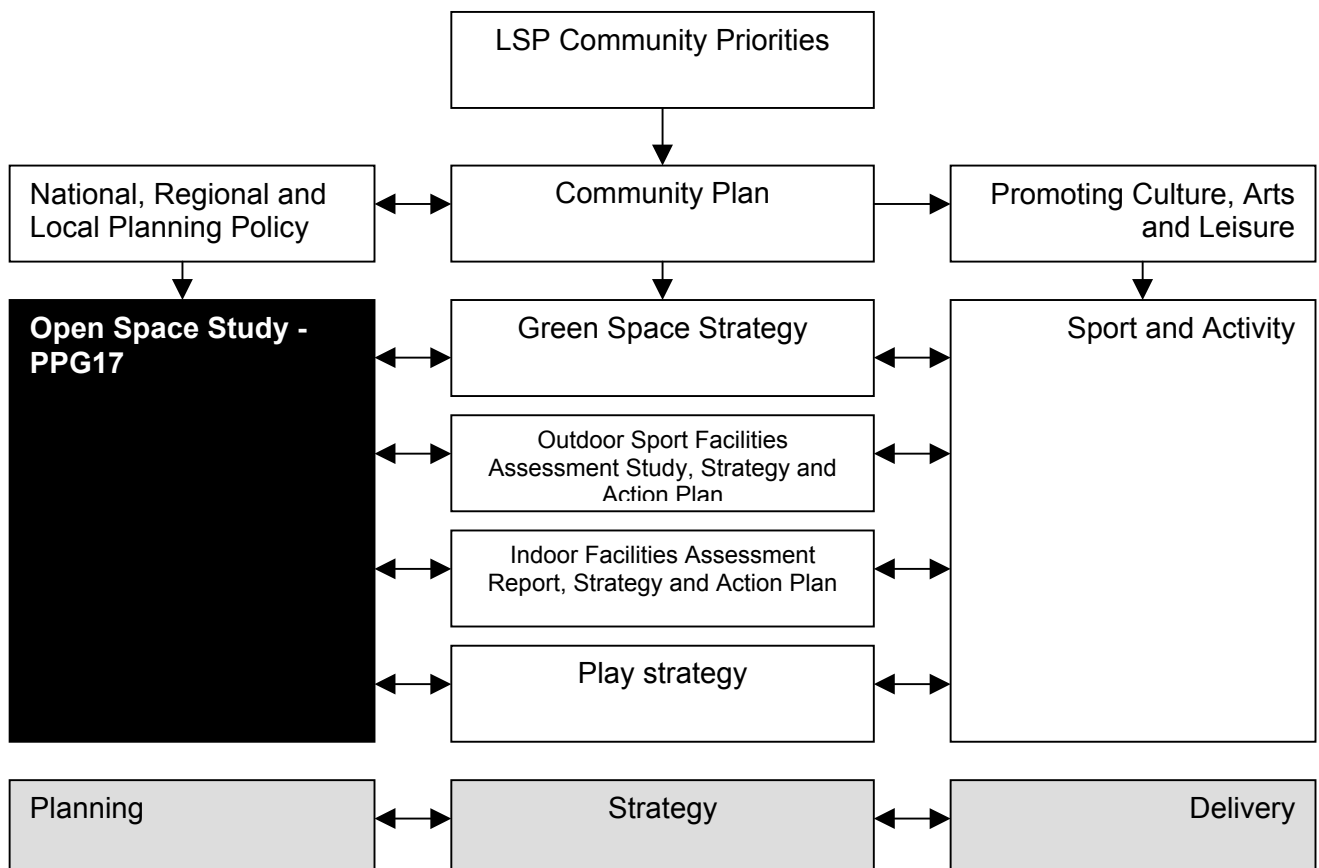
and schools. The strategy sets out the vision for the next ten years in relation to the provision and improvement of indoor sports facility sites and associated facilities. The Action Plan recommends a number of high priority projects for the Borough, which should be implemented over a ten year period (2005-2015).

Dacorum Play Strategy

The play strategy is for all young people up to the age of 18, and up to the age of 24 for young people with special needs. Play in this context covers all activities that are led by young people enabling them to express themselves in a free and creative way. The strategy has links to other strategies and agendas including the Children's Play Strategy, the Community Plan and Children of Today, Adults of Tomorrow. The play strategy will clarify future direction of play initiatives in Dacorum. The Play Strategy was published in July 2007.

The following diagram illustrates how all the plans, reports and strategies fit with the open space report and aim to encourage sport and activity

Figure 3.1 Open Space Study Position



4.0 Quantity of Open Space

The assessment of the current supply of open space covers:

- open space by type (the PPG17 typology) in the Borough; and
- any deficiencies or surplus of leisure space provision by settlement

4.1 Dacorum Total

PPG17 Typology	Total Area	Total Number	% of total open space	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	37.599	36	3.35	0.272
Amenity Green Space	109.905	270	9.76	0.794
Children and Young People	15.889	57	1.41	0.115
Churchyard and Cemeteries	33.226	36	2.96	0.241
Green Corridors	21.519	12	1.92	0.156
Natural Green Space	205.114	64	18.26	1.485
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	104.465	27	9.30	0.756
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	148.986	47	13.26	1.079
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	235.935	75	21.00	1.708
Parks and Gardens	210.735	26	18.76	1.526
Dacorum Total	1123.285	649	100.00	8.133

Note: Population 138,100 (Mid Year Estimate 2004)

Using the methodology outlined in Chapter 2, a total of 649 open spaces were identified in Dacorum, comprising 1,123 hectares. This amounts to 5.3% of the total area of Dacorum.

School outdoor sport facilities have the largest land area of the typologies; amenity greens are the most numerous. The amount of land for children and young people's facilities is below the minimum level set out in the current Local Plan.

4.2 Amount of leisure space

The PPG 17 Typologies that make up leisure space are Children and Young People Facilities, Public Outdoor Sport Facilities, Private Outdoor Sport Facilities and Parks and Gardens.

Settlement	Amount of Leisure Space	Amount of leisure space per 1000 people	Compared to 2.8 ha	Amount of leisure space deficiency
Hemel Hempstead	223.785	2.73	-0.07	6.02
Berkhamsted	28.584	1.73	-1.07	17.336
Tring	116.036	9.98	7.18	-
Bovingdon	6.355	1.37	-1.43	6.53
Kings Langley	4.744	0.96	-1.84	8.48
Markyate	2.431	0.88	-1.92	5.26
Aldbury	1.778	2.70	-0.10	0.05
Chipperfield	4.981	3.25	0.45	-
Flamstead	2.266	1.94	-0.86	1.00
Flaunden	1.686	17.56	14.76	-
Wigginton	2.696	3.08	0.28	-
Great Gaddesden, Gaddesden Row, Bridens Camp Jockey End and Water End	5.409	11.13	8.33	-
Little Gaddesden and Ashridge	63.023	84.94	82.14	-
Potten End	2.475	1.85	-0.95	1.2714
Astrove, Long Marston, Puttenham. Wilstone	5.585	5.23	2.43	-
Rucklers Lane	0.108	0.14	-2.66	1.978
Bourne End	1.027	3.85	1.05	0.2794
Dacorum	480.075	3.476	0.676	45.469
Tring excluding Tring Park	23.672	2.04	-0.76	8.8948

Compared to Policy 73 of the Local Plan (2.8 hectares per 1000 people-derived from the NPFA standard), Dacorum currently has an undersupply of leisure space, a deficit of 45.469 hectares.

Hemel Hempstead has a small deficiency i.e. 6.02 hectares, while Berkhamsted has the largest shortfall, 16.8 hectares or 0.895 hectares per 1000 people. There are other deficiencies, for which surpluses elsewhere would be of little value as their travel distances would be too great. In some cases informal leisure spaces can relieve some of the deficit and this is examined in section 4.3 Quantity of open space in Settlements.

The large surplus in Tring is due to Tring Park. Without it, Tring would be deficient of 8.9 hectares of leisure space. Flaunden has a large surplus due

to the relative size of the recreation ground and Little Gaddesden and Ashridge has a large surplus due to the private sport facilities as part of Ashridge Management Centre.

4.3 Quantity of Open Space in Settlements

Settlement	Amount of Open Space	Amount per 1000
Hemel Hempstead	591.267	7.204
Berkhamsted	143.312	7.651
Tring	163.699	14.074
Bovingdon	14.685	3.185
Kings Langley	49.453	10.005
Markyate	8.040	2.899
Aldbury	6.255	9.695
Chipperfield	30.45	19.954
Flamstead	7.747	6.644
Flaunden	2.069	21.552
Wigginton	5.111	5.848
Great Gaddesden, Gaddesden Row, Bridens Camp Jockey End and Water End	9.782	20.128
Little Gaddesden and Ashridge	66.932	90.205
Potten End	10.164	7.569
Astrope, Long Marston, Puttenham. Wilstone	8.531	7.988
Rucklers Lane	4.724	6.341
Bourne End	1.027	3.846
Total	1123.498	8.135

4.4 Hemel Hempstead

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	8.215	0.100
Amenity Green Space	74.572	0.909
Children and Young People	10.861	0.132
Churchyards and Cemeteries	14.531	0.177
Green Corridors	6.189	0.075
Natural Green Space	133.206	1.623
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	34.072	0.415
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	72.661	0.885
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	130.769	1.593
Parks and gardens	106.191	1.294
Hemel Hempstead Total	591.267	7.204

Note: Population 82,075 (Census 2001)

Hemel Hempstead has a large provision of amenity green spaces and natural green space. Amenity greens are one of the key features of the New Town neighbourhood concept that Hemel Hempstead is based on. Amenity greens may provide opportunities to alleviate some of the deficit of leisure space in the town, depending on their size and scale. The amount of allotments is below the standard of 0.25 hectare per 1000 people recommended by The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG). The current provision of land for children and young people facilities (0.8 hectares per 1000 population) is below the standard set out in the current Local Plan.

4.5 Berkhamsted

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area by 1000 population
Allotments	14.14	0.755
Amenity Green Space	6.007	0.321
Children and Young People	2.556	0.136
Churchyard and Cemeteries	4.971	0.265
Green Corridors	8.815	0.471
Natural Green Space	14.218	0.759
Public Outdoor Sports Facilities	11.056	0.590
Private Outdoor Sports Facilities	16.165	0.863
School Outdoor Sports Facilities	59.469	3.175
Parks and Gardens	5.913	0.316
Berkhamsted Total	143.312	7.651

Note: Population 18,730 (Census 2001)

Please note that a breakdown of open space provision in Northchurch can be found in Appendix 15.

Although Berkhamsted is deficient in leisure space especially parks and gardens and public sports facilities, it does have high levels of school sport facilities and natural green spaces. The natural green spaces such as the Castle does provide some opportunity for informal leisure activity but more formal leisure space is required. There may be potential for some further use of school facilities through dual use arrangements within the area.

4.6 Tring

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area by 1000 population
Allotments	3.749	0.322
Amenity Green Space	9.611	0.826
Children and Young People	0.967	0.083
Churchyards and Cemeteries	3.371	0.290
Green Corridors	2.884	0.248
Natural Green Space	5.741	0.494
Public Outdoor Sports Facilities	6.166	0.530
Private Outdoor Sports Facilities	12.269	1.055
School Outdoor Sports Facilities	24.366	2.095
Parks and Gardens (not including Tring Park)	3.835	0.330
Tring Total	71.334	6.133
Tring Total including Tring Park	163.698	14.074

Note: Population 11,631 (Census 2001)

Tring has a smaller area of open space per 1000 population compared to Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted. It has a relatively large proportion of private sports clubs and schools. Like Hemel Hempstead, the provision of children and young people facilities in Tring is below the standard set in the Local Plan. Tring Park is the largest single open space highlighted in the Borough: it provides opportunities for informal countryside leisure space, and should be maintained for informal recreation.

4.7 Bovingdon

PPG17 Typology	Total Area	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	0.000	0.000
Amenity Greenspace	5.528	1.199
Children and young people	0.137	0.030
Churchyard and cemeteries	1.574	0.341
Green Corridors	0.000	0.000
Natural Greenspaces	1.090	0.236
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	1.080	0.234
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	5.138	1.114
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.138	0.030
Parks and gardens	0.000	0.000
Bovingdon Total	14.685	3.185

Note: Population 4,611 (Census 2001)

Despite a mix of different types of open space total provision in Bovingdon is a relatively small amount of open space. It is deficient of 6.626 hectares of leisure space. There are no allotments or parks and gardens in Bovingdon. The provision of children and young people facilities is below the minimum standard in the current Local Plan. New provision should be considered when opportunities arise.

4.8 Kings Langley

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	2.729	0.552
Amenity Green Space	4.013	0.818
Children and Young People	0.640	0.130
Churchyards and Cemeteries	1.286	0.244
Green Corridors	3.631	0.735
Natural Green Space	18.577	3.759
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	4.104	0.830
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.000	0.000
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	14.563	2.948
Parks and Gardens	0.000	0.000
Kings Langley Total	49.453	10.007

Note: Population 4,942(Census 2001)

The Dacorum part of Kings Langley has a mix of types of open space both formal and informal. It has more than 2.8ha per 1000 people of leisure space. However, it does not have any public outdoor sport facilities. Kings Langley has high provision of natural green spaces; these provide some opportunity for informal leisure activity.

4.9 Markyate

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	1.366	0.497
Amenity Green Space	2.187	0.796
Children and Young People	0.127	0.046
Churchyards and Cemeteries	0.347	0.126
Green Corridors	0.000	0.000
Natural Green space	0.279	0.102
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	2.304	0.838
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.000	0.000
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	1.430	0.520
Parks and Gardens	0.000	0.000
Markyate Total	8.040	2.926

Note: Population 2,748 (Census 2001)

Like Bovingdon, Markyate has a relatively low level of open space. There are no parks and gardens or public sport facilities in Markyate. Allotment provision is above the NSALG standard. Its rural setting allows access to countryside for informal leisure. Markyate is deficient of 2.495 hectares per 1000 people of leisure space. Opportunities for new future provision should be considered when opportunities arise.

4.10 Selected Small Villages

4.11 Aldbury

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	0.995	1.512
Amenity Green Space	1.523	2.315
Children and Young People	0.095	0.144
Churchyards and Cemeteries	0.787	1.196
Green Corridors	0.000	0.000
Natural Green Space	0.355	0.540
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.000	0.000
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.054	0.082
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.817	1.242
Parks and Gardens	1.629	2.476
Aldbury Total	6.255	9.506

Note: Population 658 (Census 2001)

4.12 Chipperfield

PPG17 Typology	Total Area	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	1.053	0.689
Amenity Greenspace	0.000	0.000
Children and young people	0.254	0.166
Churchyard and cemeteries	0.904	0.592
Green Corridors	0.000	0.000
Natural Greenspaces	22.860	14.961
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.000	0.000
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities (sports clubs)	4.727	3.094
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.692	0.453
Parks and gardens	0.000	0.000
Chipperfield Total	30.490	19.954

Note: Population 1,528 (Census 2001)

4.13 Flamstead

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	1.017	0.872
Amenity Green Space	2.333	2.001
Children and Young People	0.000	0.000
Churchyards and Cemeteries	1.430	1.226
Green Corridors	0.000	0.000
Natural Green Space	0.000	0.000
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.019	0.016
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.000	0.000
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.701	0.601
Parks and Gardens	2.247	1.927
Flamstead Total	7.747	6.644

Note: Population 1,166 (Census 2001)

4.14 Flaunden

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area by 1000 population
Allotments	0.000	0.000
Amenity Green Space	0.342	3.563
Children and Young People	0.061	0.635
Churchyards and Cemeteries	0.041	0.427
Green Corridors	0.000	0.000
Natural Green Space	0.000	0.000
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.000	0.000
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.000	0.000
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.000	0.000
Parks and Gardens	1.625	16.927
Flaunden Total	2.069	21.552

Note: Population 96 (Census 2001)

4.15 Great Gaddesden, Gaddesden Row, Bridens Camp Jockey End and Water End

PPG17 Typology	Total Area	Area by 1000 population
Allotments	2.390	4.918
Amenity Greenspace	0.524	1.078
Children and Young People	0.043	0.088
Churchyard and Cemeteries	0.893	1.837
Green Corridors	0.000	0.000
Natural Green Spaces	0.000	0.000
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	3.280	6.749
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	1.721	3.541
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.566	1.165
Parks and Gardens	0.365	0.751
Great Gaddesden, Gaddesden Row, Bridens Camp Jockey End and Water End Total	9.782	20.128

Note: Population 486 (Census 2001)

4.16 Little Gaddesden and Ashridge

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	0.000	0.000
Amenity Green Space	0.000	0.000
Children and Young People	0.000	0.000
Churchyards and Cemeteries	1.144	1.542
Green Corridors	0.000	0.000
Natural Green Space	2.413	3.252
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	60.543	81.594
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	2.480	3.342
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.352	0.474
Parks and Gardens	0.000	0.000
Little Gaddesden and Ashridge Total	66.932	90.205

Note: Population 742 (Census 2001)

4.17 Potten End

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	0.818	0.611
Amenity Green Space	2.033	1.519
Children and Young People	0.040	0.030
Churchyards and Cemeteries	0.218	0.163
Green Corridors	0.000	0.000
Natural Green Space	4.145	3.098
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	1.713	1.280
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.475	0.355
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.289	0.216
Parks and Gardens	0.433	0.324
Potten End Total	10.164	7.596

Note: Population 1338 (Census 2001)

4.18 Wigginton

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	0.556	0.636
Amenity Green Space	0.421	0.482
Children and Young People	0.000	0.000
Churchyards and Cemeteries	0.609	0.697
Green Corridors	0.000	0.000
Natural Green Space	0.000	0.000
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	1.926	2.204
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.000	0.000
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.829	0.949
Parks and Gardens	0.77	0.881
Wigginton Total	5.111	5.848

Note: Population 874 (Census 2001)

4.19 Astrope, Long Marston, Puttenham and Wilstone

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	0.571	0.535
Amenity Green Space	0.217	0.203
Children and Young People	0.000	0.000
Churchyards and Cemeteries	1.120	1.049
Green Corridors	0.000	0.000
Natural Green Space	0.276	0.258
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.000	0.000
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	2.588	2.423
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.762	0.713
Parks and Gardens	2.997	2.806
Astrope, Long Marston, Puttenham and Wilstone Total	8.531	7.988

Note: Population 1,068 (Census 2001)

4.20 Bourne End

PPG17 Open Space Typology	Total Area	Area per 1000 population
Allotments	0.000	0.000
Amenity Green Space	0.000	0.000
Children and Young People	0.000	0.000
Churchyards and Cemeteries	0.000	0.000
Green Corridors	0.000	0.000
Natural Green Space	0.000	0.000
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.000	0.000
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	1.027	3.846
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	0.000	0.000
Parks and Gardens	0.000	0.000
Bourne End Total	1.027	3.846

Note: Population 267 (Census 2001)

4.21 Rucklers Lane

PPG17 Typology	Total Area	Area by 1000 population
Allotments	0	0.000
Amenity Greenspace	0.249	0.334
Children and young people	0.108	0.145
Churchyard and cemeteries	0	0.000
Green Corridors	0	0.000
Natural Greenspaces	4.367	5.862
Public Outdoor Sport Facilities	0	0.000
Private Outdoor Sport Facilities	0	0.000
School Outdoor Sport Facilities	0	0.000
Parks and gardens	0	0.000
Rucklers Lane Total	4.724	6.341

Note: Population 745 (Census 2001)

Dacorum's rural villages have varying amounts of open space. They generally have good access to the countryside which, although not entirely accessible to the general public, may be a partial substitute for public open space.

Chipperfield is well provided for open space. The Common includes natural green space and a private sport facility. There is lack of public outdoor sport facilities in Aldbury, Flamstead and Flaunden, however this deficit is alleviated by amenity greens and a recreation ground in each village. Apart from Little Gaddesden, Ashridge and Flaunden the selected small villages have a high provision of allotments. The provision of facilities for children and young

people in the selected small villages is below the minimum standard as set out in the current Local Plan. There are no natural green spaces in Wigginton, though the nearby Tring Park can be said to make up for this deficit.

4.22 Dual Use of School Facilities

Dual use is the sharing of facilities by groups whom they were not originally intended. The Outdoor Sports Facilities report highlighted a number of school facilities within the Borough which are also used by sport clubs or available for hire. These are listed in table 4.1. In this study these pitches have been counted as school outdoor sport facilities, as this is their primary use. This adheres to the method set out in the Companion Guide to PPG17, it should be noted that they have multiple users.

Table 4.1: Schools with Dual Use Arrangements

Secondary Schools	
Ashlyns School, Berkhamsted	Extensive use of the schools outdoor facilities
Berkhamsted Collegiate School	Cricket pitch used by a local club
Adeyfield School, Hemel Hempstead	Football pitches used by local teams, netball courts used in holiday periods and on Saturdays
Astley Cooper School, Hemel Hempstead	Football pitch used for Sunday League football
Hemel Hempstead School,	Limited community use, football pitches used by clubs on Saturdays and Sundays
Longdean School, Hemel Hempstead	Extensive use, used by 14 football teams
Kings Langley School	Limited community use by one football team
Tring School	Some use, netball courts used for training by a team and football pitches
Middle and Primary Schools	
South Hill School, Hemel Hempstead	Community use available to one junior pitch and access to changing rooms.
Barncroft School, Hemel Hempstead	Community use available to one junior pitch and access to changing rooms. May close following the Review & Primary School Provision in Hemel Hempstead by the County Council.
Gade Valley School, Hemel Hempstead	Community use available to one senior, one junior pitch, and a rugby pitch
Lime Walk School, Hemel Hempstead	Community use available to one junior pitch
Holtsmere End School, Hemel Hempstead	Community use available to one junior pitch and one junior cricket pitch.
Micklem School, Hemel Hempstead	Community use available to one junior pitch
Greenway School, Berkhamsted	Community use available to one junior pitch
Bishop Wood School, Tring	Community use available to one junior pitch
St Bartholomew's School, Wiggington	Community use available to one junior pitch and changing rooms
Aldbury School	Community use available to one junior pitch
Kings Langley Primary School	Community use available to one junior pitch

The majority of dual use schools are located in Hemel Hempstead with 53% of dual use schools there. Dual use is encouraged in the current Local Plan as it can relieve local shortages of leisure space or open up an activity to wider participation.

4.23 Conclusions

Dacorum has a wide mix of open spaces. It has a high level of amenity greens and school outdoor sport facilities. However, it does have a deficit of 45.469 hectares of leisure space. Some of this deficit can be alleviated through dual use arrangements. With a deficit of leisure space in the three main towns of the Borough, this emphasises the importance of retaining the existing sites. Their loss should not be contemplated without replacement by larger high quality sites in appropriate locations. Markyate and Bovingdon both have a large deficit of open space: opportunities should be sort to provide more open space here and retain what is available. The small villages are relatively well provided: however, provision for children and young people should be increased in these locations where possible.

5.0 Distribution of Open Space

This chapter examines the distribution of open space across the borough, highlighting any areas of deficiency in supply. It considers hierarchical open spaces within the settlements and the distribution of children and young people facilities across the Borough. Map 1 illustrates all open spaces identified in this study.

Table 5.1: Total area of hierarchical open spaces

Hierarchical Space Type	Number of Sites	Total Area
Regional Park	1	92.364
Borough Park	5	148.179
Local Park	47	238.377

Based on the Dacorum Hierarchy of open spaces the open space assessment identified only one Regional Park, Tring Park. Five Borough parks were identified, of which four are located in Hemel Hempstead. There are 47 Local Parks distributed across the Borough. The broad distribution is shown in table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Distribution of hierarchical open spaces

Settlement	Local	Borough	Regional
Hemel Hempstead	32	4	0
Berkhamsted	5	0	0
Tring	3	0	1
Large Villages	3	0	0
Small Villages	4	1	0

5.1 Hemel Hempstead (Map2)

There no open spaces that are big enough to be considered as a Regional Park within Hemel Hempstead.

5.2 Hemel Hempstead Borough Parks

As a planned New Town, Hemel Hempstead generally has an adequate spread of borough park provision. Gadebridge Park, Bunkers Park, Sheethanger Common/Bury Wood and Boxmoor are each larger than 20 hectares and therefore of sufficient size to be considered as Borough Parks.

Boxmoor, an attractive semi-rural area, is divided by roads, the River Bulbourne and the Grand Union Canal. It contains two cricket grounds and is a venue for events. Large areas are used for grazing where access is restricted to footpaths. However, guidance on the open space hierarchy in London recognises the importance of areas such as Boxmoor, despite their lack of formal facilities, and allows their recognition as a Borough Park.

Boxmoor is managed by a charitable trust (see appendix 12) and includes common land extending outside town into Westbrook Hay.

Gadebridge Park, has a range of facilities such as a skate park, bowling and putting greens and serves as the venue for events. With its location close to the Town Centre, it is regarded as the 'Town Park' of Hemel Hempstead. The council is looking to enhance the park to obtain a Green Flag Award.

Bunkers Park is a relatively new 'country' park, situated on former farm land, on the edge of Hemel Hempstead. Despite not having formal facilities it is of sufficient importance to be designated a Borough Park. It has an important role in providing for informal leisure activities and as a natural habitat. The Hemel 2020 Vision seeks to extend the park to the east to introduce additional open space uses including sports pitches and to enhance the park as a destination for residents and visitors.

Sheethanger Common/Bury Wood, like Bunker Parks and Boxmoor lacks formal facilities but is of sufficient size and importance to be recognised as a Borough Park. It is widely used for informal leisure activities and has an important nature conservation and biodiversity role for the area.

Although much of the town's population can gain access to borough parks at the 1200m catchment level, the north eastern side of the town is deficient in terms of 'Borough Park' provision. This places greater importance on the Grovehill Playing Fields as the largest facility in this area. The adopted Maylands Business Park Master Plan recognises that there are not enough high quality open spaces and seeks to address this. There is a small area of deficiency in Apsley, but Long Deans Nature Reserve functions like an extension to Bunkers Park, if this were considered as part of Bunkers Park then this removes the deficiency in Apsley.

5.3 Hemel Hempstead Local Parks

At the local park level of 280 m catchment, several small areas emerge as deficient. They are:

- Apsley/Nash Mills: the southern part of Hemel Hempstead lack a local park. It is just outside the 1200m catchments of Boxmoor and Bunkers Park and about 400 metres from Long Dean and 500 metres from Rucklers Lane. Opportunities for new open spaces within the settlement boundary are limited due to the 'built up' nature of the area. Development of green space at Two Waters into a park would reduce some, of the deficiency in the area.
- North East and East Hemel Hempstead, the Maylands area is the furthest part of Hemel Hempstead from a Borough Park, it also has no local parks. It is a commercial/industrial area, but facilities should be provided for some recreation and a quality environment. Options for open space should be explored in the East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan and Maylands Masterplan. PPG 17 mentions the need to provide open space for employees. There are pockets of deficiency in Grovehill and Woodhall Farm that are just outside the 280 metre catchment of local parks. Within

Grovehill there are a number of amenity greens that would alleviate the deficiency. New open space as part of Local Plan housing proposal sites H18 Land at North East Hemel Hempstead and H41 Land South of Redbourn Road will also help reduce the demand on existing spaces but not remove the deficiency.

- Warners End/Chaulden – the north west corner of Hemel Hempstead is outside the catchment of both Borough Parks and Local Parks. However, there are a number of local parks close by, and there are a number of natural green spaces within the area to alleviate the deficiency.
- The central area of Hemel Hempstead is outside the 280 metre Local Park catchment. It is vital the Water Gardens are retained and enhanced, the riverside walk through the town is completed and new space provided in the Waterhouse Square scheme. The Hemel 2020 Vision seeks to develop an urban park within the river and canal corridors in the heart of the town.

5.4 Berkhamsted (Map 3)

None of the open space in Berkhamsted is large enough to qualify as a Regional or Borough Park, and Berkhamsted Common (map 1) is a significant distance to the north of the town. Most facilities in and around the town function at or below the local park level.

Only the central and northern area of Berkhamsted is within 280 metres of local parks. The central area is served by Canal Fields, Berkhamsted Castle (a Scheduled Ancient Monument with restricted public access) and Castle End Wood. These facilities have an important role in Berkhamsted and should be protected from development. Canal Fields has a number of different facilities including a playground and skateboard park, whereas Berkhamsted Castle and Castle End Wood are informal spaces. The area is also served by The Moor, but this is too small to qualify as a local park.

The south and east are deficient of local park sized facilities, however, Butts Meadow and Velvet Lawn recreation grounds are located within these areas. Both these recreation grounds are slightly smaller than local parks but alleviate the deficiency in these areas, and provide opportunities for formal leisure activities. In the west of Berkhamsted and Northchurch there are several amenity greens and small facilities which alleviate some of the deficit. Lagley Meadow in the west of Berkhamsted provides a playground and playing fields for formal recreation, but was too small to qualify as a local park.

A comparatively high percentage of Berkhamsted's open space is school playing fields, which are widely distributed. Due to the limited opportunities for new open spaces within Berkhamsted, the option of dual use should be considered further to reduce some of the deficiency. Currently dual use arrangements occur at Ashlyns School (South/East), Berkhamsted Collegiate (South/East), Greenway School (South) for the use of their outdoor sport pitches by clubs.

The Local Plan Proposal sites H37/L1/C1 at Shootersway Berkhamsted require a minimum of 3.9 ha of new leisure space for pitches and informal amenity purposes. A dual use arrangement of school playing pitches has

been suggested. New open space would, reduce the deficiency in the west of Berkhamsted.

The topography of Berkhamsted does not allow for easy access to the countryside, as many non-car users would experience a hill climb to reach open countryside, or a relatively long walk along the towpath.

5.5 Tring (Map 4)

Tring Park (Regional Park) is located to the south of Tring. It provides a large area for informal recreation. Like Berkhamsted there are no open spaces of borough park size. However open space is well distributed across the town. The west of the town is outside the 280 metre buffer. Current facilities on Miswell Lane only partially compensate for the lack of a local park in this area of Tring. This underlines the importance of leisure proposal site L4 which seeks the an extension of the existing leisure space and to safeguard it from alternative development. The extension would make the open space more usable, and large enough to qualify as a local park.

5.6 Bovingdon (Map 5)

Bovingdon is deficient in open space. However, the facilities in Bovingdon are distributed across the village. The larger facilities are located on the north east (playing fields) and south (football club, cricket club and amenity green) sides of the village. The central area has amenity greens and a children and young people's facility. Bovingdon Green is categorised as a local park due to its size and importance to the village.

Boxmoor Trust acquired the former Bovingdon Brickworks Quarry in 2000 to protect provide a nature conservation site on the edge of Bovingdon.

5.7 Kings Langley (Map 6)

The Dacorum side of Kings Langley (i.e. West of the Grand Union Canal) is reasonably served by open space, which is evenly spread across the village. The majority of the village is within 280 metres of a local park, apart from the central area. However, within the central area, there are a number of green spaces are located along with the Nap playground. A park (at Primose Hill, Three Rivers) is available, but is not easily accessible across the canal.

5.8 Markyate (Map 7)

Markyate has a shortage of open space. None of its open spaces qualify as a local park. The main facilities of Markyate are situated at the north (amenity green, football club, and cricket club) and the south (allotment, playground, and amenity green). The central area of Markyate has a few amenity areas.

5.9 Distribution of Facilities for Children and Young People (Map 8)

Map 8 illustrates the distribution of children and young people facilities across the borough. The map illustrates all children and young people facilities with a

280-metre circumference around them to illustrate their catchment. The areas that are deficient of children and young people facilities are:

- Green End, Hemel Hempstead
- Central Markyate
- Northchurch
- South East Berkhamsted,
- East Tring
- North Kings Langley
- South Flamstead

6.0 Open Land

6.1 Background

Open Land was first designated in the Dacorum Borough Local Plan (12th April 1995), in conformity initially with Policy 71 of the Structure Plan. The policy continued in the next Structure Plan (Policy 46).

Policy 46 sought to protect and manage “open spaces which are necessary and appropriate to the character or operation of the town”. The overall stock of open space would be maintained or increased, taking account of urban form and neighbourhood needs.

An open land strategy for each settlement was based on an appropriate combination of the following criteria:

- i) landscape features, such as open ridges, waterway corridors or belts of woodland;
- ii) urban form, as defined by neighbourhood structure, historic patterns of development or route corridors;
- iii) open space structure, such as green wedges, greenways or green “chains”;
- iv) the contribution of open space to the special character of specific areas, including conservation areas;
- v) open space standards, particularly in densely developed urban areas with lack of open space;
- vi) the accessibility of open spaces within towns;
- vii) the historic, wildlife and amenity value of the open spaces;
- viii) the uses to which the open spaces are or should be put, including sport and recreation.

Dacorum’s Open Land Strategy was drawn up in conformity with the above policy. Open land is one of the features of the Land Use Division in Towns and Large Villages (DBLP 1991-2011, Policy 9). The concept was developed through the Consultation and Deposit Draft versions of the previous local plan (adopted in 1995), and supplemented in Background Papers covering Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring (1992) and the Large Villages of Bovington and Kings Langley (1995). Following changes to the village boundary of Markyate, a strategy for the village was added to Policy 116 of the current local plan. The Leisure and Open Land Technical Report (2000) updated the strategy to reflect the small amount of open land which had been built on. The background papers and information are being updated and consolidated, and will be published separately.

From the outset the approach was strategic in nature. It related to contiguous open areas of more than one hectare, which made a significant contribution to the form and character of the settlement and the need for leisure space in terms of standards of provision and distribution.

The main elements of the strategy are as follows:

- to recognise and protect landscape features – open ridges, river valleys, woodland, dry valleys;
- to enhance local character and support a distinctive urban form – neighbourhood structure; green wedges, green chains; structure of environmental areas; contribution to areas of special character (conservation areas, listed buildings); and
- to provide for neighbourhood needs through leisure space.

Open Land areas that are included in the PPG17 open space typology are leisure space, school grounds/playing fields, woodland, nature conservation sites, allotments, churchyards, cemeteries, amenity land, walkways and the Grand Union Canal.

PPG17 (paragraph 11) states that “open space....facilities of high quality or of particular value to a local community should be recognised and given protection by local authorities through appropriate policies in plans. Areas of particular quality might include:

- small areas of open space in urban areas that provide an important local amenity and offer recreation and play opportunities;
- areas of open space that provide a community resource and can be used for informal or formal events; and
- areas of open space that particularly benefit wildlife and biodiversity”.

These types of areas are suggestions, and do not, but should, include the wider contribution to the urban landscape.

The Open Land identified on the Proposals Map only includes sites within towns and large villages. Leisure space or wildlife sites beyond the settlement boundaries are protected by Green Belt, Rural Area, and other policies in the current Local Plan.

Development on other open land (i.e. sites less than a hectare in size) is judged against its contribution to:

- leisure facilities
- townscape
- visual amenity (attractiveness)
- nature conservation
- general environment

The policy has been successfully applied, allowing, for example, school extensions, but ensuring their siting had no adverse effect on open parts of

the site. Similarly, significant amenity land has been protected from encroachment by gardens or other development.

Amenity land is a particular feature of the New Town neighbourhoods in Hemel Hempstead, and forms part of the town's structure. Development in Residential Areas (part of the Area Based Policies Supplementary Planning Guidance) identifies Residential Character Areas where smaller amenity spaces are important to overall design and environmental quality. In some areas the retention of amenity greens is supported; in others, limited loss to car parking or other uses may be acceptable.

The East of England Plan's emphasis on green infrastructure means that the approach to Open Land remains valid and should be retained.

6.2 Hemel Hempstead

As a New Town, Hemel Hempstead was planned with considerable amounts of open space. Boxmoor Estate and the Grand Union Canal Corridor are the main areas of open land in the south of the town.

The main features are the "string of sausages" on the west side of the Gade Valley and the line of open land on the ridge line on the east side of the valley from Belswains Playing Field to Keens Field and the start of the Nickey Line. Warners End Valley and Shrubhill Common are dry valleys that have been left open, the former being important for its sports pitches and the latter for its nature conservation interest.

Potential additions include: Hunting Gate Wood; structural woodland between Hawthorn Lane and Martindale Road; extensions to Warners End Wood; Trouvere Park; Brickmakers Lane allotments; dell at The Crofts; extensions to Longdeans School and Woodfield School; Hobletts Manor School; Martindale School; woodland belt west of Maylands Avenue between St Albans Road and Wood Lane End; woodland belt off Tewin Road; amenity space around flats at Berkeley Square/Cuffley Court, Bayford Close, Woodhall Farm; Datchet Close; amenity space adjoining Howe Grove;

The northern part of South Hill School could be deleted since permission has been granted for significant building.

6.3 Berkhamsted

Open land in Berkhamsted and Northchurch comprises school and church grounds, allotments, woodland and leisure space, with the Grand Union Canal providing a green corridor. The main areas are Canal Fields/The Moor; Butts Meadow Recreation Ground, allotments and Berkhamsted Collegiate School; and Sunnyside Allotments.

Potential additions include St Mary's Church grounds; Bridle Way; Victoria and Swing Gate Junior Schools; and St Peter's Church grounds (currently under Town Centre designation). The opportunity could be taken to include part of the Edgeworth House site nearest the canal as open land.

6.4 Tring

The main areas of open land are the swathe from Mortimer Hill allotments through the school grounds to Grove Road; St Peter's Church, Pond Close Open Space, Streamside Walk north to Icknield Way; Dundale; Dundale School; Memorial Garden and Mansion Drive; Bishop Wood School; and Miswell Lane open space including part of the grounds of Goldfield School.

The Open Space Study identifies the grounds of Frances de la Salle School as Outdoor Sport. This could be added to the Open Land category. Also part of the extensive school playing fields of Tring School and Grove School could be rounded off. The study also identified a small number of amenity greens some of which may be structurally significant.

6.5 Bovington

The main concentration is on the north-eastern edge around the church and school. Old Dean could be added, and perhaps the amenity space at Lancaster Drive.

6.6 Markyate

Markyate's open land is very limited and was identified most recently. There is no need for any change.

6.7 Kings Langley

The main complex comprises the cricket ground, Common and junior school, with subsidiary areas at The Nap and the churchyard. No changes are proposed.

7.0 Quality of Open Space

Research into open space planning highlights the importance that users place on the infrastructure, quality of facilities and condition of landscaping.

The study assessed whether 16 criteria were satisfactorily met: i.e. at local, borough and regional parks

- Good entrance / access points
- Good signage
- Equal access
- Sense of safety
- No evidence of dog fouling
- Appropriate provision of facilities
- Good and fair quality facilities
- Free of litter
- Clear of graffiti
- No evidence of vandalism
- Well maintained grounds
- Well connected to surrounding areas
- Conservation of natural features
- Information boards provided
- Provision of seats
- Management plan

Smaller sites are important, but due to their nature it would have been unrealistic to assess them individually in the same way as a park because the range of facilities they can provide is dependent on their size (and function) as well as their location.

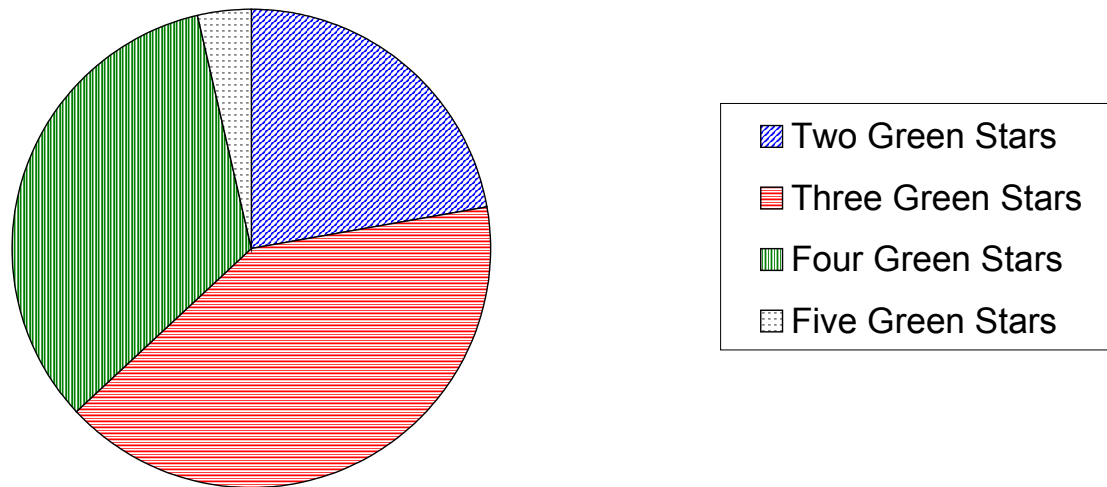
Each park was given a green star rating, depending on the number of points it received.

Table 7.1 Green Star Rating

Points	Stars
0-2	No Stars
3-5	One Green Star ☆
6-8	Two Green Stars ☆☆
9-11	Three Green Stars ☆☆☆
12-14	Four Green Stars ☆☆☆☆
15-16	Five Green Stars ☆☆☆☆☆

Table 7.2 Dacorum Star Ratings

Star Rating: Number of Stars	Number of open spaces
None	0
☆	0
☆☆	13
☆☆☆	20
☆☆☆☆	18
☆☆☆☆☆	2

Figure 7.1: Breakdown of Dacorum hierarchical open space star ratings**Table 7.3: Distribution of the star ratings**

	No stars	One Green Star ☆	Two Green Stars ☆☆	Three Green Stars ☆☆☆	Four Green Stars ☆☆☆☆	Five Green Stars ☆☆☆☆☆
Hemel Hempstead	0	0	9	15	12	0
Berkhamsted / Northchurch	0	0	1	0	3	1
Tring	0	0	0	2	2	0
Bovingdon	0	0	0	1	0	0
Markyate	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kings Langley	0	0	0	2	0	0
Small Villages	0	0	3	0	1	1

There is no correlation between the star rating and the settlement. The ratings are distributed across settlements, probably reflecting the different types of

open spaces with levels of facilities, the history of their provision and local approaches to management.

7.1 Assessment of Open Space Quality

A number of consistent themes have emerged across the sites:

Good points:

- Good entrances
- Clear of graffiti
- Well maintained
- No dog fouling
- Sense of safety

Bad points:

- Lack of information boards
- Lack of signage
- Lack of seats
- Lack of management plans

The Council is currently producing a Green Space Strategy which will produce a framework for management plans and set priorities for Dacorum's Open Space.

As expected, natural green space such as woodlands and commons typically scored lower than parks and gardens. Part of the criteria reflects the number of facilities available at an open space, and it may not always be appropriate for natural green spaces to have a number of facilities as they may detract from their form. For example, both Chipperfield Common and Castle End Wood both gained a two star rating, but are both clean, well maintained and free from vandalism.

The assessment did highlight three open spaces with lower than expected ratings, where improvements could be made:

- Reith Fields: evidence of graffiti, vandalism, litter and dog fouling, poor signage and fear for safety.
- Lawn Lane Open Space: fear for safety, poor signage, evidence of litter and graffiti.
- Durrants Hill Road Open Space: evidence of dog fouling and litter, poor signage, and not accessible to all.

7.2 Conclusion

Despite having a large number of open spaces, the quality of them is generally fairly good. Three quarters of parks have a star rating 3 or more. Most open spaces are clean and well maintained (though there are exceptions). There are areas for improvement, with better signage and information boards and management plans being required if the council is to achieve Green Flag status for a number its parks. The Green Space Strategy will provide a focus for the future management of open spaces, and will be supported by new management plans for Dacorum's open spaces.

8.0 Identifying Local Need

This section examines people's perceived need for particular types of Open Space in the Borough.

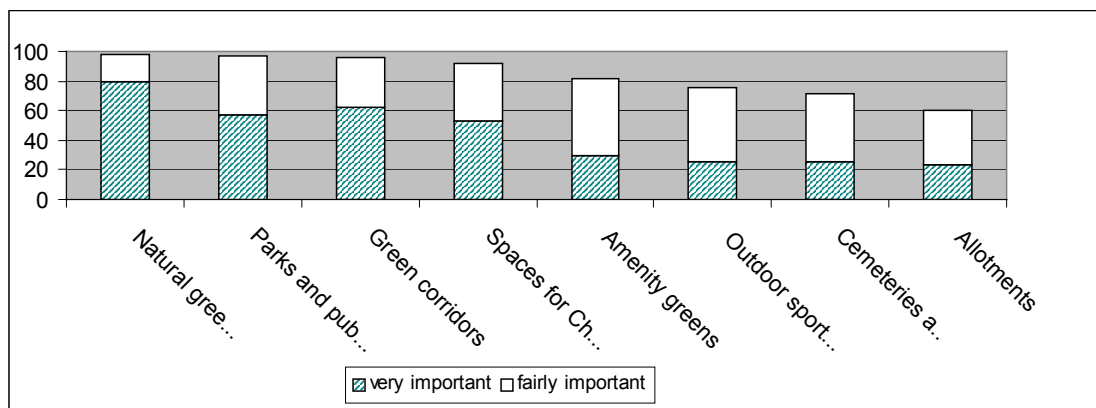
8.1 Importance

Question 2. How important are the following categories of open space to you?

Each open space category listed was deemed 'very or fairly important' by a majority (60%+) of respondents. 'Natural green spaces' were deemed the most important category of green space overall, referred to as 'very important' by 80% of the total sample, and as 'fairly important' by a further 17.5% (97.5% very/ fairly important).

Three other categories of open space were also deemed 'very important' by over 50% of all respondents, 'parks and public gardens' (57%), 'green corridors' (62.4%), and 'spaces for children and young people' (52.7%). These three categories were also rated as 'very or fairly important' by in excess of 90% of respondents. Of the categories of open space listed, 'allotments' achieved the lowest importance rating.

Figure 8.1: Importance of open spaces: (% response – all respondents)



'Natural green spaces' was deemed the most important category of green space by respondents from all 'areas' of the borough, with the percentage rating this as 'very important' only falling below 80% amongst those living in 'Hemel Hempstead' (74.8%).

'Mean' importance scores also confirm 'natural green space' as of the greatest importance, in the borough overall, and in the four areas of the borough. These are shown below. Please note that the lowest 'mean' score demonstrates highest importance.

Table 8.1: 'Mean' Importance Scores

(1 = very important : 2 = fairly important : 3 = not very important : 4 = not at all important)

		Q2.1: Parks and public gardens	Q2.2: Natural greenspaces	Q2.3: Green corridors	Q2.4: Outdoor sport facilities	Q2.5: Amenity greens	Q2.6: Spaces for children & young people	Q2.7: Allotments	Q2.8: Cemeteries and churchyards
		Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean
Area	Tring	1.56	1.20	1.38	2.23	2.11	1.71	2.24	2.06
	Berkhamsted	1.44	1.14	1.42	1.97	1.91	1.52	1.96	1.94
	Rural	1.66	1.19	1.37	1.99	1.94	1.60	2.14	2.15
	Hemel Hempstead	1.38	1.28	1.45	2.01	1.83	1.54	2.38	2.10
Total		1.47	1.23	1.42	2.03	1.91	1.57	2.24	2.08

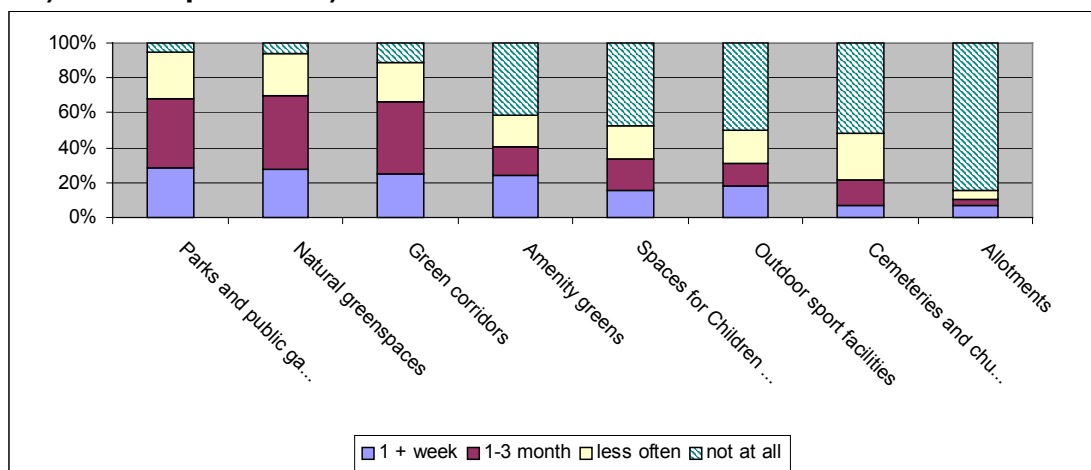
8.2 Frequency of visit

Question 3. Thinking about the last 12 months, how frequently, if at all, you have used or visited the following open spaces in Dacorum?

Three categories of open space had been used in the last year by the great majority (89%+) of all respondents, and had been used regularly (at least once a month) by two-thirds or more: 'parks & gardens' (94.6% 'used'/ 68.4% 'at least monthly'), 'natural green spaces' (94.3%'used'/ 69.4% 'at least monthly'), and 'green corridors' (89.1%'used'/ 66.5% 'at least monthly').

Other categories which had been used during the last 12 months (at least once) by a majority of all respondents were 'amenity greens' (58.7%), 'spaces for children and young people' (52.4%), and 'outdoor sport facilities' (50.1%). 'Cemeteries and churchyards' had been used by just under a half (48.6%) of respondents during the last year, whilst 'allotments' had been used by only 15.9%.

Figure 8.2: Usage of green space in last 12 months (% response (used at all) – all respondents)

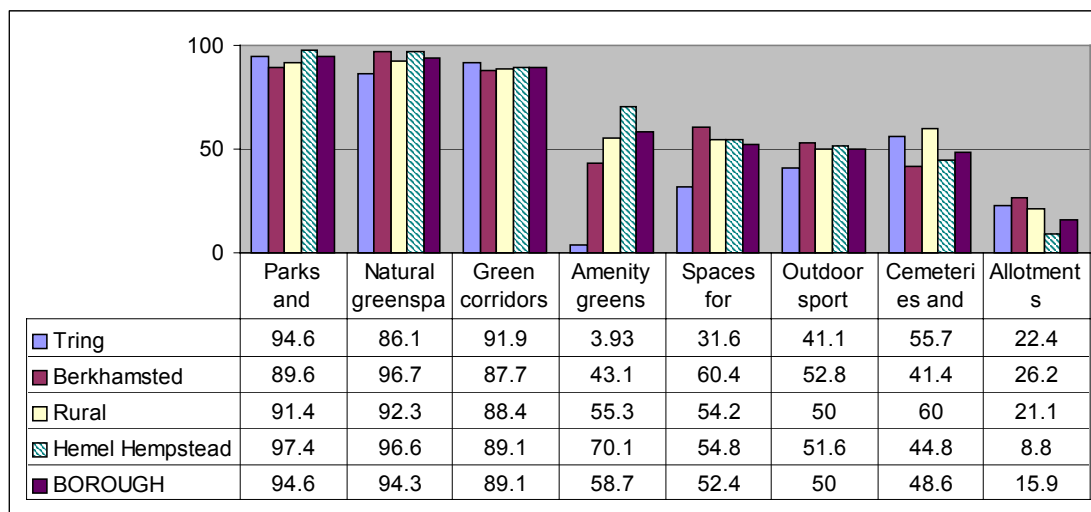


Whilst 'parks & gardens', 'natural green spaces', and 'green corridors' had been used in the last 12 months by the great majority of respondents from all areas of the borough, and 'allotments' was the least used category green space in all areas of the borough, there were variations in green space usage between areas. For example:

- The usage of 'amenity greens' was lower amongst those living in 'Tring' (39.3%) and 'Berkhamsted' (43.1%), and higher amongst those living in 'Hemel Hempstead' (70.1%).
- The usage of 'spaces for children and young people' was lower amongst those living in 'Tring' (31.6% cf. 52.4% overall).
- The usage of 'allotments; was higher amongst those living in 'Berkhamsted' (26.2%), and lower amongst those living in 'Hemel Hempstead' (8.8%).

This variation in usage by settlement is shown below.

Figure 8.3: Usage of green space in last 12 months (% response (used at all) – by area)



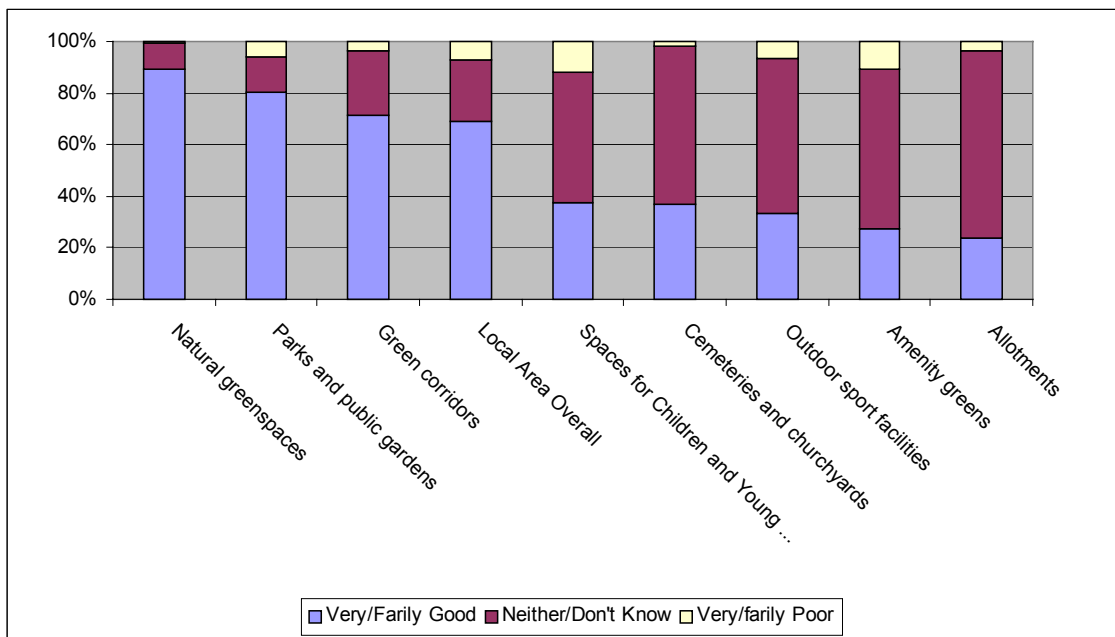
8.3 Quality

Question 4: How do you rate the quality of the following categories of open space in Dacorum?

'Natural green spaces' was the category of open space which was rated the highest for quality overall, with 45.3% rating this as 'very good' and a further 44.1% as 'fairly good' (89.4% 'good'). 'Parks and public gardens' (80.3%), 'green corridors' (71.6%), and 'open space in the local area – overall' (68.9%) were also rated as 'very or fairly good' by more than two-thirds of all respondents.

Only two categories of green space were rated as 'poor' by more than one-in-ten of all respondents, and these were 'spaces for children and young people' (11.8%), and 'amenity greens' (11%).

Figure 8.4: Quality of Open Space in Dacorum (% response – all respondents)

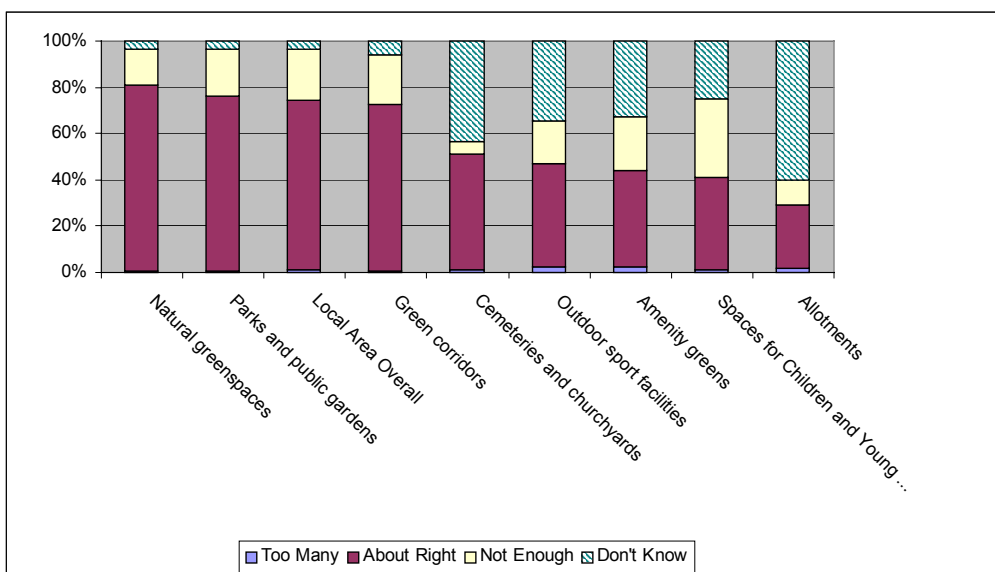


8.4 Quantity

Question 5. What is your view on the quantity of the following categories of open space in Dacorum?

One-in-three of all respondents (33.8%) was of the view that there were 'not enough' spaces for children and young people' in Dacorum. Other categories of open space about which one-in-five or more respondents felt there 'was not enough' were 'amenity greens' (23.5%), 'green corridors' (21.8%), 'green space in the local area overall' (21.5%), and 'parks and public gardens' (20%).

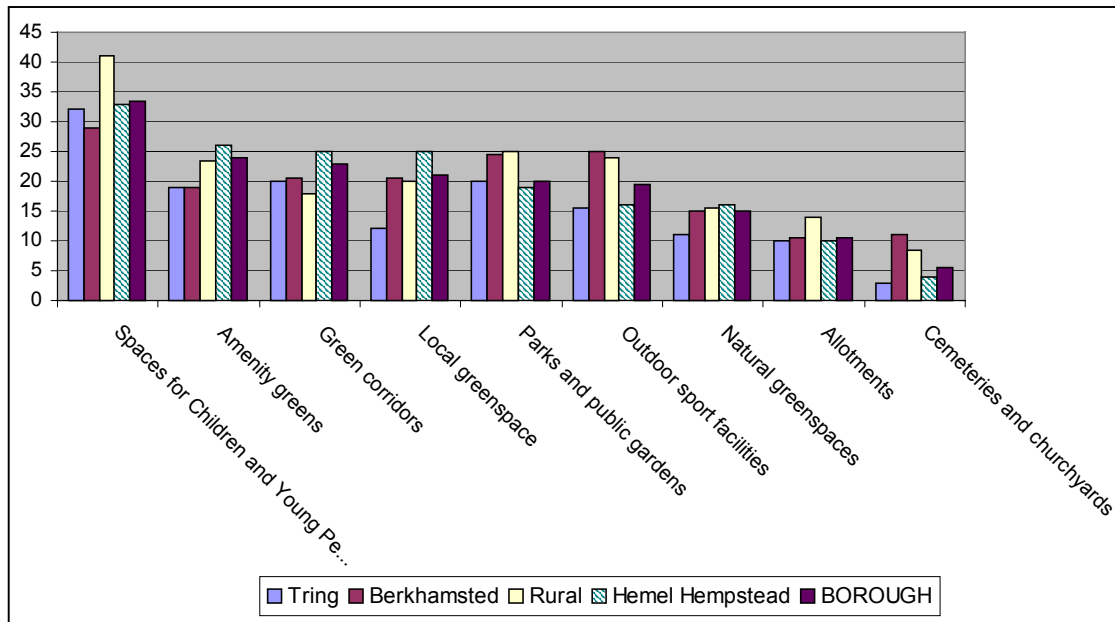
Figure 8.5: Quantity of Open Space in Dacorum (% response – all respondents)



In all areas of the borough, open space requirements were greatest for 'spaces for children and young people', with 'not enough' responses in respect of these ranging from 29.4% ('Berkhamsted') to 40.8% 'Rural' areas.

However, those living in 'Tring' were a little less likely than others to be of the view that there was 'not enough' 'open space overall in their local area' (12% compared with 21.5% overall).

Figure 8.6: Quantity of Open Space in Dacorum – Additional Requirements (% 'not enough' response – by area)



8.5 Importance

Question 6. How important are the following to you?

The overwhelming majority of respondents were of the view that 'the natural environment, heritage and habitats' in Dacorum were important:

- 99.1% were of the opinion that 'easy access to countryside in and around the towns and villages of Dacorum is important (74.9% 'very' + 24.2% 'fairly');
- 96.7% were of the opinion that 'the protection of all types of green spaces from future development' is important (77.6% 'very' + 19.1% 'fairly')
- 95.3% were of the opinion that 'the inclusion of wildlife areas and natural green spaces within their town/ village' is important (64.3% 'very' + 31% 'fairly'),

The above aspects achieved high importance ratings from respondents in all areas of the borough, as illustrated in the table below, where low 'mean' scores represents high importance.

Table 8.2: 'Mean Importance Ratings' – All respondents, by area*(1 = very important : 2 = fairly important : 3 = not very important : 4 = not at all important)*

		Q6.1: Easy access to countryside in & around the towns & villages of Dacorum	Q6.2: The inclusion of wildlife areas & natural green spaces within your town/village	Q6.3: The protecting of all types of green spaces from future development
		Mean	Mean	Mean
	Tring	1.15	1.39	1.22
	Berkhamsted	1.19	1.32	1.17
	Rural	1.25	1.37	1.35
	Hemel Hempstead	1.32	1.45	1.26
Total		1.26	1.40	1.26

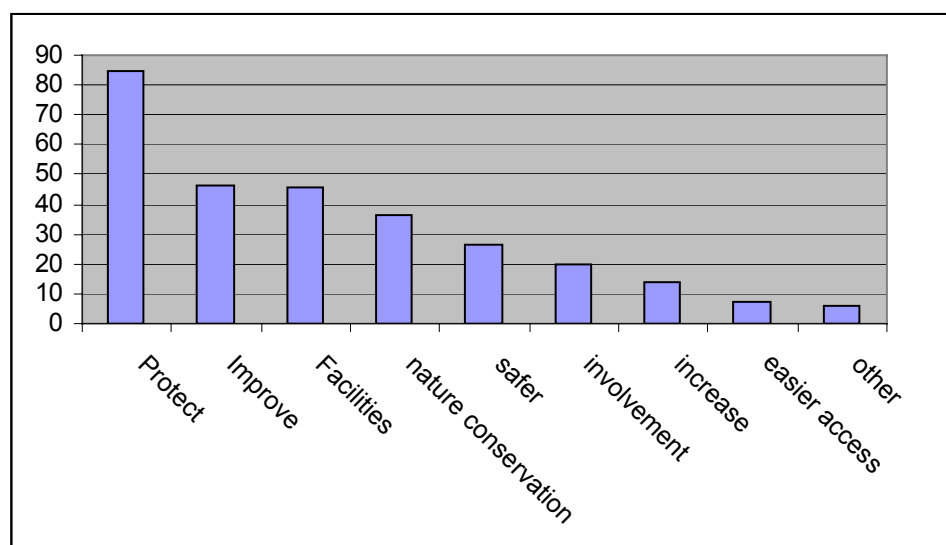
8.6 Priorities

Question 11. What do you think should be the main priorities for 'parks and open spaces' in Dacorum?

'Protecting open space from development' was the main priority for parks and open spaces in Dacorum amongst the sample overall, referred to by 84.6% when asked to refer to up to three priorities.

Only four other priorities were referred to by more than one-in-four of all respondents: 'improve the quality of open space' (46.2%), 'increase facilities' (45.5%), 'nature conservation' (36.2%), and 'make people feel safer when visiting open spaces' (26.6%).

Figure 8.7: Main Priorities for Parks & Open Spaces in Dacorum (% response – all respondents)



Whilst 'protecting open space from development' was the greatest priority of respondents from all areas of the body, those who lived in 'Rural' areas were more likely than others to be of the opinion that 'making people feel safer when visiting open spaces' was a main priority' (40.7% compared with 26.6% overall).

Table 8.3: Breakdown of priorities on settlement scale

		Area				Total
		Tring	Berkhamsted	Rural	Hemel Hempstead	Responses
		%	%	%	%	%
Q11: Main priorities for parks and open spaces	Protecting open space from development	83.3	94.6	84.6	81.8	84.6
	Improve the quality of open space	50.9	40.5	41.8	48.5	46.2
	Increase facilities	43.9	47.2	34.7	49.6	45.5
	Nature conservation	37.2	34.6	32.0	38.0	36.2
	Make people feel safer when visiting open spaces	24.4	18.8	40.7	24.1	26.6
	Increasing involvement of local residents in management	18.7	22.7	13.8	21.6	19.8
	Increase the amount of open space	12.2	15.2	20.1	11.0	13.6
	Make it easier for people to visit open spaces	8.2	8.7	10.8	5.6	7.5
	Some other priority	7.6	3.1	5.8	6.4	5.9
	Don't know			.8	.6	.4

8.7 Conclusions

The results have highlighted a wide range of interesting points. It is clear from the panel that 'Natural green spaces' are considered the most important category of open space, whilst allotments are considered the least important category. The importance of these open spaces is reflected in their use. 'Parks & gardens', 'natural green spaces', and 'green corridors' had been used more regularly by the respondents and 'allotments' was the least used category. It is however acknowledged that this varies between areas.

One-in-three of all respondents (33.8%) was of the view that there were 'not enough' spaces for children and young people' in Dacorum. This also ties in with the observation that 'protecting open space from development' was the main priority for parks and open spaces in Dacorum, referred to by 84.6% of respondents. The panel highlighted additional facilities and events, cleaner conditions and better management as the main factors that would encourage them to use open spaces more often. The production of further management plans to support the green space strategy should help to improve the open spaces.

9.0 Conclusions by PPG 17 Typology

9.1 Allotments

There are currently 36 allotments in 14 settlements within the Borough with a total area of 37.599ha. Allotment sites are distributed quite evenly across the settlements of the Borough (with exceptions).

The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) recommends a provision of 0.25 hectares per thousand population. Based on the adult population of 108,884 (Census 2001) this would give a provision of 27.771 hectares. If the NSALG standards were to be adopted then there would be an oversupply of 10.551 hectares. Despite allotments receiving the lowest 'importance' and 'usage' ratings of all categories of open space there is a demand for plots, with people on waiting lists in most areas. It is therefore sensible to provide allotments around the current rate which is 0.35 hectares per thousand. Having said this it is clear that the use of allotments varies from settlement to settlement.

Opportunities should be sought to enhance the quality of existing allotments, so that they can be utilised to the full. The Dacorum Borough Council owned sites (in Hemel Hempstead) were established at the start of the New Town development in the early 1950's. Over the course of time they have lost their definition and a number of plots have become unworkable, repair is required to bring them back into use.

Alternatively, allotments can be used to alleviate any other open space deficiency and/or contribute to biodiversity objectives.

9.2 Amenity Green Space

The study identified 272 amenity green spaces in Dacorum with a total area of 124.569ha: this equates to 0.902 hectares per thousand population. Hemel Hempstead has a particularly high number of amenity greens due to its New Town neighbourhood design. It is not recommended that a quantitative standard is taken forward. Instead a case by case approach would confirm the level of provision appropriate to the context, particularly for local play, contribution to biodiversity and local character and urban design. For example levels of overall open space needs, depending on where the site is located and the scale and type of the individual residential, employment or mixed use development. 51.9% of the respondents to the Citizens Panel Questionnaire felt that amenity greens were 'fairly important' with 29.7% considering them 'very important'. Furthermore, a majority of respondents (58.7% had used amenity green spaces at least once in the last year. one-in-five respondents felt there 'was not enough' 'amenity greens' (23.5%).

9.3 Children and Young People

Open space helps to meet children's play needs. It is widely acknowledged that the importance of children's play extends far beyond the activity itself and contributes directly towards child development through developing a wide range of physical, social and emotional skills and abilities. The key issues are the nature and location of play space, and the condition of play environments.

The study identified 53 children and young people facilities, which have a total area of 17.7 ha, i.e. 0.128 ha per thousand population. Over 90% of the Citizens' Panel rated this category as 'very or fairly important'. The use of this facility was generally lower in Tring and higher in Berkhamsted and Hemel Hempstead. One-in-three of all respondents (33.8%) was of the view that there were 'not enough' spaces in Dacorum. The requirements for this category was the greatest throughout the borough with 'not enough' responses in respect of these ranging from 29.4% ('Berkhamsted') to 40.8% 'Rural' areas.

The current standard for children's play is a minimum of 0.8 hectares per thousand (0.6 hectares for the over 5's and 0.2 for the under 5's). Current provision for all settlements appears to fall well below this level. However, children also play in larger spaces, and these are invariably more important allowing greater freedom (e.g. for ball games). This element of 'provision' has not been calculated. It is recommended that the standard is continued to be used as a starting point but would be applied flexibly given the variations in need in different areas of the borough.

Map 8 illustrates the distribution of the children and young people facilities across the Borough. The facilities are distributed across the settlements of the borough but with some notable areas of deficiency, i.e.

- Green End Hemel Hempstead
- Central Markyate
- South East Berkhamsted,
- East Tring
- North Kings Langley
- South Flamstead

9.4 Natural Green Space

The study recorded 64 natural green spaces equating to 205.114 hectares or 1.485 ha per thousand population. Sites are distributed quite evenly across the borough, many of them outside or just on the edge of settlements. 79.9% of the respondents to the Citizens' Panel March 2007 questionnaire believed that the quantity of green spaces is just right. It is clear from the responses that this is the most important category, with 80% referring to it as 'very important'. This type of open space is also used the most regularly with 94.3% having used this type 'at all'.

There is currently no standard for natural green spaces in Dacorum. Policy 103 of the local plan seeks to encourage management of sites of ecological

value when development is permitted on or adjacent to such sites, or require compensatory measures. Formal opportunities through the planning process or Wildlife and Countryside Act or other voluntary measures will be encouraged. The Local Biodiversity Action Plan provides the ecological context for this work. The Urban Nature Conservation Study (March 2006) states that “new sites should be enhanced or created for their wildlife value where appropriate, especially where consistent with Open Land. These can help to offset areas of deficiency or improve public accessibility.” It recommends use of Natural England’s standards (see below).

The ANGSt model is based on research which reviewed the available scientific literature and concluded that provision of natural green space in urban areas should be governed by a hierarchy of size and distance criteria which can be translated into a set of standards. The ANGSt model requires:

- that no person shall live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2ha in size;
- provision of at least 1ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 population;
- that there should be at least one accessible 20ha site within 2km from home;
- that there should be one accessible 100ha site within 5km; and
- that there should be one accessible 500ha site within 10km.

It is acknowledged that these may not be achievable in the short term particularly the larger site standards but they provide threshold aspirations for the long term particularly given the importance that the Citizens’ Panel placed on these and the levels of use. Other green spaces also need to be taken into account as they provide multi-functional usage.

There are no 500ha Wildlife Sites within Dacorum.

The Urban Nature Conservation Study shows that Tring, Berkhamsted and the western half of Hemel Hempstead are served by Tring Park and the Ashridge / Berkhamsted Common complex, representing at least one accessible 100ha site within 5km (map 1). A series of relatively unimproved pastures within the Aylesbury Vale provides a further large area for relatively accessible biodiversity but only via rights of way. Whilst providing a biodiversity zone, Prae Wood to the east of Hemel Hempstead has no rights of way at all, and is therefore not considered accessible. This reduces the availability of such sites to large areas of Hemel Hempstead and Kings Langley. The remaining areas of the Borough lack large biodiversity sites.

With respect to the standard of one accessible 20ha site within 2km from home, it is apparent from Urban Nature Conservation Study that the majority of Dacorum should have access to larger areas of recognised ecological value. Areas of deficiency are found south and west of Berkhamsted and Bovingdon, and in a large zone north of Hemel Hempstead towards and beyond Markyate.

The Urban Nature Conservation Study also considers smaller 10ha Wildlife Sites and a 1km biodiversity / access zone. This shows that Bovingdon, most

of the northern half of Hemel Hempstead and Markyate are impoverished. Tring is particularly well served, whilst Berkhamsted relates to Northchurch and Berkhamsted Commons, and Ashridge beyond. Hemel Hempstead generally is impoverished with respect to an appropriately large wildlife area for the size of the town, whilst Kings Langley has rather small, limited biodiversity resources close by.

9.5 Green Corridors

Green corridors are important in promoting environmentally sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling. Their provision can have a great value in linking housing, education, community and employment areas and different types of open space. Green corridors also have an important role in nature conservation and the biodiversity of Dacorum. The study highlighted 12 green corridors with a total area of 21.519 hectares.

71.6% of the Citizens' Panel judged the quality of Green Corridors as good and 71.7% of the Citizens' Panel concluded that the quantity is about right. Green Corridors are considered to be 'very important' by 62% of respondents and are used at least monthly by 66.5% of respondents.

Green corridors are crucial in promoting sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling in urban areas. This does however mean that setting a provision standard is not really appropriate. Instead it is proposed, following guidance from PPG17, that we promote the use of green corridors to link housing areas to cycle networks, town centres, places of employment and community facilities.

9.6 Outdoor Sport Facilities

Within the Borough there are a number of outdoor sport facilities, these are summarised in the following table:

Table 9.1 Outdoor Sport Facilities

	Number	Area (Hectare)	Amount per thousand population
Public	22	94.854	0.687
Private	48	141.165	1.022
School	76	238.449	1.727
Total	146	474.468	-

The current quantity standard for the provision of outdoor sport facilities is part of the leisure space standard, a minimum of 1.6 hectares per thousand of population which takes account of public and private sport provision. Currently this level of standard is met on average within the Borough, but a number of settlements fall below the standard. There are deficits of public and private sport facilities in Hemel Hempstead and Berkhamsted. There is a lack of public sport facilities in Bovingdon, Kings Langley, Aldbury, Chipperfield, Flamstead and Flaunden. 19 schools within the Borough offer opportunities for dual use of some of their facilities to private clubs. In areas of deficiency

opportunities for more dual use should be considered. Local Plan proposal sites at Shootersway Berkhamsted (L1) and Bunkers Park Hemel Hempstead (L2) provide opportunities for new sport facilities in their respective locations. The new pitches would help reduce deficiencies in these areas. 44% of respondents consider the quantity 'about right'.

Outdoor pitch sports facilities within the Borough should be of adequate quality and provide the range of facilities required to meet the needs of sports clubs. The Outdoor Sport Facilities Assessment Report (October 2006) provides a full assessment of the distribution, type and quality of sport facilities within Dacorum.

The aim of the Outdoor Sport Facilities Assessment Strategy (October 2006) is as follows:

'By 2015 Dacorum will have an appropriate distribution and range of high quality outdoor sports facility sites with associated ancillary facilities, which will provide opportunities for participation from all sections of the community.'

The aim will be worked towards by the implementation of the following objectives:

1. Provide usable, accessible and sustainable outdoor sports facilities and ancillary facilities within the Borough.
2. Seek to ensure that this provision is of an appropriate distribution, quantity and quality.
3. Rectify identified inadequacies and meet identified shortfall as outlined in the Assessment Report through improvements to the current pitch stock and ancillary facilities.
4. Encourage, support and develop partnerships with local schools, which do not have formal community use arrangements to develop structured use of outdoor sports facilities.
5. Proactive use of planning powers to secure appropriate developer contributions for new or enhanced facilities.
6. Work in tandem with the parish councils and voluntary sector organisations/clubs, with regards to securing and developing pitch and other outdoor sports provision for the use of sport and recreation.
7. Ensure that existing and future provision complies with the Disabled Discrimination Act legislation and is fully accessible for all residents (including juniors and females).

9.7 Parks and Gardens

The study highlighted 24 parks and gardens with total area of 196.990 hectares, equating to 1.426 ha per thousand population. Chapter 5 considers

the location of hierarchical open spaces (i.e. local, borough and regional parks).

75.8% of the respondents to the Citizens' Panel Questionnaire March 2007) stated that the quantity of parks was about right. 63.2% of respondents thought the quality of parks and gardens was fairly good. Parks and Gardens were considered 'very important' by 57% of respondents with 28% using them on a weekly basis.

The current minimum standard for parks is part of the 2.8 hectares leisure space standard. Table 4.2 illustrates the settlements that are deficient in leisure space.

The quality of parks is reasonable, but opportunities to improve the amount of facilities should be considered. Management plans are required to help the council to reach the aim of Green Flag Awards. The Green Space Strategy will be supported by a number of management plans for the open spaces, and aims to achieve Green Flag status for Gadebridge Park. The strategy will seek to improve the range and condition of facilities within parks should be developed to taking into account:

- the unique character of these parks and the potential to incorporate further facilities;
- whether there is a deficiency in the provision of open space in the area;
- the proximity of other parks which may have an oversupply of certain facilities;
- local social conditions.

9.8 Cemeteries and Churchyards

Many historic churchyards provide important places for quiet contemplation, especially in busy urban areas and often support biodiversity and interesting geological features.

As churchyards usually only exist where there is a church, the only form of provision standard which might be required is a qualitative one. Every individual cemetery has a finite capacity and therefore there is a demand for more space. Accessibility, so that relatives can visit, is important.

The study identified 36 cemeteries and churchyards, with a land area of 34.221 ha. 49.6% of respondents to the Citizens' Panel questionnaire thought the quantity of churchyards and cemeteries was about right. 48% of respondents felt that these were 'fairly important' with 25.9% considering these to be 'very important', It is invariably impossible to extend churchyards because of surrounding development, but sometimes 'extensions' are possible for example in Markyate and Potten End. There is no crematorium in the Borough.

While cemeteries and churchyards have a valuable amenity purpose, their main function is as a place of burial. Therefore they are not included in the Local Provision Standards.

Sufficient land is currently safeguarded for burials, for example Local Plan Proposal Site C6 8.5 hectares at Woodwells Cemetery. A 0.28ha extension is proposed of the Markyate Cemetery as part of the Manor Farm development.

9.9 Open Space Standards

Standards of provision should be informed by both the assessment of the current quantity, quality, and accessibility of existing open and the established needs and aspirations of the community.

The purpose of these standards is to provide for adequate levels of provision for each type of open space within the Borough based upon existing needs and the future needs of the Borough up to 2021, and beyond.

Consequently a set of locally based open space standards have been recommended based upon the findings of the assessment of local need and open space provision within the Borough, and taking account the approach to provision in successive local plans. They are summarised in Table 9.2. To a large degree they follow well established and accepted standards of provision. In the future they provide an appropriate base by which to plan new provision in existing area of deficiency or large new developments.

Table:9.2: Recommended Open Space Standards

Open Space Type	Quantity Standard	Area required to meet needs up to 2021?	Accessibility Standard	Quality Standard/Aspiration
Allotments	0.35ha of allotment land per 1,000 people	N/a	<p>There are no definitive national or local standard for the accessibility of allotments.</p> <p>Recommended: All residents with the towns should be within 1km of an allotment.</p>	<p>There are no definitive national or local standard for the quality of allotments.</p> <p>Allotment sites should be of adequate quality and support the needs of the local community. Opportunities should be sought to bring unusable plots back into use.</p>
Natural Green Space	1ha per 1,000 population for local nature reserves (Taken from Policy 102, Dacorum Local Plan 1991 –2011, and recommended by English Nature)	N/a	<p>Aim to meet Angst standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ that no person shall live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2ha in size ▪ that there should be at least one accessible 20ha site 	<p>Areas of natural and semi-natural green space should be of adequate quality and support local biodiversity. They should have appropriate facilities to their location.</p>

				<p>within 2km from home</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ that there should be one accessible 100ha site within 5km ▪ that there should be one accessible 500ha site within 10km. 	
Public Parks	See leisure space	See leisure space	See leisure space	<p>All residents within the towns have access to a local park within 400 metres of their home, a Borough Park within 1.2 kilometres, and a Regional Park within 3.2 kilometres².</p>	Public parks within the borough should meet the Green Flag 'good' quality standard.
Leisure space (Adult/youth play, public and private fields, pitches, courts, greens and miscellaneous facilities such as ski slopes, athletics tracks, and pitch and putt courses.)	2.8ha of leisure space per 1,000 people	Depending on growth options. See chapter 11	Depending on the type of leisure space		

Playing pitches	See leisure space		All residents should be within 1200 metres ¹	Outdoor sport facilities should be of adequate quality and provide a range of facilities required to meet the needs of sport clubs.
Children and young people	For the over 5s minimum of 0.6 hectares per 1000 population. For the under 5s minimum of 0.2 hectares per 1000 population	See leisure space	All residents within the Borough should have access to areas of formal and informal play provision for children and teenagers within 400 metres of home if living in the towns or large villages (This should equate to a Local Area for Play within 100 metres and a Local Equipped Area for Play within 400 metres). Or 800 metres if living outside these areas.	Children and young people provision should be of adequate quality and provide a range of facilities that are relevant to the size of the facility. The guidelines set out within the NPFA six-acre standard (2001) should be used to assess the quality and range of provision.

No standard is recommended for amenity greens, churchyards and cemeteries, and green corridors.

¹ Based on Paragraph 3.23 of The six acre standard NPFA 2001

² Based on walking distance

9.10 Carrying Capacity

Whilst the maps show the catchments of open space, it has not been assessed how many people use the sites and whether the carrying capacity has been reached. The main factors affecting this will be the location of the site and the density of the housing that it serves, i.e. the denser the housing, the higher the population, and therefore the more potential users there will be. If a site is reaching its carrying capacity then it may be damaged (both in terms of its infrastructure and its ecological interest) and people's enjoyment of it will be diminished. This issue will be particularly important in planning new spaces in town centres or in the main business area, and is assumed to be of more concern where there are clear deficiencies of locally accessible open space.

Consideration should be given to practical measures, which could be employed to extend the present catchments. Such measures could include creating more park gates or establishing clearly sign-posted routes to parks to avoid busy roads. The quality of facilities and condition of open spaces should also be taken into account when prioritising investment and information collected on non-public spaces within areas of deficiency should be interrogated to assess whether they could play a role in meeting deficiencies. In areas short of public parks and where there are limited opportunities to increase supply either by the creation of new spaces, improving other types of public open spaces, or by increasing public access to private spaces, the only way of addressing deficiency will be to ensure that the potential of existing spaces is fully realised where appropriate.

10.0 Conclusions by settlement

This chapter summary of open space within the settlements of Dacorum. It draws conclusions and discusses future provision.

10.1 Hemel Hempstead

Hemel Hempstead has a variety of open spaces with a total area of 591.261: this equates to 7.204 ha per 1000 population. The town is currently deficient of 6.02 hectares of leisure space when compared to the 2.8 hectares per thousand people standard in the Local Plan.

There are no open spaces that are big enough to be considered as a Regional Park within Hemel Hempstead. Gadebridge Park, Bunkers Park, Sheethanger Common/Bury wood and Boxmoor are of sufficient size to be considered as Borough Parks.

North East Hemel Hempstead is deficient of a Borough Park, the largest facility in the area is the Grovehill Playing Fields but it is not large enough to qualify as a Borough Park. The adopted Maylands Business Park Master Plan recognises that there are not enough high quality open spaces and seeks to address this. There is also a small area of deficiency in Apsley, but Long Deans functions like an extension to Bunkers Park: if this was considered as part of Bunkers Park then this removes the deficiency in Apsley.

Hemel Hempstead generally has an adequate spread of local park provision. At the 280 metre catchment, several areas emerge as deficient,

- Apsley/Nash Mills,
- North East and East Hemel Hempstead. The Maylands business area is furthest from a Borough Park, and has no local parks. Options for open space can be explored in the East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan. Pockets of deficiency in Grovehill and Woodhall Farm partly offset by existing amenity greens and new open space as part of Local Plan housing proposal sites H18 Land at North East Hemel Hempstead and H41 Land South of Redbourn Road will help.
- Warners End/Chaulden. The north west corner of Hemel Hempstead is outside the catchment of both Borough Parks and Local Parks. However, there are a number of green spaces within the area to alleviate the deficiency.
- The central area of Hemel Hempstead.

Hemel Hempstead has a large provision of amenity green spaces and natural green space. Amenity greens are one of the key features of the New Town Neighbourhood concept that much of Hemel Hempstead is based on. Because the larger amenity greens may provide opportunities to alleviate some of the leisure deficiency have been specifically assessed (See Table 9.1).

Table 10.1: Amenity Space to Park Analysis

Site Name	Analysis	Potential to be converted to leisure space
North of Caravan Park, Boundary Way	A potential site for leisure space in a deficient area, but the site is part of the Maylands Area subject to the Maylands Business Park Master Plan. The draft Master Plan proposes a green energy centre for the site.	Yes, but unlikely, due to Maylands Master Plan
Caravan Site, Buncefield Lane	Green space in caravan park, not appropriate for public access	No
Rear of Berkley Square, Cuffley Court, Bayford Close	Some potential, especially for young people facility, but it would not be appropriate for a sports facility due to its shape and character. Would only give a small facility.	Yes, but only a small gain.
Lawn Lane Open Space and Durrants Hill Road Open Space	The two sites have been selected in the Hemel Hempstead 2020 Vision to create a town park.	Site already a leisure space but could be extended and developed further.
Jocketts Road Open Space	Has potential to be developed, to support the near by adventure playground	Yes
Woodhall Lane Open Space	The site is not located in an area deficiency.	No

The development of Lawn Lane and Durrants Hill, which are highlighted in the Hemel 2020 vision into a town park, would provide a facility of 7.4 hectares.

Both the areas of Cupid Green and Green End were identified as being deficient of children and young people facilities.

The amount of allotments in Hemel Hempstead is below the 0.25 hectare per thousand people recommend by The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG). However, the Council's priority is to improve the quality of the current sites, including repairing unusable plots, prior to any new sites being provided. The current provision of children and young people facilities (0.8 hectares per 1000 population) is below the standard as set out in the current Local Plan.

The Proposed Changes to the East of England Plan (March 2007) proposes 12,000 additional dwellings should be accommodated within Hemel Hempstead and possibly 18,000 by 2031. Of these 5,700 homes may have to be provided in the Green Belt. This is discussed in chapter 11 in more detail.

The need for new housing could place pressure on the release of open spaces for development. However, spaces should not be lost unless there is surplus supply or an existing space is replaced with a better quality, accessible open space. New development within the settlement will increase the demand on existing spaces and, consideration may need to be given to the carrying capacity of some existing spaces.

New open space will need to be provided if Hemel Hempstead grows, commensurate with the standards recommended in Table 9.2. In particular, the Core Strategies Supplementary Issues and Options Paper Growth at Hemel Hempstead (November 2006) identified a number of potential locations for the growth of the town. Options 1 and 5 are on open space, which would need to be replaced. Potential sites 6,7,10,11,12a, 12b and 13 would all be located in areas that are outside of the catchment of borough and local parks.

The study recommends the following areas as extensions to Open Land designations:

Hunting Gate Wood; structural woodland between Hawthorn Lane and Martindale Road; extensions to Warners End Wood; Trouvere Park; Brickmakers Lane allotments; dell at The Crofts; extensions to Longdeans School and Woodfield School; Hobletts Manor School; Martindale School; woodland belt west of Maylands Avenue between St Albans Road and Wood Lane End; woodland belt off Tewin Road; amenity space around flats at Berkeley Square/Cuffley Court, Bayford Close, Woodhall Farm; Datchet Close; amenity space adjoining Howe Grove.

10.2 Berkhamsted

Berkhamsted has a range of open spaces with a total area of 143.533 ha which equates to 7.663 ha per 1000 population. It is deficient of 16.75 hectares of leisure space when compared to the 2.8 hectares per thousand people standard in the Local Plan.

Although Berkhamsted is deficient of leisure space especially parks and gardens and public sport facilities, it does however, have a high level of school sport facilities and natural green space. The natural green space

facilities provide some opportunity for informal leisure activity but this should not be converted into formal leisure space as a balance of formal and informal is required. There may be potential for some further use of school facilities through dual use arrangements within the area. Access to countryside open space is constrained by the topography.

None of the open space in Berkhamsted is large enough to qualify as a Regional or Borough Park. Most facilities function at or below the local park level.

Only the central and northern area of Berkhamsted is within 280metres of local parks. The central area is served by Canal Fields, Berkhamsted Castle and Castle End Wood. These facilities have an important role in Berkhamsted and should be protected from development. Canal Fields has a number of different facilities including a playground and skateboard park, whereas Berkhamsted Castle and Castle End Wood are informal leisure spaces. The area is also served by The Moor, but this is too small to qualify as a local park.

The south and east are deficient of local park sized facilities, however, Butts Meadow and Velvet Lawn recreation grounds are located within these area. Both these recreation grounds are slightly smaller than local parks but alleviate the deficiency in these areas, and provide opportunities for formal leisure activities. In the west of Berkhamsted and Northchurch there are several amenity greens and small facilities which alleviate some of the deficit. Lagley Meadow in the west of Berkhamsted provides a playground and playing fields for formal recreation, but was too small to qualify as a local park.

Due to the limited opportunities for new open spaces within Berkhamsted, the option of dual use arrangements with schools should be considered further to reduce some of the deficiency. Currently dual use arrangements occur at Ashlyns School (South/East), Berkhamsted Collegiate (South/East), Greenway School (South) for the use of their outdoor sport pitches by clubs.

Existing open space should not be considered for development due to the current deficiency in Berkhamsted.

Potential additions to designated Open Land include St Mary's Church grounds; Bridle Way; Victoria and Swing Gate Junior Schools; and St Peter's Church grounds (currently under Town Centre designation). The opportunity could be taken to include part of the Edgeworth House site nearest the canal as Open Land.

10.3 Tring

Tring (including Tring Park) has a number of open spaces with a total area of 163.698 hectares: this equates to 14.074 ha per 1000 population. Excluding Tring Park, the total is 71.334 ha (i.e. 6.133 ha per 1000 population) and results in a deficiency of 8.895 ha of leisure space.

A relatively large proportion of the open space in Tring is private sports clubs and schools. Like Hemel Hempstead, the provision of children and young people facilities in Tring is below the standard set in the Local Plan.

Tring Park is the only regional park in the Borough, and is located to the south of the town. It provides a large area for informal recreation. Like Berkhamsted, no open spaces qualify as borough parks in Tring. However open space is distributed across the town. The west of the town is outside the 280 metre buffer. Facilities on Miswell Lane compensate to some degree for the lack of a local park in this area of Tring, and emphasise the importance of leisure proposal site L4 which seeks the an extension of the existing leisure space and should be safeguarded from alternative development. The extension, enhance the usable space and make it large enough to qualify as a local park.

The grounds of Frances de la Salle School is recommended as an addition to the open land designation.

10.4 Bovingdon

The open space of Bovingdon has a total area of 14.615 hectares: this equates to 3.170 ha per 1000 population. Bovingdon is deficient of 6.63 hectares of leisure space.

There are no allotments or parks and gardens in Bovingdon. The provision of children and young people facilities is below the minimum standard in the current Local Plan. New provision should be considered when opportunities arise, and developer contributions could be sought to fund new provision.

Old Dean and the amenity space at Lancaster Drive are recommended as potential additions to the Open Land designation.

10.5 Kings Langley

The total area of open spaces in Kings Langley is 49.453 hectares: this equates to 10.007 ha per 1000 population. It is deficient of 8.48 hectares of leisure space and has no public sport facilities. However, it has a relatively high provision of natural green spaces, these facilities provide some opportunity for informal leisure activity.

10.6 Markyate

The open space of Markyate has a total area of 8.040 ha: this equates to 2.926 ha per 1000 population. It is deficient of 5.26 hectares of leisure space.

None of Markyate's open spaces qualify as a Local Park. The main facilities of Markyate are situated at the north (amenity green, Football Club, and Cricket Club) and the south (allotment, playground, and amenity green).

Like Bovingdon, Markyate has a relatively low level of public open space. Despite a mix of types they are relatively small compared to the population.

There are no parks and gardens or public sport facilities in Markyate. The amount of allotments is above the NSALG standard. Its rural setting allows access to countryside for informal leisure. Opportunities for new future provision should be considered when opportunities and small open space is to be provided as part of the Manor Farm development. However, it will only make a small difference to the deficiency of open space in the village.

10.7 Other settlements

Dacorum villages are quite well provided for in terms of the amount of open space. Rural wards tend have good access to the countryside which, is a partial substitute for public open space.

Chipperfield is well provided: the Common includes natural green space and a private sport facility. There is lack of public outdoor sport facilities in Aldbury, Flamstead and Flaunden, although this is alleviated by amenity greens and a recreation ground in each village. Apart from Little Gaddesden and Flaunden the selected small villages have a high provision of allotments. The provision of children and young people facilities in the selected small villages is below the minimum standard as set out in the current Local Plan: new facilities should be considered if any new developments come forward in these areas.

11.0 Recommendations

Dacorum has a diverse range of open space. Spaces vary greatly in size, scale and character and collectively have an important role in providing for formal and informal activity and nature conservation.

The Urban Nature Conservation Study states that ecological networks and processes that exist at the broad scale are important in helping sustain the habitats and wildlife within the urban areas, and are also important in providing additional resources that can be assessed by local communities.

Within these spaces, a balance needs to be reached, between providing increased public access, and providing areas of increased ecological diversity, where public access should be controlled or restricted. Factors to be considered when deciding the appropriate balance include the size of space, location (i.e. if it is within area rich or deprived of open space), and the value and importance of the ecological habitat to be protected. Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves and Wildlife Sites should be protected from adverse development appropriate to their status.

The East of England Plan's emphasis on green infrastructure encourages support for open land provision in the main settlements. This study recommends potential additions to the open land designation: they can be delineated in the Site Allocations DPD.

The Urban Nature Conservation Study recommends the protection and enhancement of links to the open countryside and recognised wildlife sites. This approach is supported as it provides opportunities for informal activities.

The study identifies a number of areas deficient of a local, borough, regional park. Existing spaces within these areas should be protected from development, and new opportunities for open space be sought.

The areas where dedicated children's play areas are not provided are mainly confined to certain villages. In order to ameliorate these deficiencies, it is recommended that opportunities for both formal children's play should be increased.

As part of the quality analysis a few sites scored lower than expected. Opportunities should be sought to improve the quality of these open spaces. Management Plans could act as catalyst for the improvements, and developer contributions sought

Furthermore, if a proposed development is located in an area deficient in local park provision, it will be necessary for additional land to be brought into local park use. This will require the developer to make a contribution towards the provision of a local park, either by incorporating it within the development or contributing to off-site provision.

If the proposed development is not located within an area which is deficient in either quantity or access to local park provision, then consideration will be given to quality issues. If appropriate, therefore, the developer will be required to make a contribution towards the enhancement of the quality of Public Park provision, e.g. the range of facilities and their condition.

Deficiencies in open space provision should be addressed through specific improvements to existing spaces within the areas affected where possible, or through establishing new open spaces where opportunities arise as a result of new housing development. Existing Council land holdings could potentially be used to fulfil local needs particularly where opportunities are linked to other initiatives (i.e. Schools re-organisation).

The Urban Nature Conservation study seeks new sites for wildlife where appropriate, especially where consistent with Open Land designations. These can help offset areas of deficiency or improve public accessibility.

The settlements with the largest relative deficits of open space are Berkhamsted, Bovington and Markyate. Where possible opportunities should be sought to increase the amount of formal and informal open space in these settlements.

Table 9.2 illustrates the recommended quantity and quality standards to be carried forward in the Local Development Framework. These standards provide a target for future provision, and further information for Section 106 negotiations.

The study recommends that sites identified in this audit should be protected due to their recreational, visual, strategic or wildlife value. They should only be lost where very special circumstances can be demonstrated, they are not in a deficient area, and a contribution should be made to allow for improvement to neighbouring facilities or the creation of a new facility nearby.

Future leisure space requirement

Using two different population study scenarios the study considers future leisure space requirements. Scenario 1 is based on Office of National Statistics 2004 Based Population Projections; published by Hertfordshire County Council on 27 September 2007 they are trend-based projections, which take no account of future local or national policies and strategies.

Scenario 2 is based on the EERA⁴ Chelmer model Population Projections, published by Hertfordshire County Council 24 January 2007. Commissioned by EERA to inform its response to the Regional Spatial Strategy. They are 2001-based and comprise trend-based and policy-based projections of population, households and dwellings, produced using the Chelmer method. This model takes account of the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the East of England Plan. As a result there could be 10,000 additional dwellings in

⁴ EERA – East of England Regional Assembly

Dacorum itself: EERA has assumed 2,000 dwellings from the Dacorum allocation, would be located on the fringes of Hemel Hempstead, in St Albans District.

Table 11.1: Scenario 1

	2004	2005	2009	2014	2019	2024	2029
2004-based Subnational population projections	138.0	138.4	139.5	141.2	143.5	145.9	148.2
Leisure space (2.8 ha per 1000)	386.4	387.5	390.6	395.4	401.8	408.5	414.9
Extra leisure space required (in hectares)	-1.0	1.12	4.2	8.9	15.4	22.1	28.5

Table 11. 2: Scenario 2

Year	2001	2006	2011	2016	2021
EERA Chelmer model Population Projections	138	139.2	143	145.1	148.3
Leisure space (2.8 ha per 1000)	386.4	389.7	400.4	406.3	415.2
Extra leisure space required (in hectares)	-1.0	3.3	14	19.88	28.84

The recent amendments to the East of England Plan indicate that Dacorum's population will grow by approximately 10,000 people. This will require additional leisure space in the borough. The total amount will vary according to the level of additional housing required (and increase in the population), its distribution and the needs of the community. The Secretary of State's Proposed Changes to the Regional Plan direct extra housing in and around Hemel Hempstead, which currently has a deficit of 6.02ha of leisure space.

New developments should have sufficient open space and, the Core Strategies Supplementary Issues and Options Paper Growth at Hemel Hempstead (November 2006) identifies public open space and other green infrastructure as key infrastructure needs in planning new neighbourhoods.

The population growth figures are still being worked on and a further projection is probable after the East of England Plan is adopted. If the full housing and population growth is allocated to Dacorum, then the change in population between 2001 and 2021 is likely to be in the order of 14-15,000 people (and a commensurate increase in open space would be required).

Current space lost should normally be replaced with an open space of the same typology, size and high quality. New housing also places extra pressure on existing open spaces that could be lost to development or, extra users of an open space could result in its carrying capacity being exceeded. The Dacorum Local Development Framework should make provision for the retention of existing and creation of new open space to support any new housing.

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