



Green Space Strategy 2011 - 2016

January 2011





Our Vision

In Dacorum, we aspire to protect and enhance our natural environment, heritage and habitats. With the involvement of the community, we will create attractive, sustainable, accessible and well-managed green spaces.

Foreword

Dacorum benefits from a tremendous resource of high quality parks and recreation areas, set within some of the most remarkable landscapes in the country. Our fantastic green spaces are one of the main reasons people choose to live, work, and visit here. This strategy sets out our commitment to manage and protect this legacy, to ensure it remains intact for current and future generations.

The quality of some of Dacorum's green spaces has deteriorated over time through the ageing of facilities and infrastructure, and new investment is required. This strategy gives us the impetus and tools to improve their quality and to help deliver what local communities want from their neighbourhoods. We will improve facilities, and encourage residents to become more involved in managing their local green spaces. We aim to balance the needs of the community with the demands on our service, working wherever possible to combat climate change and alleviate the pressures of the modern age.

We have a number of challenges to face in the future, not least in providing enough homes for the community. This strategy provides a strong framework to help manage, refresh, and create new green spaces.

Councillor Stephen Holmes
Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration



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Executive Summary

Green spaces are integral to Dacorum, and important components of people's health and well being, the Borough's economic prosperity, the biodiversity of the environment and our contribution to sustainability. The Green Space Strategy is our commitment to improving the quality of neighbourhoods, to meet community and planning needs, and to deliver the priorities of Dacorum Borough Council and The Dacorum Partnership.

The Green Space Strategy was developed in consultation with the local community and stakeholders. Their views are captured through our vision for the future of Dacorum's green spaces.

Our Vision

In Dacorum, we aspire to protect and enhance our natural environment, heritage and habitats. With the involvement of the community, we will create attractive, sustainable, accessible and well-managed green spaces.

The priorities of Dacorum's community form the foundations of the Green Space Strategy and the basis of the following policies:

Policy 1 – To protect green space from development

Policy 2 – To protect and enhance our natural environment, heritage and habitats

Policy 3 – To create attractive, sustainable, accessible and well managed green spaces

Policy 4 – To manage our green spaces with community involvement to ensure they are fit for purpose

Policy 5 – To make people feel safe

Policy 6 – To use development opportunities to improve the quality and provision of open space

These will form the framework for our approach to the management and development of green space.

The green spaces and facilities of individual towns and villages within the Borough will be improved through an action plan developed from a detailed assessment of the Borough's resources using the community priorities of Improving Quality; Increase Facilities; Nature Conservation and Easy Access to the Countryside.



Green Space Strategy

Section One: Policies and Objectives



1 Introduction

1.1 What is a Green Space Strategy

This Green Space Strategy is a vision and plan to deliver improved public spaces within the Borough. It provides the means to improve the quality of neighbourhoods, to meet community and planning needs, and to deliver our wider objectives for Dacorum.

Over the next five years the strategy will be a management tool to guide our work programme and direct existing resources, plus any additional funding. It will support the development of the Local Development Framework¹ and help to protect green space from the pressure of development.

To prepare the strategy we assessed the needs of our communities, the availability of resources and the quality, quantity and accessibility of green spaces. This information helped establish our priorities for the Borough and develop local standards for the provision, design and management of new green spaces. The work has fed into an Action Plan which describes how we are going to deliver the recommendations in the strategy.

This strategy provides both the general direction required to improve our green spaces and also detailed local solutions to implement the community's priorities on the ground. To achieve this, the strategy is divided into four sections.

Section One – Policies and Objectives

This contains the overarching policies and objectives which affect the whole Borough.

Section Two - Area Studies

A detailed study of the Borough, divided into seven settlement areas with a supplemental study on Hemel Hempstead in general. The green spaces of each area are evaluated and considered against local needs and community priorities to identify how the broad policies outlined in Section One will be delivered. The study areas are as follows:

- Tring
- Berkhamsted and Northchurch
- Hemel Hempstead – General
- Hemel Hempstead – North East
- Hemel Hempstead – North West
- Hemel Hempstead – South
- Bovingdon, Chipperfield & Kings Langley
- Ashridge and Watling

¹ The Local Development Framework consists primarily of a series of development plan documents and supplementary planning documents and replaces the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011, as our principle planning document.

Section Three – Action Plan

This brings together the actions identified in Section One: Policies and Objectives, and Section Two: Area Studies, into a comprehensive working document for service planning and delivery.

Section Four – Consultation and Appendices

This includes details of the consultation process undertaken to produce the strategy, with a summary of the key results from the general public consultation, stakeholder and settlement workshops.

1.2 Scope of the strategy

The strategy considers all publicly accessible green space included in Planning Policy Guidance 17² typology plus public rights of way where appropriate.

Parks and gardens

High quality areas often formally laid out which provide opportunity for informal recreation and community events. Some formal sport may be present, typically tennis or bowls and some turf pitches, but these will contribute to the range of activities rather than being the primary purpose.

Semi natural green space

Areas providing opportunity for wildlife conservation and informal recreation. This will include both designated nature reserves and areas of informal natural planting or areas that have developed with little management intervention into semi natural habitats.

Green corridors and links to the countryside

These include linear areas for walking, cycling or horse riding, both for leisure and providing practical travel routes. These areas also provide opportunity for wildlife migration and foraging. Public rights of way are also considered where they form important links to the wider countryside or accessible green space.

Outdoor sports facilities

Areas primarily devoted to sporting pastimes, both formal team sports and informal games. Outside of typical peak times for sports matches, these areas are likely to be most used by dog walkers, joggers and for a wide range of individual activities such as kite flying.

Amenity green space

Areas providing opportunity for recreation close to home and/or providing a visual break in the urban environment. These areas are unlikely to include significant facilities but may be used frequently for play or informal ball games.

² Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Provision for children

These include outdoor areas such as playgrounds, skateboard parks and basketball courts which primarily cater for children and young people.

Allotments

Areas providing for community gardening with the benefit of local food production and social interaction. Though these are included within the scope, they are not a major focus of the strategy and further consideration of the issues affecting allotments would justify a separate document.

Cemeteries and churchyards

These provide opportunity for quiet contemplation and relaxation. The strategy will consider the presence of cemeteries in terms of opportunities provided for recreation, but it will not consider functional or developmental issues relating to the operation of cemeteries or churchyards.

Green Space not included

The effect of private sports provision is considered where it affects supply issues but generally private sports clubs and facilities are excluded. School grounds and playing fields are also considered in this manner. Their potential to contribute is considered but not specific issues relating to the management of school grounds.

Indoor recreational facilities, including sports facilities and provision for young people such as youth clubs, will not be considered.

Civic spaces such as market squares and urban pedestrianised areas are excluded.

Private gardens may be considered in relation to their influence on the supply and demand for green space but specific matters relating to the design or management of private gardens will be excluded.

1.3 Links to other documents and strategies

The Green Space Strategy builds on the findings of our Open Space Study (March, 2008) and the four cross cutting themes of The Dacorum Partnership³, which are:

- Developing community cohesion
- Promoting healthy and caring lifestyles
- Rejuvenating Dacorum
- Acting on climate change.

Through the Corporate Plan 2009-2014, Dacorum Borough Council has made a long term commitment to the following six priorities:

³ Towards 2021 the Dacorum Sustainable Community Strategy, the Dacorum Partnership, Jan 2008

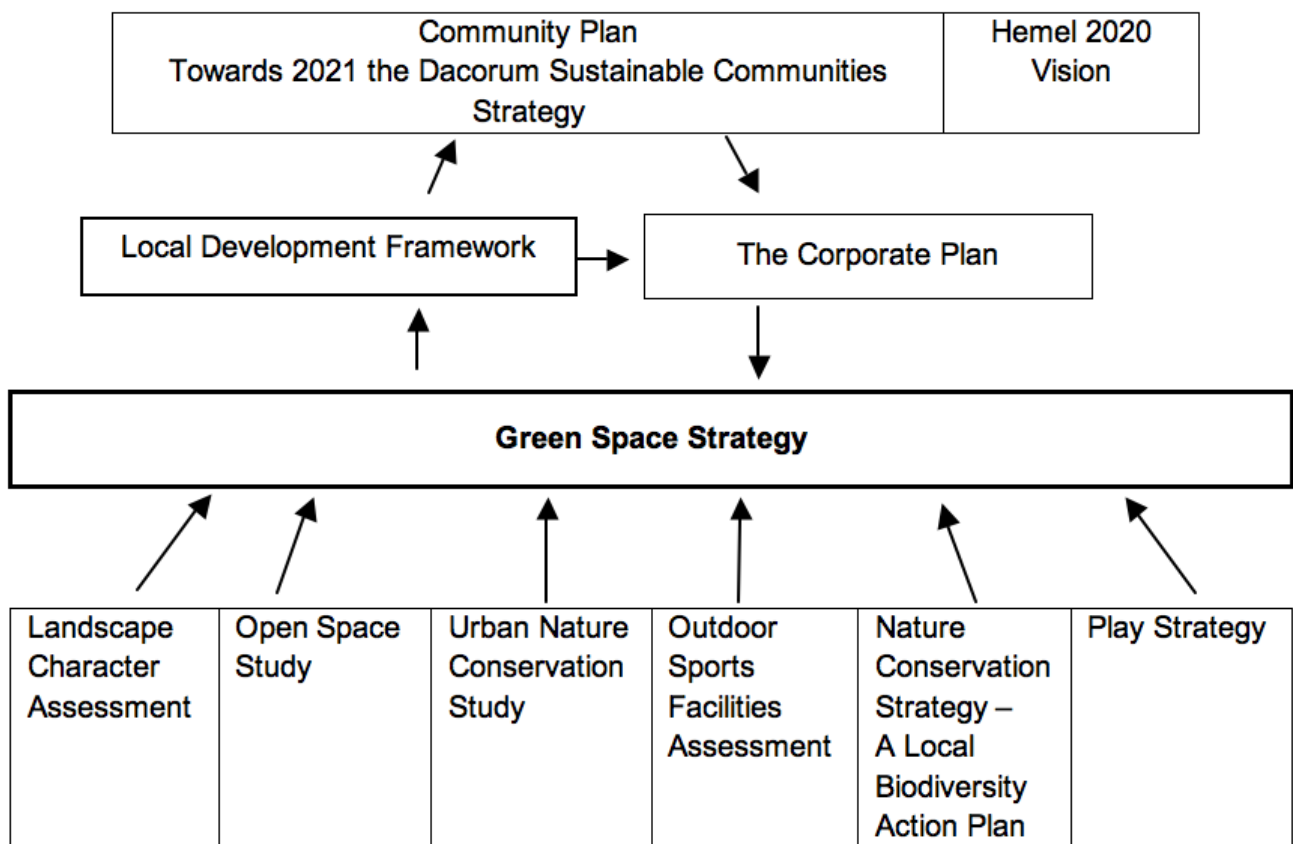
- Community
- Resources and Value for Money
- Environment
- Economic Development and Regeneration
- Affordable Housing
- Profile and Reputation.

Producing the Green Space Strategy is part of fulfilling this promise and achieving the goals of Dacorum Borough Council and The Dacorum Partnership.

The Green Space Strategy will be an important component of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework and will help shape future planning policies across the Borough. It will identify areas that need to be protected from development, areas that can be enhanced by development and areas where green spaces should be created as part of larger developments. It will also be used by the Council as a tool to direct its own resources into maintenance.

The Green Space Strategy will draw upon but not replace the work of existing specialist strategies in related subject areas.

Figure 1: Links between the Green Space Strategy and the corporate and planning framework



1.4 The benefits of green space to Dacorum

Our green spaces provide essential breathing space for the community while helping to define the character of the area. The greenery of the settlements and the beauty of the local landscape provide much of what draws people to live and work in Dacorum.

The Environment

Green spaces contribute to the beauty of our urban and rural environment. They do this by providing a counterbalance to urban development and by providing a focus and setting for rural communities.

Greenery provides a vital role in improving living conditions in densely developed communities, cooling and freshening the air and reducing dust and noise pollution. Green spaces also help to reduce flood risks by reducing the rate of water runoff and absorbing flood water.

They provide opportunities for wildlife to survive and integrate with our managed landscape, providing refuge for rare and diverse species and maintaining biodiversity for future generations to enjoy.

Community

In many areas green spaces help to define a settlement. They allow community events to take place, providing shared memories and encouraging integration, involvement and pride. Green spaces encourage people to exercise by providing facilities and recreation activities which are often free and accessible. Available spaces also provide an inclusive resource to those in the community who for socio-economic reasons cannot access formal leisure facilities.

Play

There is good evidence that opportunity for independent adventurous play in a safe environment helps both physical and mental development, enabling children to become better at judging risks and more able to socialise.

Education

Green spaces provide not just an outdoor classroom to enrich formal education but also personal contact with nature and experience of the environment that theory or description cannot provide.

Sport

Green space provides local residents with good access to both organised and informal sport, with few barriers to participation. With obesity levels reaching 20 to 25% in the UK, 30 minutes of regular gentle exercise could make a significant difference to people's health.

Healthier Lives

Green spaces promote health and well-being, providing breathing space for relaxation and stress reduction. They provide traffic-free transport routes, and opportunities for people to lead healthier lives.

The Economy

Both businesses and employees aspire to move into areas they consider to be more attractive and which provide a better quality of life. Green space is often a factor in these decisions.

High quality green space can increase the amount of tourism, both in terms of holiday makers and day trippers. High quality parks or gardens can also increase house prices by up to 20%.

Well-managed and well-designed green space can make new development more attractive to existing and future residents, while reducing its impact on the environment.

The provision of 'green infrastructure' is an essential component of development. This ensures that we can maximise the benefits for local people.

1.5 The Borough Context

1.5.1 Borough Character

Covering 210 square km, Dacorum is the most western Borough in Hertfordshire. It straddles the Chiltern Hills from the M25 to the Aylesbury Vale, and includes the substantial new town of Hemel Hempstead, the historic market towns of Tring and Berkhamsted, and a further 14 rural parishes. Over a third of the area of the Borough is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty with the industrial and commercial development of Hemel Hempstead providing a striking contrast to the remote tranquillity of the Chiltern Hills.

With a population of 138,400, it is the most populated Borough in Hertfordshire and is set to grow by a further 10,000 residents over the next 10 years if current trends continue. The outcome of the East of England plan will also be a key factor in future population levels. The current population is younger than the national average, but the fastest increase is occurring in the over 65 age group.

The area is well connected to the region with the M25, M1, A41 and the London to Birmingham railway line all passing through the Borough.

The local economy is reasonably strong by national standards. The State of the Borough Report⁴ highlights that Dacorum's economy is a real strength, being large and productive with a healthy knowledge-driven sector. This is supported by exceptional local skill levels

⁴ The State of the Borough, An Economic, Social and Environmental Audit of Dacorum, Dec 2006

which place the Borough in the top 20% nationally. Personal income levels are above the national average but slightly below the average for the county. Overall levels of deprivation are low, placing the Borough in the 14% least deprived Boroughs nationally.

The Report considered the profile of Dacorum's environment to be more mixed. Services were considered to be good as well as transport connections, but exceptionally high house prices restrict affordability. The provision of local amenities is modest by national standards and the score for the natural environment is below average, though this is typical of large urban areas affected by traffic and congestion.

1.5.2 Open Space Provision

The Council and The Box Moor Trust ⁵ provide 703 ha of public open space across 491 sites, comprising of the following.

Category of Open Space (PPG17)	Proportion of provision
Parks and public Gardens	30%
Natural green space	15%
Amenity green space	29%
Outdoor sports fields	14%
Allotments	5%
Cemeteries	4%
Green corridors	3%
Spaces for children and young people	2%

The most notable fact from this provision analysis is that in contrast to traditional settlements, amenity green space is in third place, just ahead of sports fields. This reflects the large amount of amenity green space provided within the neighbourhoods of Hemel Hempstead New Town. The town also benefits from some significant parks and playing fields providing structural green space. Despite this, the town still has a small deficiency in leisure space (6.02 ha) compared with the 2.8 ha per 1000 population set by the Local Plan.

The historic market towns have relatively little green space within their boundaries, but sit in attractive countryside containing extensive areas of accessible green space. Approximately 800 ha of accessible natural green space are provided at Ashridge by the National Trust and a further 100 ha are provided by British Waterways at Tring Reservoirs, resulting in a total of approximately 1600 ha for the Borough. This is over 11 ha per 1000 residents, which is high by national standards.

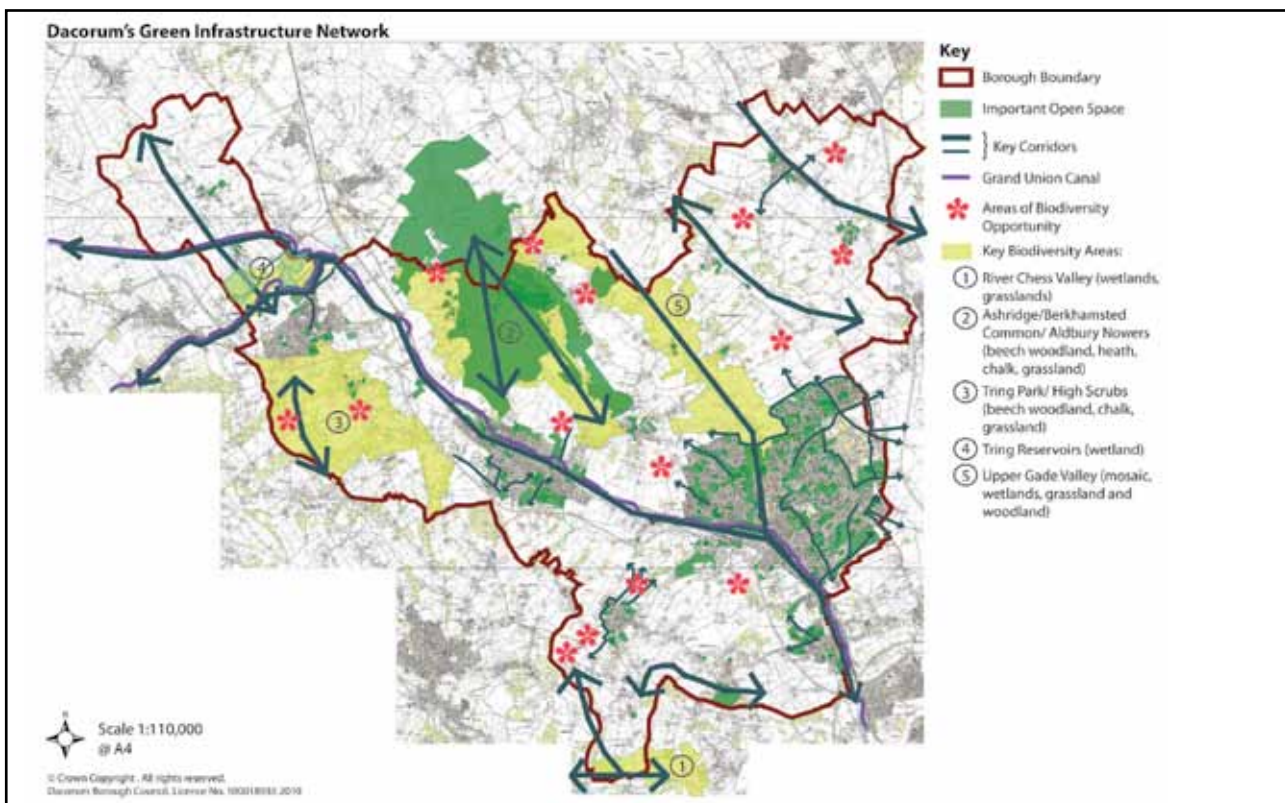
However, to benefit from Ashridge and the reservoirs, the majority of residents have to travel, limiting accessibility. This is particularly an issue for residents living in the north east of the Borough. In addition at the local level, many settlements are deficient in green space.

⁵ Further information on the Box Moor Trust is on page 76.

1.5.3 Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure is the term used to describe the network of protected sites, nature reserves, green spaces, waterways and green linkages that surround and thread through the built environment. It brings with it a range of environmental, social and economic benefits described in 1.4, and is particularly important on the urban fringe, where it helps to soften the transition between urban and rural landscapes.

Dacorum's key landscape features, sites and areas of high biodiversity are identified on the following Green Infrastructure Network map. This will be supported within the Core Strategy by individual Place Strategies which identify wildlife corridors and areas of open space that are of particular local importance for each of the Borough's towns and large villages.



2 Community Priorities

As part of the development of the strategy, a programme of consultation targeted at users, non users and stakeholders was undertaken during 2006-2010 to identify the needs, values and opinions of the local community. The process first considered the Borough as a whole. This was followed by further focus group work with stakeholders and town and parish councils to identify local needs which are considered as part of Section Two: Area Studies. A summary of all consultation undertaken in the process of developing the strategy is detailed in Section Four: Consultation and Appendices.

The top three priorities for green spaces from these consultation exercises were:

1. *Protection from development*
2. *Improving quality*
3. *Increasing facilities*

Protection from development was an overwhelmingly popular response, with 80% of respondents identifying it as a priority. Improving quality and increasing facilities were also strongly identified, with approximately half of all respondents emphasising these as priorities. With regard to facilities, the clearest priority was to improve the range and quality of provision for children and young people.

Other important issues were:

4. *Nature conservation (managing and providing access to natural green space)*
5. *Making people feel safe*
6. *Increasing resident involvement*

Although important, these issues were not major priorities. They were identified by 33%, 25% and 20% of people respectively.

While nature conservation was reported quite highly as a priority, residents felt strongly that in overall terms, there was sufficient quantity of natural green space. Natural green space was also given the greatest importance by residents when considering all possible types of public open space and therefore is a focus for attention in this strategy.

Although increasing resident involvement was only considered a priority by 20% of residents, over 60% felt that residents should be more involved if possible. Therefore it is included as a priority.

7. *Easy access to the countryside*

Although not ranked in the prioritisation exercise, 99% of respondents felt that having accessible routes into the surrounding countryside from the towns and villages was important. As a result, they have been considered as part of the strategy.

The following were not considered to be immediate priorities, being only identified by 12% and 7% of people respectively:

- Increasing the quantity
- Making it easier to visit parks and open spaces

However, increases in quantity will be considered in relation to urban growth where additional green space is required to reflect a significant addition to the population or physical growth of the urban areas. In these cases, the quantity standards proposed in Dacorum Borough Council's Open Space Study (2008) will be adopted. Local increases in the quantity of green space will also be proposed where appropriate.

3 Priorities for Play

The consultation programme identified improvements to play facilities as one of the local community's highest priorities. They also felt that play areas and youth facilities were in most need of expansion when considered against other forms of green space, and that the

current quality was poor. For this reason a specific set of priorities for play is included in this strategy.

3.1 Dacorum Play Strategy

The Dacorum Children's Trust Partnership developed a play strategy in 2007. The consultation used to inform the strategy is summarised below:

Pre School to 10 years old want a clean well maintained environment with no vandalism; they also wanted more and better equipped play areas.

A strong theme across almost all age groups was for more adventurous play, with the request for an adventure playground cited in almost all consultation exercises.

Expanded skateboard provision was an almost unanimous request from teenagers. There was also some desire for more ball courts, sports pitches and BMX tracks.

The final consistent theme was for better access to woodland and nature areas. This was widespread across the age ranges, being reported in groups aged 5 to 10, 8 to 12, and 13 to 16 year olds.

The opinions of groups with special social needs were in line with these three broad themes, while groups with special physical needs requested appropriate play equipment integrated within existing play areas.

Cultural activities were also mentioned in a number of focus groups. This should be seen as support for a continued events programme in Dacorum.

The final play strategy consultation asked for a list of ten proposals to be ranked in order of priority. The top five of these were as follows:

1. *Water Play Park*
2. *Outdoor Fitness Trail*
3. *Roaming Play in rural areas (for family play - creative sessions, climbing wall, ice rink etc)*
4. *New Static Play areas*
5. *Ranger/Wardens providing safer places to play*

These priorities are currently being taken forward by The Dacorum Children's Trust Partnership.

Journey time was also considered. The preferred maximum journey time was given as 5 – 15 minutes, which at 3 mph equates to 1200 m. It should be noted that very few people (only 6%) were prepared to travel further than 15 minutes.

3.2 Quality Audits

The quality audits and accessibility audits of the Borough's play areas reflect the content of the consultation. When independently assessed, 10 were considered to have severely limited access, 10 had some accessible features and 31 were generally accessible. This report undertaken as part of the annual independent risk assessment focused on access to the play areas, opportunities for inclusive play for all children forms a separate assessment.

When assessed for quality in 2007, the best performing play area in the Borough was Gadebridge Park, closely followed by Canal Fields in Berkhamsted. Gadebridge Park scored 18 out of 33 for its site features (Canal Fields 19 out of 33) and 18 out of 41 for its play activities (Canal Fields 17 out of 41), which equates to about half the points available. The Borough as a whole achieved an average of 11.6 out of 33 for the play area site features and just 6.8 out of 41 for the play activities, reflecting the consistently low quality of most of the existing play areas.

3.3 Play Priorities

In response to the established information on the Borough's play areas, the following priorities will be adopted for the Green Space Strategy and implemented through the action plans for each individual settlement:

1. Refurbishing targeted existing play areas, making sure that they provide more adventurous play opportunities and that they meet accessibility standards.
2. Increasing the number of play areas so that there is less distance to travel between each.
3. Identifying gaps in the current ball court and skateboard facilities, and aiming to create new provision.
4. Improving access to local woodlands and nature areas. This priority links to making it easier to get to the countryside.
5. All initiatives to implement these will follow Play England's guidance in Design for Play: a guide to creating successful play spaces (Play England, 2008), where possible.

4 Policies – putting the vision into action

This section translates our vision and the communities' priorities into policies to form the framework of our overall approach to the management and development of green space. Each policy is supported by identified actions to guide our work programme over the next five years.

In Dacorum, we aspire to protect and enhance our natural environment, heritage and habitats. With the involvement of the community, we will create attractive, sustainable, accessible and well-managed green spaces.



Gadebridge Park

Policy 1 *To protect green space from development*

Protection from development was the biggest priority for almost all residents and forms the premise of the policy. However, the quality audits have shown that, over time, changes in demand and patterns of use combined with poor quality, design and integration can result in green space which no longer meets community needs.

To reflect this, this strategy adopts the following principles:

The Strategy recommends that all formal and informal recreation space is designated as open land as part of the Local Development Framework.

The incremental loss of green space through development on the edge or on small pockets of green space will be resisted.

Redevelopment of areas of open space which are of poor quality, design and integration will be supported, provided the proposed alternative use meets community needs. In particular, the conversion of green spaces which no longer meet local needs to publicly accessible leisure facilities will be supported. This aims to address the deficiency in publicly accessible leisure space.

The detail provided in Section Two: Area Studies will provide a guide and evidence to prioritising improvements to existing facilities as development arises within the settlement areas.

Any additional green space provided as part of new housing will follow the Design Principles detailed in Appendix 1.

Action 1.

For each relevant proposed development, evaluate the impact on green space using the principles adopted for **Policy 1** *Protect green space from development*.

⁶ Site of Special Scientific Interest

Policy 2 *To protect and enhance our natural environment, heritage and habitats*

Many of Dacorum's historic features and areas of nature conservation interest are in publicly accessible areas. Appendix 2 Designations and Cultural Heritage lists the special protection areas, SSSIs⁶, local nature reserves, scheduled ancient monuments and listed parks found within the Borough.

The Dacorum Nature Conservation Strategy (Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, 2000) identifies eight priority habitats for conservation in the Borough. They are:

- Lowland beech woods
- Chalk rivers and associated wetland
- Lowland acid grassland and heath
- Lowland calcareous grassland
- Ancient species rich hedgerows
- Oak hornbeam woodland
- Unimproved neutral grassland
- Urban habitats.

As would be expected from the abundance of designated areas, there is good representation of many of these habitats locally; in particular lowland beech woods, lowland calcareous grassland, chalk rivers and wetlands. The strategy was commissioned by the Dacorum Environmental Forum (DEF) as a 50 year vision and adopted by Dacorum Borough Council in 2000. DEF has identified an action to revise this local biodiversity action plan within their Annual Action Plan 2008-2011.

Action 2.

Support the DEF in their review of the Nature Conservation Strategy – 'A Local Biodiversity Action Plan'.

The urban habitats which are a priority under the Nature Conservation Strategy were reviewed through the Urban Nature Conservation Study, (Hertfordshire Biological Records Centre, 2006). The following actions are based on the recommendations of this study.

Action 3.

Ensure SSSIs in local government ownership have appropriate management plans and that these are being implemented to ensure they remain in good condition.

Action 4.

Enhance the landscape through the appropriate management of significant landscape features under the control of the Council such as Tring Park, Tring Woods, Bunkers Park and Chipperfield Common.

Action 5.

Through the area studies, identify opportunities to improve natural habitats in other green spaces where appropriate.

The adoption of National Indicator 197 Improved Local Biodiversity will provide a wider assessment of the condition of ecologically important areas. The indicator measures the proportion of local sites in positive conservation management, as demonstrated through maintenance, restoration, enhancement, advice or management plans. It focuses on County Wildlife Sites, a designation which indicates a minimum ecological standard and provides policy protection.

Action 6.

Ensure County Wildlife Sites managed by Dacorum Borough Council have appropriate management plans.

Action 7.

Through the area studies, identify sites with wildlife site potential, and develop five year management plans for these.

Designating sites as local nature reserves further protects the management and community benefit of important ecological areas. Local nature reserves are a statutory designation under section 21 of the National Parks and Access to Countryside Act 1949. They signal a commitment from a local authority to maintain and improve the nature conservation of the site, provide access and opportunities for people to become involved.

In 1996, Natural England set a target level for the provision of local nature reserves of 1 ha per 1000 population. For Dacorum this equates to a target of 138 ha. The two existing local nature reserves – Howe Grove and Shrubhill Common – provide 22.6 ha. The Green Space Strategy will address the shortfall, identifying potential sites and considering local need, as a wide distribution of sites would benefit more of Dacorum's community.

Action 8.

Through the settlement action plans, identify a programme of sites to be designated as local nature reserves.

Policy 3 *To create attractive, sustainable, accessible and well managed green spaces*

In order to achieve this policy, the following principles have been adopted in the development of the strategy:

Attractive

We will assess the quality of all significant green spaces and set appropriate standards to meet the expectations of local residents.

Sustainable

We will ensure the best use of resources, through the most efficient use of operational resources and the application of appropriate quality standards for the function and purpose of each significant green space.

Accessible

We will adopt the approach of the Sensory Trust to accessibility, and work towards providing more access for more people in more places. We recognise that this will be constrained by resources, the need to retain the special qualities of individual green spaces and the requirement to balance access with other objectives such as nature conservation and landscape character. Any consultation exercise undertaken at a service, individual site or project level will include a qualitative assessment of accessibility.

The strategy supports the HCC's policy of developing accessible routes in the countryside in line with the BT Countryside for all standards and will seek to extend the network as development opportunities arise.

Action 9.

Include the provision of inclusive play equipment within the refurbishment of play areas, as capital or external funding allows.

Action 10.

Consider physical access and aides to accessibility such as information, seating and shelter in individual site management plans, with associated actions detailing planned improvements.

Action 11.

Develop and implement an annual ROW improvement plan to improve access to the countryside and the green space network.

Action 12

Promote paths and trails which meet the BT Countryside for all standards through the Millennium Miles initiative.

Action 13.

Promote accessible routes and provision within green spaces through the Dacorum Borough Council website, and individual site signage and leaflets.

Well managed

All significant green spaces have had their quality assessed against local criteria developed from the Green Flag Award. This resulted in an assessment rating of poor, fair, good, very good or excellent.

Within the overall green space resource, there are special places that have a role to play across the Borough and should be managed accordingly. These Destination Parks will be managed and maintained to meet and exceed the standards required by the Green Flag Award.

The Destination Parks identified within the Borough are:

Ashridge Estate
Boxmoor (including Heath Park and Plough Gardens)
Bunkers Park (including Long Deans)
Canal Fields
Chipperfield Common
Gadebridge Park
Tring Park
Tring Reservoirs

Direct action will be targeted towards Borough Council owned sites. For the remainder we will encourage external organisations to achieve the award standards.



Tring Memorial Garden

Action 14.

Seek external recognition for the quality and management of our green spaces through national award and accreditation schemes such as Green Flag.

Policy 4 *To manage our green spaces with community involvement to ensure they are fit for purpose*

The consultation process used to develop the Green Space Strategy sought the views of Dacorum's residents to determine the priorities for the service. We will continue to seek to engage all sectors of the community in the management of our green spaces, and consult with local residents over all significant material changes. In particular we will seek the involvement of the community in the management of Destination Parks. These could be 'Friends Groups', residents associations, local wildlife trust groups or interested individuals.

Action 15.

Write and implement a promotion and marketing strategy for the Council's Green Spaces by 2012.

Action 16.

Develop the Dacorum Borough Council website to include information on all significant sites with public access.

Action 17.

Undertake consultation at a service level every three years, with the aim of achieving a 10% rise in resident satisfaction by 2016.

Action 18.

Develop active 'Friends Groups' for each of the Destination Parks we manage by 2015.

Policy 5 *To make people feel safe*

The priority of making people safe will be addressed by the Community Safety Partnership, one of the ten themes of the Sustainable Community Strategy. Through joint working, the Community Safety Partnership aims to build a strong, cohesive and confident community where people feel safe and are safe. Their targeted areas addressed through an annual action plan, include improvements to green spaces and engaging with the community in their development.

To discourage crime and anti-social behaviour, we will adopt a multi-agency approach to green space development. We will work in partnership with young people and disadvantaged groups to develop facilities which meet their needs, generate ownership, and reduce the perceived threat of young people gathered together. Green spaces considered to be a focus of anti-social behaviour will have their design and layout assessed to identify what practical improvements can be made.

The public's perception of safety can be affected by visual disorder such as vandalised buildings or graffiti, and is also directly related to the number of other people present. Good design, maintenance standards and the range of activities available within a green space affect the quality of experience and encourage use.

Action 19.

Support the Community Safety Partnership action plan to reduce crime and the perception of crime through improving green spaces to meet the needs and concerns of local residents.

Action 20.

Develop revised grounds maintenance standards and associated monitoring, to include removing graffiti and fly-tipping within agreed time limits.

Action 21.

Identify redundant buildings within green spaces and refer them to Commercial Assets Property Development to consider their future use.

Action 22.

New open spaces will follow the Secured by Design principles, which aim to design out crime, and will be assessed by the police crime prevention unit. Care will be taken to ensure that the layout does not compromise accessibility.

Policy 6 *To use development opportunities to improve the quality and provision of open space*

All new housing development has an impact on the existing green space resource and infrastructure, whether it is a large scale scheme, or infill development within a former garage block. New estates should provide sufficient open space for their community, and be landscaped to provide a quality setting and to enhance the surrounding area. A copy of the required design standards is included in Appendix 1. Dacorum Borough Council expects that new development will deliver additional and improved green spaces for the residents of the Borough. These will support the strategic development of the Borough's green space resource forming a well designed network of interconnected sites providing for:

- Children's play
- Outdoor sports
- Informal relaxation
- Sustainable transport
- Access to nature

Contributions to off-site facilities are essential to increase the capacity of existing resources. It is important that we seize upon these opportunities and identify, protect and create green spaces at all levels. This will make sure that we get the best possible outcomes for the community.

A key document in bringing opportunities forward will be the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, a detailed audit of existing resources which sets out our requirements resulting from growth, to be used as part of our evidence base. The Plan, to be published in 2011, will be a living document and will be updated throughout its adoption period to 2031. From Spring 2011 this will be supported by a Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, which will set out a standard charge approach to planning obligations. The level of housing growth will be considered in the Core Strategy, 2012-2031. Following adoption of the Core Strategy, the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document will be updated, or replaced in line with the relevant legislation at that time.

Action 23

Support the development of a robust policy on developers contributions to improve the quality and provision of the Borough's green space.



Green Space Strategy

Section Two: Area Studies



1 Introduction – Structure and methodology

This section of the Green Space Strategy considers the Borough's green space resource: its quality, extent and opportunities for improvement. Seven separate area studies, supplemented by a further study on Hemel Hempstead, have been undertaken in order to take account of local circumstances and provide sufficient attention to detail on a human scale.

The area studies consider the social character of the area and the current open space provision by type, abundance and quality. These results are evaluated using the community priorities of improving quality; increase facilities, particularly focussing on provision for children and young people plus outdoor sports, cycling and allotments; nature conservation and easy access to the countryside. The evaluation and feedback from local consultation are then used to develop local policies, priorities and actions.

The areas are:

- Tring
- Berkhamsted and Northchurch
- Hemel Hempstead General
- Hemel Hempstead North East
- Hemel Hempstead North West
- Hemel Hempstead South
- Bovingdon, Chipperfield and Kings Langley
- Ashridge and Watling

The studies focus on the main towns and villages within the Borough. The needs and facilities of smaller villages are not considered in depth. Parish Environmental Action Plan's could provide an alternative process for improving the local environment and countryside.

Section Three: Action Plan collates the actions from each of the area studies and Section One: Policies and Objectives, into one working document for service planning and delivery.

The evaluation methodology adopted for each of the community priorities is described in Section Four: Consultation and Appendices, Appendix 3.



Green Space Area Study – Tring

2.1 Context

Tring is a small market town in the north west region of the Borough. A weekly market still occurs on Fridays, plus there is a fortnightly farmers' market and regular auctions. The High Street provides the focus for local commerce while a modest industrial estate has been built on the western edge of the town.

The town is 30 miles (50 km) north west of London, and lies 5 miles from Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire and 8 miles from Leighton Buzzard in Bedfordshire. The A41 trunk road and the West Coast Main Line pass close to the town providing much of its economic basis.

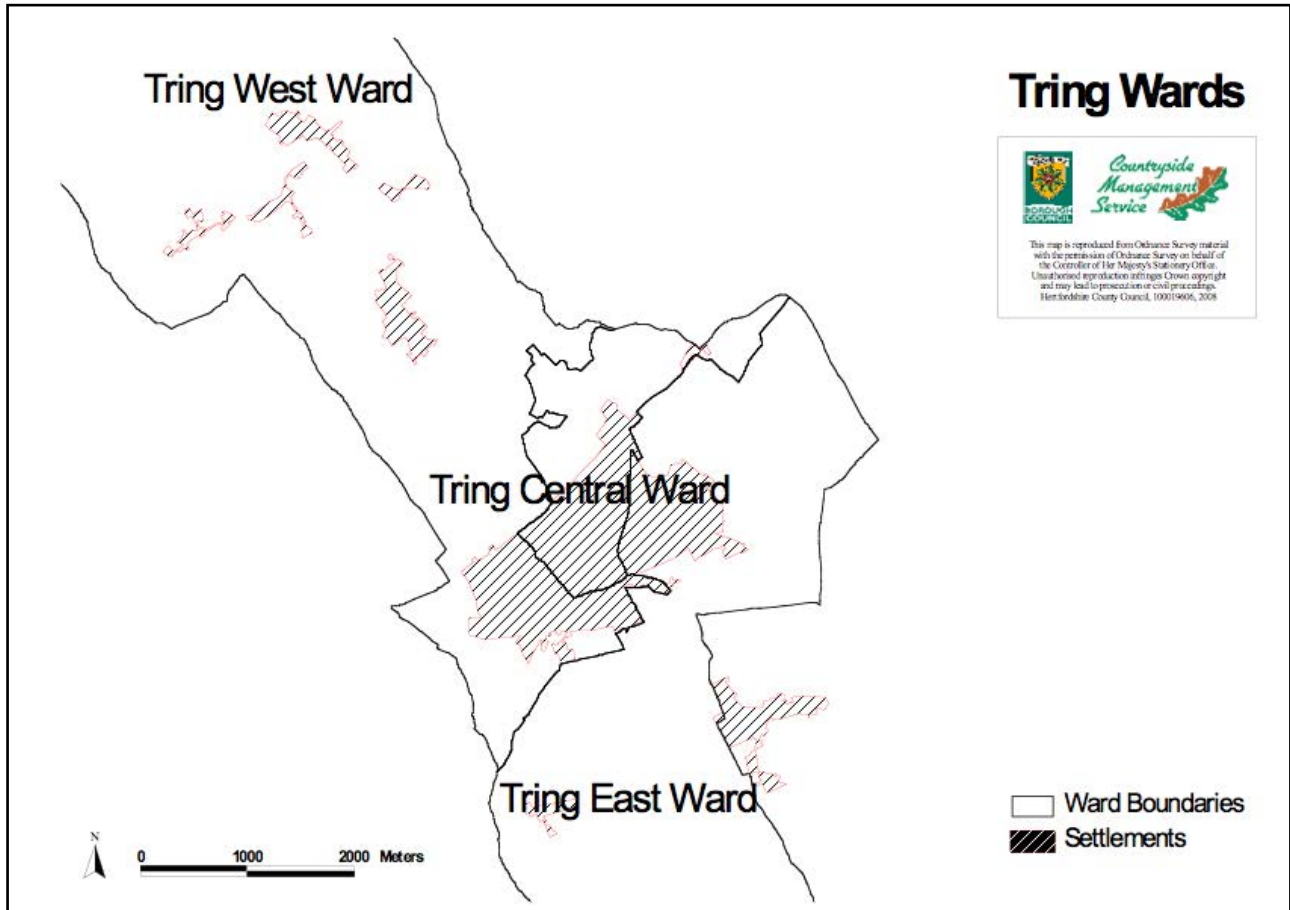
The town sits in an area of attractive countryside on the junction between the Chiltern Hills and the Aylesbury Vale, two quite different and distinctive landscapes. The Grand Union Canal and Tring Reservoirs are situated to the north of the town and the 300 acre Tring Park lies immediately to the south.



Tring Park

2.1.1 Social Character

In the 2001 census, the three wards which cover the settlement of Tring had a combined population of 13,200. This equates to about 10% of the total population for the Borough.



The health of people in Tring Central was in line with the Borough average, which is slightly better than the average for the East of England as a whole. The population of Tring East and Tring West enjoyed slightly better health than the Borough average.

Economic activity rates are similar across the three wards but there are more self-employed people in the outer wards. All three are slightly above the Borough average.

Greater differences appear regarding qualifications. Residents of Tring Central are significantly more likely to have no qualifications than residents in either of the other two wards. In this respect they are below average for the Borough, while the two outer wards are significantly above the average. It should be noted that the figures for Tring Central are still slightly better than the average for the East of England.

Differences in age structure are also apparent. Tring Central has an above average number of 8 to 14 year olds, while Tring East has an above average number of 45 to 65 year olds, and a corresponding scarcity of 25 to 45 year olds.

Regarding multiple indices of deprivation, when considered against all wards nationally, Tring West and Tring Central are amongst the 12% least deprived wards in the country, while Tring East is amongst the 2% least deprived wards in the country. Ethnic minorities account for a very small proportion of the population at approximately 2%.

In summary, while some considerable social variation exists within the town, Tring is by national standards reasonably healthy, economically active and with little sign of deprivation.

2.1.2 Designations and strategic development issues

The historic centre of Tring is a conservation area which covers a triangle of land approximately between Western Road, Park Road and Tring Park. The settlement is situated within the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and surrounded by Green Belt land. The open space, allotments, and school sites within the town are designated open land; Tring Park, Tring Woods and Tring Reservoirs are identified as Sites of Special Scientific Interest.

The infill housing development identified through the Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011 is mostly complete, with only a small area off Miswell Lane / Western Road remaining. The Draft Core Strategy (November 2010) suggests two options for future housing growth to 2031.

Option 1 of 330 homes, could be accommodated on identified sites within the settlement. Option 2 includes a further 150 homes outside the settlement on a greenfield site¹.

Following consultaion in November 2010, the preferred level of growth will be incorporated into the final document.

2.1.3 Open Space Provision

Parks and gardens

Miswell Lane Open Space (part) 1.7 ha
 Mortimer Hill 1.4 ha
 Memorial Gardens 0.9 ha
 Total 4 ha (1.3%)

Semi natural green space

Tring Park 125 ha
 Tring Reservoirs 57, 28 & 14 ha
 Tring Woods 25 ha
 Dundale 3.5 ha
 Brook Street Open Space 2.4 ha
 Miswell Lane Open Space (part) 1.2 ha
 Total 7.1 ha within the settlement, plus 249 ha within 2km. (89%)

¹ Previously undeveloped land, often in agricultural use.

Green corridors

'Streamside walk' continuation 0.25 ha (0.08%)

Outdoor sports facilities

Cow Lane 8.4 ha

Pound Meadows 7.2 ha

Miswell Lane Open Space (part) 1.4 ha

Icknield Way 0.9 ha

Total 17.9 ha (6.2%)

Amenity green space

Pond Close Open Space 2 ha

9 minor sites total area 1.4 ha

Total 3.4 Ha (1.2%)

Provision for children

Sutton Close / Chapel Meadows 0.5 ha (0.2%)

Note: A further five play areas are present, but located within parks or with sports facilities

Allotments

4 sites total area 3.75 ha (1.3%)

Cemeteries and church yards

Aylesbury Road 1.9 ha

St Peter & St Paul, High Street 0.46 ha

Frogmore Street 0.45 ha

Total 2.8 ha (1%)

Grand Total 39.7 ha within the settlement plus 249 ha within 2 km

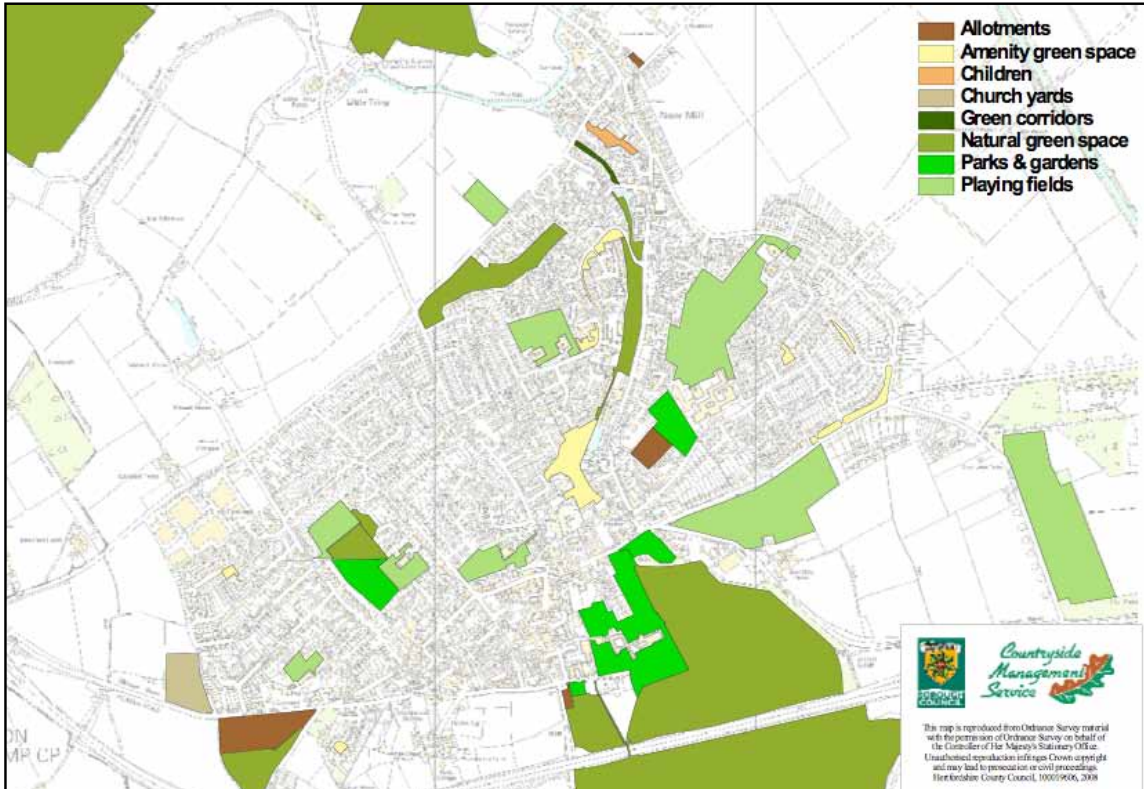
Tring Park forms a significant proportion of the town's open space provision. Its inclusion or exclusion within the open space audit results in a corresponding surplus or deficiency of open space when compared against standard measures. Despite its proximity, Tring Park could be better integrated into the fabric of the town. Due to its lack of accessibility from Tring it currently caters for those seeking a long walk in the countryside. Shorter routes can be taken from Wigginton.

Excluding Tring Park, Tring has a lower area of open space per 1000 population than Hemel Hempstead or Berkhamsted, with limited opportunities for informal recreation. However, Tring Reservoirs, Ashridge and the surrounding countryside provide many opportunities beyond the town's limits.

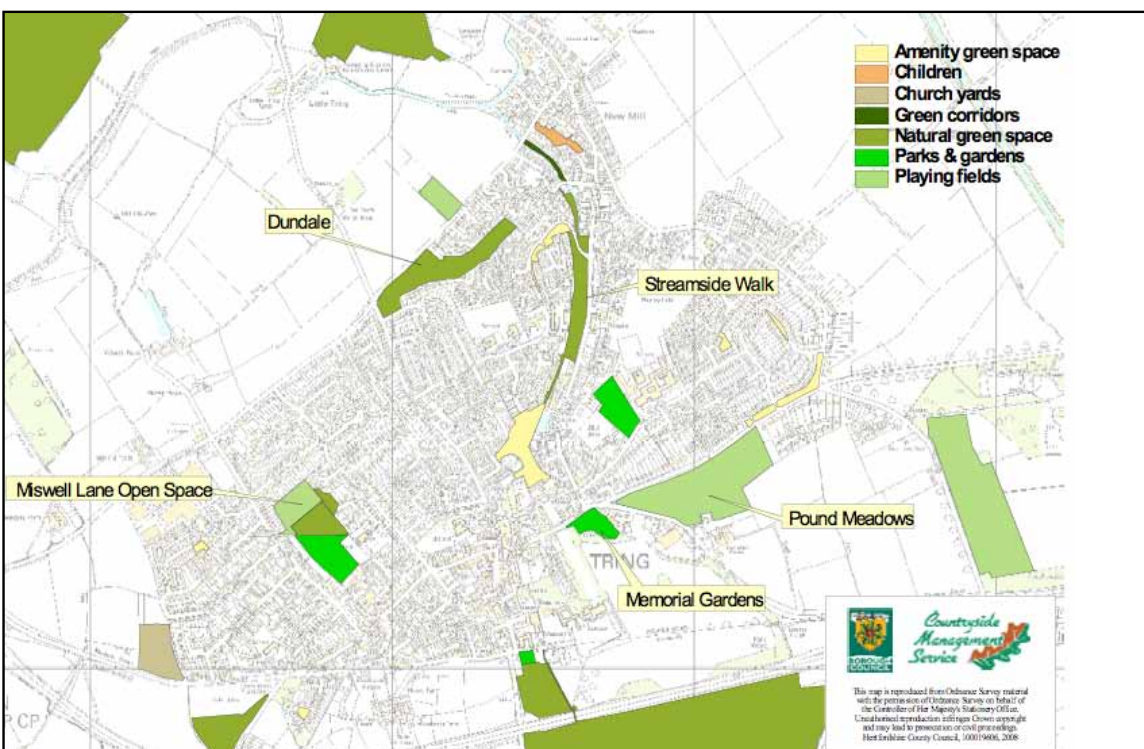
Tring has a high proportion of outdoor sports facilities (public or private sports clubs) and schools and a low number of facilities for children and young people. Open space is generally well distributed throughout the town, but the bulk of this consists of school grounds with limited public access. Once these are removed from consideration it can be seen that much of the town is devoid of public open space.

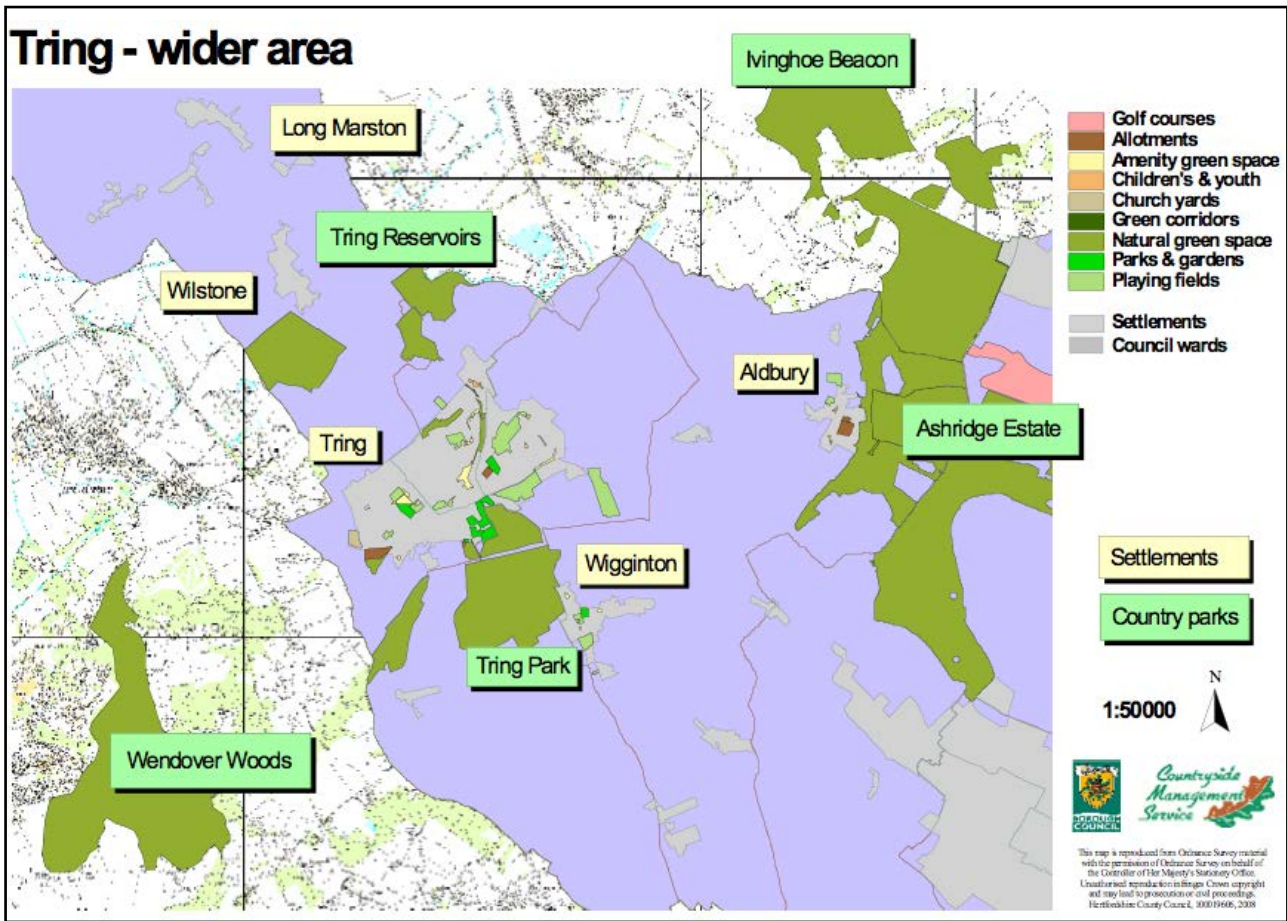
Tring is surrounded by substantial areas of accessible green space. These are located in virtually all directions, with Ashridge being the furthest and largest site, just 4 km from the edge of the town. Tring Reservoirs, to the north of the town, were built in the early 19th century to feed the arms of the Grand Union Canal. The 11 miles of waymarked trails around the reservoirs of Wilstone, Tringford, Startops End and Marsworth, and the surrounding area attract over 300,000 visitors a year.

Tring Open Space Provision



Tring Open Space Provision – Publicly accessible only





2.2 Priority: Improve Quality

The following table contains a brief description and quality assessment of all the significant green spaces within the town and adjacent countryside.

Name	Area ha	Description	Quality inspection & score
Tring Park DBC leased to the Woodland Trust	125	A substantial area of historic landscape parkland extending from the edge of the town up to the brow of the escarpment to the south. The escarpment is partially wooded and contains the historic landscape features of an obelisk and summer house. The remainder is grazed and contains an avenue of substantial lime trees leading from the mansion house. Some interpretation and way-marking is present.	Though the landscape and conservation value of the site are very high, the access routes could be much better. The route from the town is unappealing and the minor entrances anonymous. Access for the less physically able is also limited by steps, the terrain and distance from the town. Score: Fair

Tring Reservoirs British Waterways	57, 28 & 14	<p>Three impounding reservoirs built to service the Grand Union Canal. Providing one of the few stretches of open water in the area they have become a magnet for birds, leading to their designation as a SSSI.</p> <p>Provided with car parking and circular trails, these are a popular destination for walkers and bird watchers.</p>	<p>Car parking and trail are of good quality, though entrance signage is a little cluttered. On site facilities are limited, given the number of visitors and classification as a destination park. Very good interpretation material including audio version.</p> <p>Conservation of heritage features and wildlife very positive.</p> <p>Score: Good</p>
Tring Woods HCC leased to DBC	25	<p>An area of woodland occupying the escarpment to the south of the town, accessible from Hastoe Hill (road) and linked to numerous public rights of way. At its closest point the site is approximately 700 m from the edge of the town.</p>	<p>Good name boards at two locations, but not very conspicuous from beyond its boundaries. Public Rights of Way signs from the nearest highways make no reference to the site.</p> <p>Access routes become very muddy in places. Bridleway access is a plus point in widening the appeal of the site. Some of the tracks are quite steep and restricted in width.</p> <p>No interpretation is to be found or indication of the extent of the site and public access.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

<p>Pound Meadow DBC</p>	<p>7.2</p>	<p>A collection of sports fields providing for cricket, tennis and youth provision.</p>	<p>Layouts, routes, and facilities are all good. However, the entrances are not welcoming.</p> <p>Gateways are also unwelcoming but access is good, with a bus stop close by.</p> <p>Old signs on Station Road / London Road are effective but unwelcoming. Range of facilities good.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
<p>Miswell Lane Open Space DBC (part in private ownership)</p>	<p>4.4</p>	<p>A relatively informal park in the middle of the western half of Tring, consisting of a collection of amenity green space, sports provision, play and youth facilities, with rough grass and adjacent woodland.</p>	<p>The entrances are blind, access footpaths are in poor condition and the views on arrival are uninspiring. Only one surfaced path crosses the field.</p> <p>Though the range of facilities is good, the quality is disappointing, including vandalised toilets, and damaged hard surfaces. The space doesn't feel like a park. The fence line is broken.</p> <p>There is litter in hedge along the back of the pavilion and along rear of Windmill Road. Toilets and pavilion are in poor condition, and windows are boarded up, smashed and vandalised.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>

<p>Dundale to be DBC</p>	<p>3.5</p>	<p>Located on the northern edge of the town, this open space consists of a small woodland with a central ornamental lake. Formal access is from the B488 Icknield Way (road) or Eggleton Drive, with a surfaced circular route around the lake.</p>	<p>The broken fencing along the site's most visible frontage creates a poor impression.</p> <p>Access points from the cul-de-sac are low key and give little indication that this is public open space. The private road signs on the cul-de-sac entrance reinforce this impression.</p> <p>There are multiple forced entry points on the northern boundary; these should be sealed or formalised. The limited number of formal entry points on the northern boundary may be exacerbating this issue.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
<p>Brook Street Open Space / Streamside Walk. DBC</p>	<p>2.4 (inc. corridor to B488)</p>	<p>A green corridor of varying width which links Pond Close Open Space with the B488 Icknield Way. This follows the course of a stream and includes ornamental planting and a ball court at the wider southern end of the route. The stream and bank sides are largely unmanaged benefiting wildlife.</p>	<p>There are good open aspects to the site. The ball court has recently been repaired and planning permission granted for lighting.</p> <p>Localised build-ups of litter were present in the stream.</p> <p>The areas of shrubbery were monotonous. Some beds had numerous self-set trees present, while others were becoming choked with weeds.</p> <p>The pond, plus the long vegetation along the edge of the stream and un-mown banks, form beneficial habitats for wildlife.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

Pond Close Open space DBC/ Tring Town Council	2.0	An irregular area of amenity open space in the centre of the town, providing for passive recreation plus a play ground and youth shelter. The site also forms part of a green corridor running north south through the urban areas of the town.	A fairly open site; some approaches are a bit anonymous. In the context of the site the play area and youth shelter are appropriate to the setting. The play area is acceptable but limited in scope. Score: Fair
Mortimer Hill Tring Charities leased to DBC	1.4	A small suburban park mostly consisting of amenity grass complemented by some boundary tree planting and a play area.	This is a scenic pleasant spot. There is an old miscellany of signs in odd places, old rusty fences, and old footings for bins. The dog bins are unappealing. There are some holes in the footpath, and the safety surfacing is a bit aged. The range of play equipment is dull, and there is some graffiti present. Score: Fair
Memorial Gardens DBC	0.9	Small ornamental gardens centred on a pond with seasonal bedding and benches.	An attractive location close to the town centre for relaxation. The footpath is in good order but the furniture is a little dated. The welcoming entrance gateway is enhanced by colourful bedding displays. The pond has had floating islands added but is still a little spartan. Score: Fair

Sutton Close / Chapel Meadow DBC	0.5	Small amenity play space amongst residential properties with a formal playground and kick-about area.	<p>Some play equipment is bright but could be brighter and more welcoming. The surfacing is bare and worn but safe. The range of play equipment is basic.</p> <p>More trees, bins, seats and equipment are needed.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
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The highest scoring site in the area was Tring Reservoirs, which also scored highly compared with sites across the Borough. British Waterways would like to expand the facilities available to visitors to include toilets and possibly a visitor centre which would be in keeping with it's destination park status.

All of the other sites considered in the quality assessment revealed shortcomings in their maintenance or design when considered using methodology based on the Green Flag Award.

From the eleven sites assessed in Tring, one was rated poor, nine were rated fair and one was rated good. If the sites are considered in absolute terms without making allowances for their size or context, the scores of all but Tring Reservoirs fails. Dundale and Tring Woods would also now be considered poor. This approach reflects perhaps the significance of the sites as currently designed and maintained rather than just their quality.

No matter how the scores are interpreted, it can be seen that the quality of green spaces in and around Tring is relatively low when judged against a national benchmark. This finding supports the consultation priority for improving the quality and range of facilities.

The sites do provide a limited range of functions well, but they fail to provide for the whole community and contain an insufficient range of experiences to score highly. However consistent themes do run through the assessments relating to poor facilities, damaged or worn infrastructure and unwelcoming appearances.

Accessibility is also an issue for the two nearest countryside sites Tring Park and Tring Woods. Given the size and significance of the two sites to the town's open space provision, this is an important issue.



Miswell Lane Open Space



Chapel Meadow

Considering the quality results spatially, it can be seen that not only are there relatively few public open spaces within the urban areas of the town, they also tend to be low down on the range of quality assessment results. In part this is a reflection of the character of the open space which is predominantly informal, but also the level of maintenance and refurbishment.

These results support the comments from the Town Council which identified a need for the refurbishment of features and facilities within the town and better information on access to large sites beyond the town's boundary.

Action 1.

Support British Waterways' ambition to provide improved visitor facilities at Tring Reservoirs.

Action 2.

Prepare a management plan for Miswell Lane Open Space to improve the quality of the site, as this park is strategically well placed to cater for the residents in the western side of Tring.

Action 3.

Improve the horticultural interest of Brookside Open Space / Streamside walk, in keeping with its high profile location.

Action 4.

Develop a plan for the Memorial Garden to improve its integration into the town and improve its quality as a public garden.

2.3 Priority: Increase Facilities

2.3.1 Provision for Children & Young People

The following facilities, present in Tring, were evaluated as part of the development of the Play Strategy.

Quality Assessments			
	Site features (max 33)	Equipment (Max 41)	Accessibility
Mortimer Hill	8	4	Generally accessible
Miswell Lane	13	10	Severely limited
Sutton Close	11	3	Generally accessible

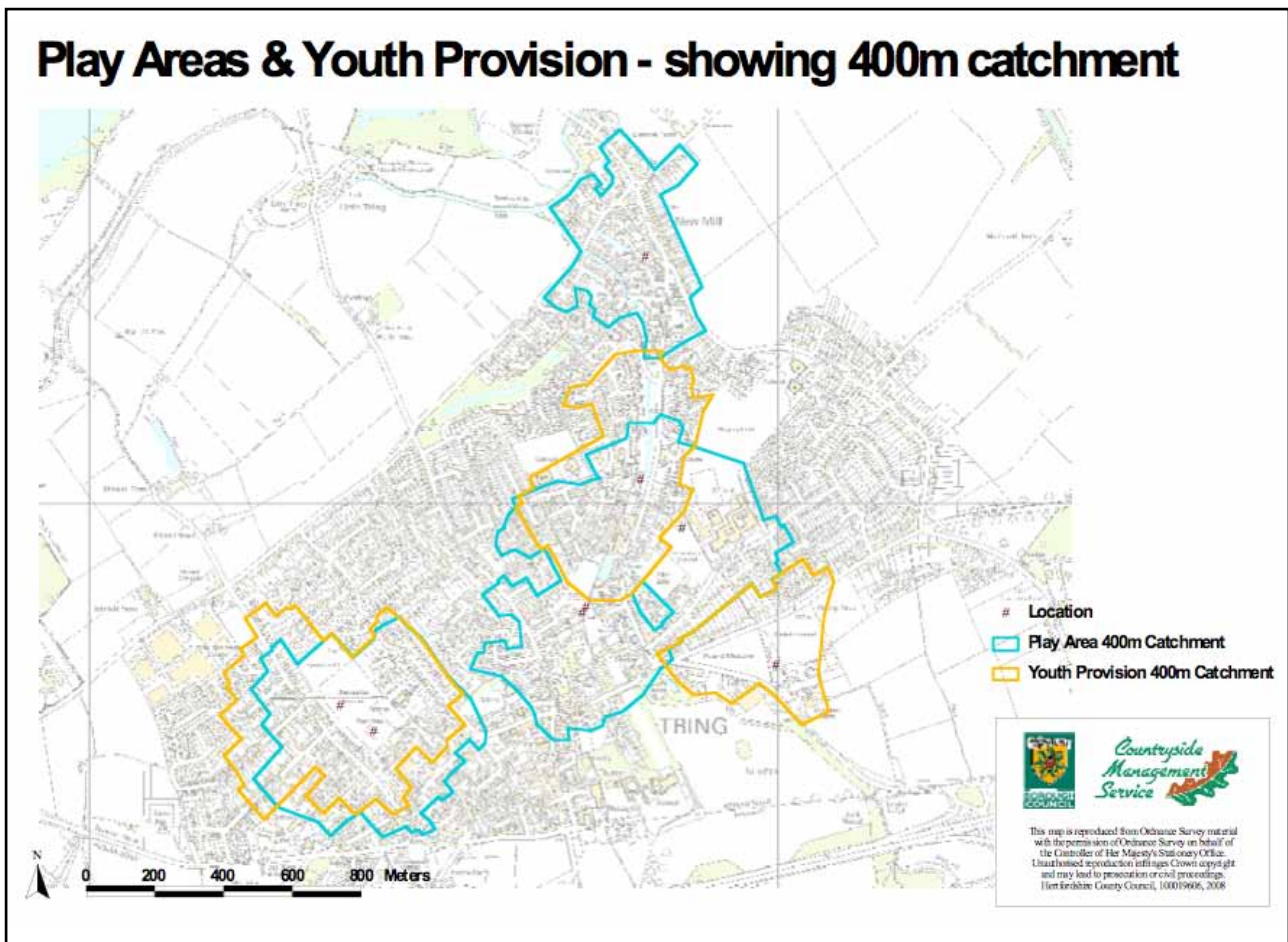
In addition to these, the following facilities are available in Tring.

- Pond Close – youth shelter and play area with four items of play equipment
- Brook Street – multi-use games area
- Miswell Lane – multi-use games area
- Pound Meadow – skate park

The provision of facilities for children and young people is below the standard set in the local plan, which requires a combined provision of 2.8 ha per 1000 head of population, and a maximum distance on foot of 400 m to sports and or play space, based on the National Playing Fields Association Standard². In comparison Tring has 0.083 ha for Children and Young People by 1000 population. The plan also requires that new developments meet the NPFA minimum equipment standards for childrens play space.

Considering play area provision for young children; two-thirds of the town is beyond the 400 m catchment set out as a policy objective in the Local Plan 1991 – 2011. However, there is little local opportunity to remedy the situation due to the limited availability of suitable space to accommodate further facilities.

Tring Central ward has the highest proportion of 8 to 14 year olds in the town and therefore should be the priority area for improvement in the quality and range of facilities on offer.



² 1.6 ha per 1000 adult/youth play, 0.6 ha children's play (over 5s), minimum 0.2 ha (under 5s), 0.4 ha other.

Action 5.

Identify a 'destination playground' which can serve the needs of children across the whole settlement, and make this the focus for significant expansion.

Pond Close Open Space would be the most logical choice of location as it is both in Tring Central and centrally located to serve the whole town. However, further consideration should be given to the setting before concluding on a location.

In terms of youth provision; less than a quarter of the town falls within the 400 m catchment policy. This assumes that the solitary youth shelter does not count as a facility in its own right; however even if it is included, more than two thirds of the town are still deficient. Like the provision for younger children, the potential for further youth provision within the town at new locations is limited; therefore consideration should be given to enhancing the quality and range of features at existing locations.

It is worth noting that a 400 m maximum catchment for older children's provision is narrower than the 1000 m catchment suggested by the NPFA guidance.

Action 6.

Improve the quality of the remaining play areas to mitigate for the greater distances people are being expected to travel to access the service, to include inclusive play provision.

Action 7.

With Tring Youth Town Council identify improvements to youth provision within the town.

Action 8.

Through the emerging Core Strategy process, identify whether further play space can be secured.

2.3.2 Outdoor Sports

The following outdoor sports facilities are available in Tring and the surrounding area. These include facilities provided by Dacorum Borough Council, town or parish councils, schools and sports clubs.

Football pitches	Public	9 senior, 3 junior
	Private	2 senior, 1 junior
	Trust	2 senior
Rugby	Public	6 senior, 4 junior
	Trust	4 senior, 4 junior
Cricket	Public	4 senior
	Private	3 senior
Hockey	Public	4 senior
	Private	4 senior
All weather pitches	Public	1
Tennis courts	Public	12

Netball courts	Public	3
Bowls	Public	1
	Trust	1

Tring benefits from two tennis courts at Pound Meadow, which are available free of charge on a first come basis.

The Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment Report (Dacorum Borough Council, 2006) identified that a number of football pitches in Tring were being overplayed at that time. The study also identified a shortfall of four and a half senior football pitches within the area covered by Tring and its adjacent villages. While other sports were catered for adequately, the lack of participation from women was noted in football, cricket and rugby.

It should be noted that the generation of senior men's football teams per head of population is very high in the Tring area, at more than twice the average.

The shortfall in senior pitches is made up of four pitches being overplayed and one new pitch required to meet latent demand. The study suggests rotating teams to make better use of the existing pitches and to improve the quality of the pitch at Miswell Lane.

It should also be noted that all the football pitches on school grounds were under-utilised in 2006. Within the four schools covered by the study there was capacity for a further 10.5 matches per week to be played.

Action 9.

Improve football pitch provision through the emerging Core Strategy process.

2.3.3 Cycling

Cycle facilities in Tring include a good link from the centre of the town along Station Road to the station and onwards to the Canal, and across Pound Meadow to Tesco. Of the schemes which the Dacorum Cycling Strategy (Dacorum Borough Council, 2009) raises for consideration in the Urban Transport Plan the following three will impact upon the use of green space within the town.

Priority 1

- Upgrade Footpath 41 to shared use between Town Centre and Icknield Way. This would improve the footpath and access to the facilities in Pond Close, Brook Street and Chapel Meadow, and provide an off road route towards the reservoirs and countryside to the north of the town.
- Footpath 39 to form a Safe Route to Schools from Station Road cycle path to Grove Road and Tring Schools.

Priority 2

- Shared path across Miswell Lane Recreation Ground, as a link in the advisory route from the Industrial Estate and Town Centre.

Action 10.

Raise the cycling priorities highlighted for Tring for consideration in the development of the LDF and seek contributions for improvements through off site development as opportunities arise.

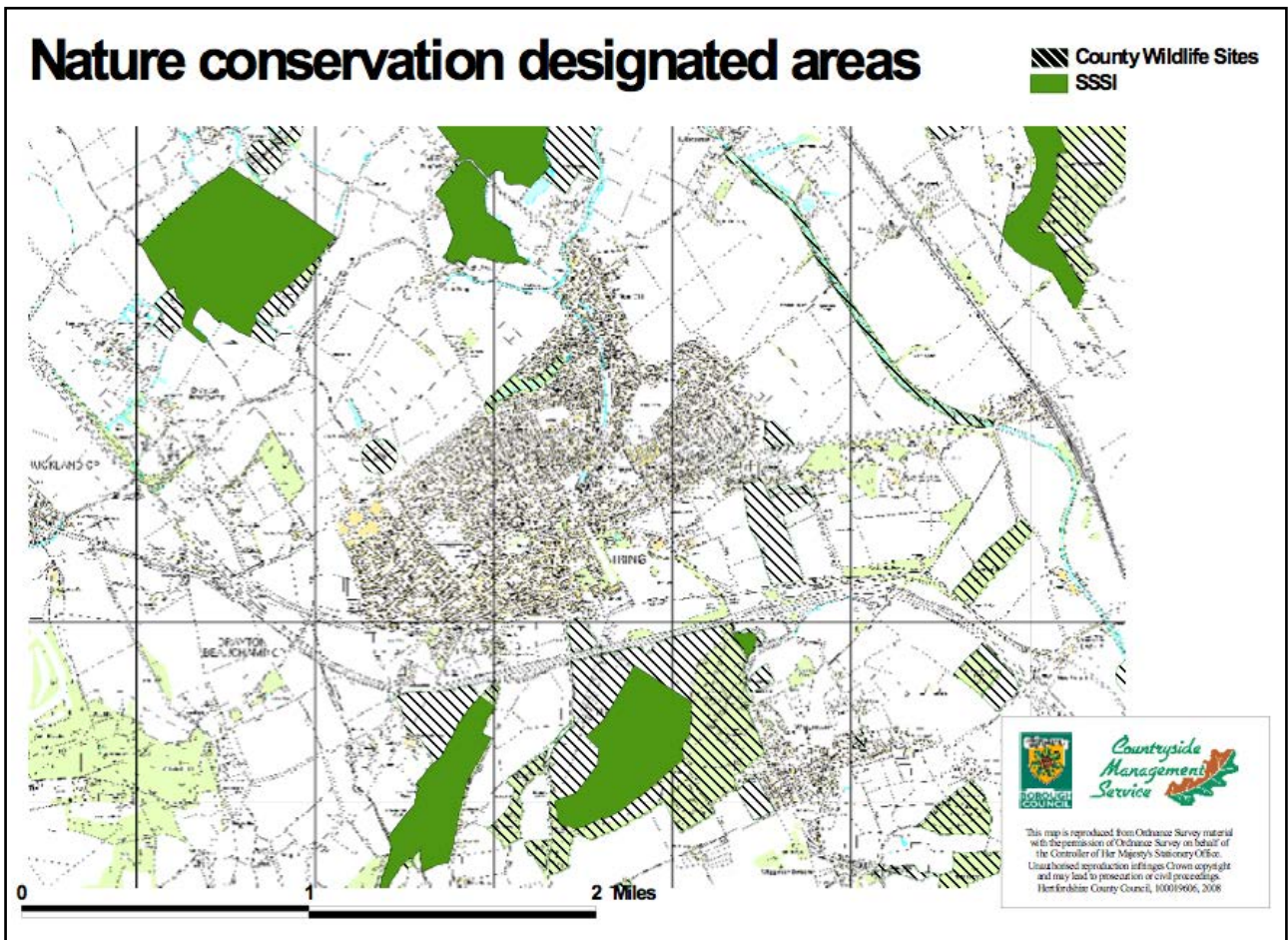
2.3.4 Allotments

At a Borough wide level there is adequate provision of allotments, when considered against the National Society of Allotments and Leisure Gardeners recommended level of 0.25 ha per 1000 population. In Tring the provision is 3.75 ha per 1000. However there is high demand for allotments locally and waiting lists for an allotment plot in the town.

2.4 Priority: Nature Conservation

A tremendous wildlife resource is available to the residents of Tring in the adjacent countryside. There are four SSSIs close to the town and a further 20 County Wildlife Sites. These are by definition significant within a regional and countywide context respectively.

Important green corridors run through and around the town; particularly on the southern and western boundaries. Some roadside hedges provide strong links to the open countryside. The canal provides a valuable continuous habitat corridor, although this is ecologically limited given its artificial banks and disturbance.



In contrast to the surrounding area, the town itself is deficient of green space of high biodiversity value. Despite the proximity of Tring Park, Tring Woods and the Reservoirs, these do not directly contribute to the urban area. Furthermore, some of the 'urban' sites are at a considerable distance for some parts of the town. Dundale is the only publicly accessible County Wildlife Site in the town. This puts greater emphasis on the importance of improving accessibility and the general quality of this site.

Within the town itself there is a clear wildlife corridor along Brook Street known locally as Streamside Walk, which links directly into the centre of Tring and beyond as a series of stepping stones. There are other links towards Dundale in the form of historic hedgerows, and this, along with Tring Mansion grounds, represents the most important ecological resource within the urban area which should be protected, maintained and enhanced.

Action 11.

Review the Dundale management plan, as the only County Wildlife Site within the town, to include improved entrances and boundaries. This also supports the play priority of better access to woodland in an area of Tring which is largely devoid of public open space.

2.5 Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside

2.5.1 Accessible Natural Green Space

Natural England's ANGSt standard states:

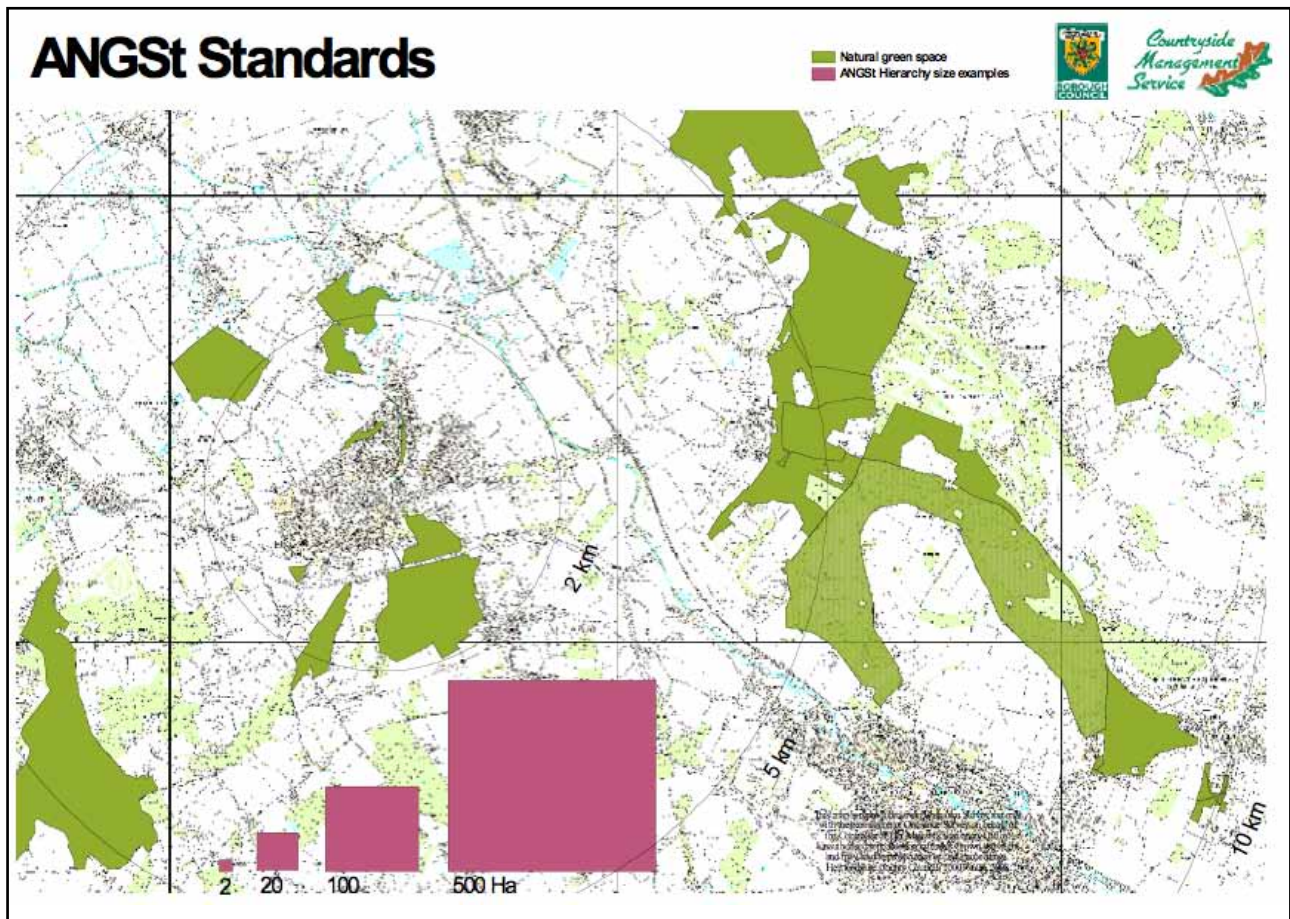
1. There should be at least 1 ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1000 head of population
2. That no person should live more than 300 m from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2 ha in size
3. That there should be at least one accessible 20 ha site within 2 km from home
4. That there should be one accessible 100 ha site within 5 km
5. That there should be one accessible 500 ha site within 10 km

When considering provision against Natural England's standard, Ashridge Estate, with a total area in excess of 800 ha, enables Tring to meet the highest level of the ANGSt provision hierarchy, as all of this sits within the 10 km radius specified by English Nature.

The presence of Tring Park meets the second highest tier which requires a site of over 100 ha within a 5 km radius. Wendover Woods in Buckinghamshire also complements this tier of provision for the western half of the settlement.

Tring Park, Tring Woods and Tring Reservoirs provide coverage across the whole settlement, satisfying the need for a 20 ha site within 2 km.

At the most local level, provision becomes more scattered. Approximately half the town is situated more than 300 m from a semi-natural green space of at least 2 ha in size. The deficient areas predominantly form two large blocks to the east and west of the town centre. Remedying this situation will prove extremely difficult due to the established land



use patterns. The open space at Miswell Lane does offer a well placed opportunity to rectify the situation to the west, but the effect upon existing sports users is likely to result in local opposition and have 'knock-on' effects to the supply of other forms of green space provision. The central third of this site, which is privately owned, has been left as a rather rough meadow which potentially could be improved to relieve the situation.

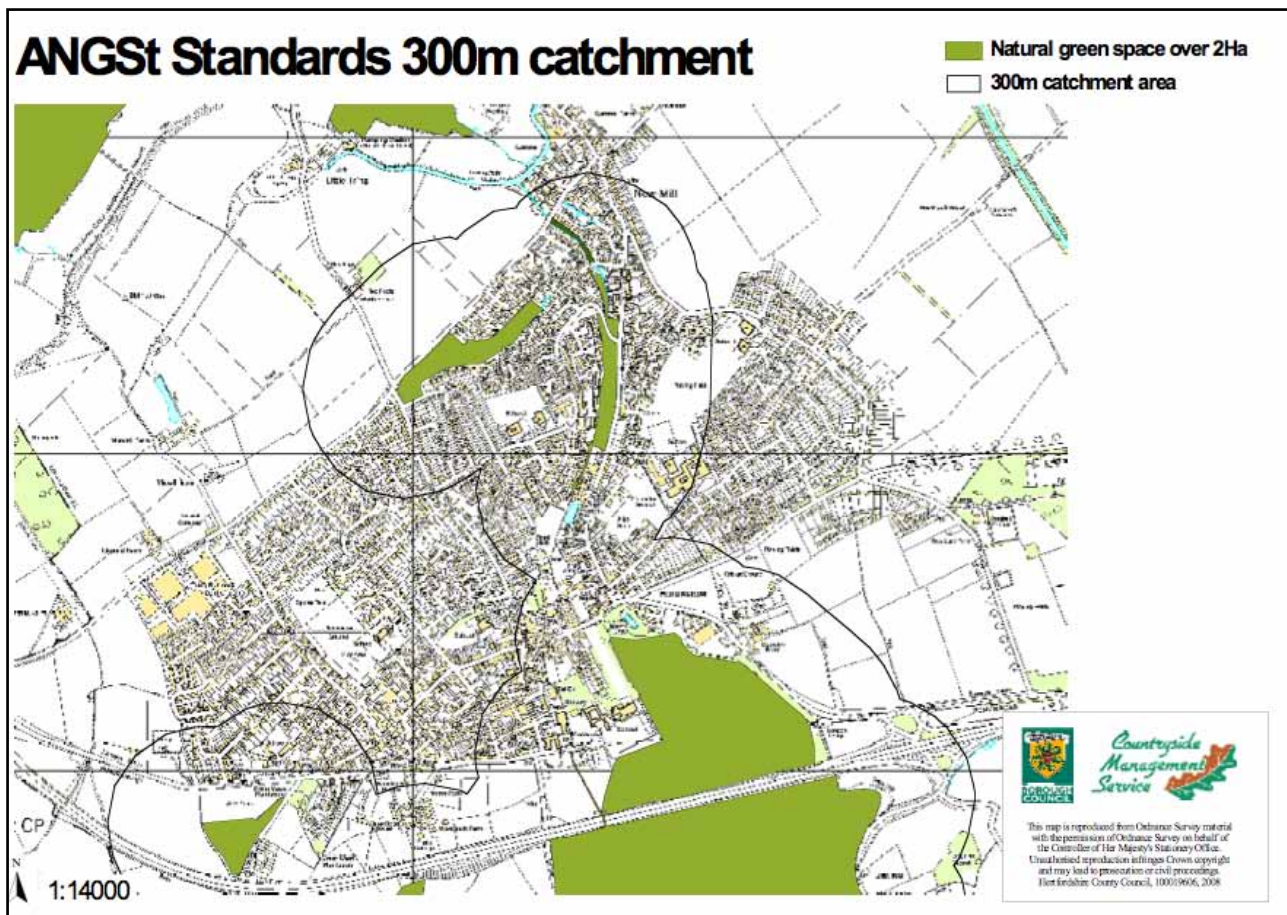
Action 12.

Seek opportunities to bring the meadow area at Miswell Lane into public ownership with the long term aim of improving the meadow.

Regarding the provision of Local Nature Reserves (LNR), the area is entirely deficient because there are no designated LNRs within Tring or its immediate surrounding area. At the broader level the availability of SSSIs and Wildlife Sites helps to mitigate this deficiency. Tring Park, Tring Woods and Tring Reservoirs SSSIs cover a total of 160 ha, which more than offsets the 13 ha of LNRs that would be required. But at a local level, a deficiency still exists within the town, and in acknowledgement of the distinct education and community focus of LNRs, this should be addressed.

Action 13.

Designate Dundale as a Local Nature Reserve, raising public awareness of the site. A section of 'Streamside Walk' could be included within the designated area due to its high profile location and character.



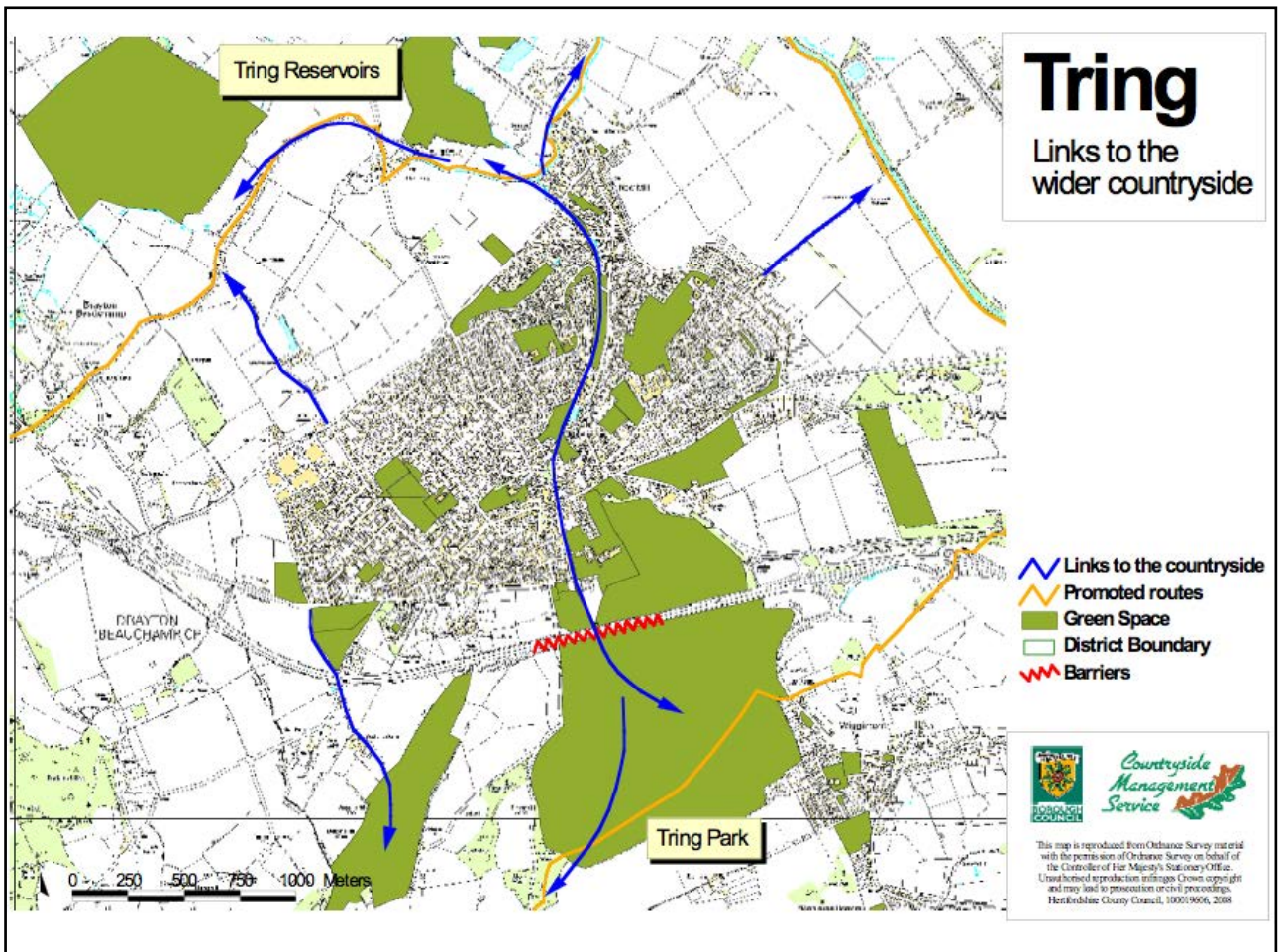
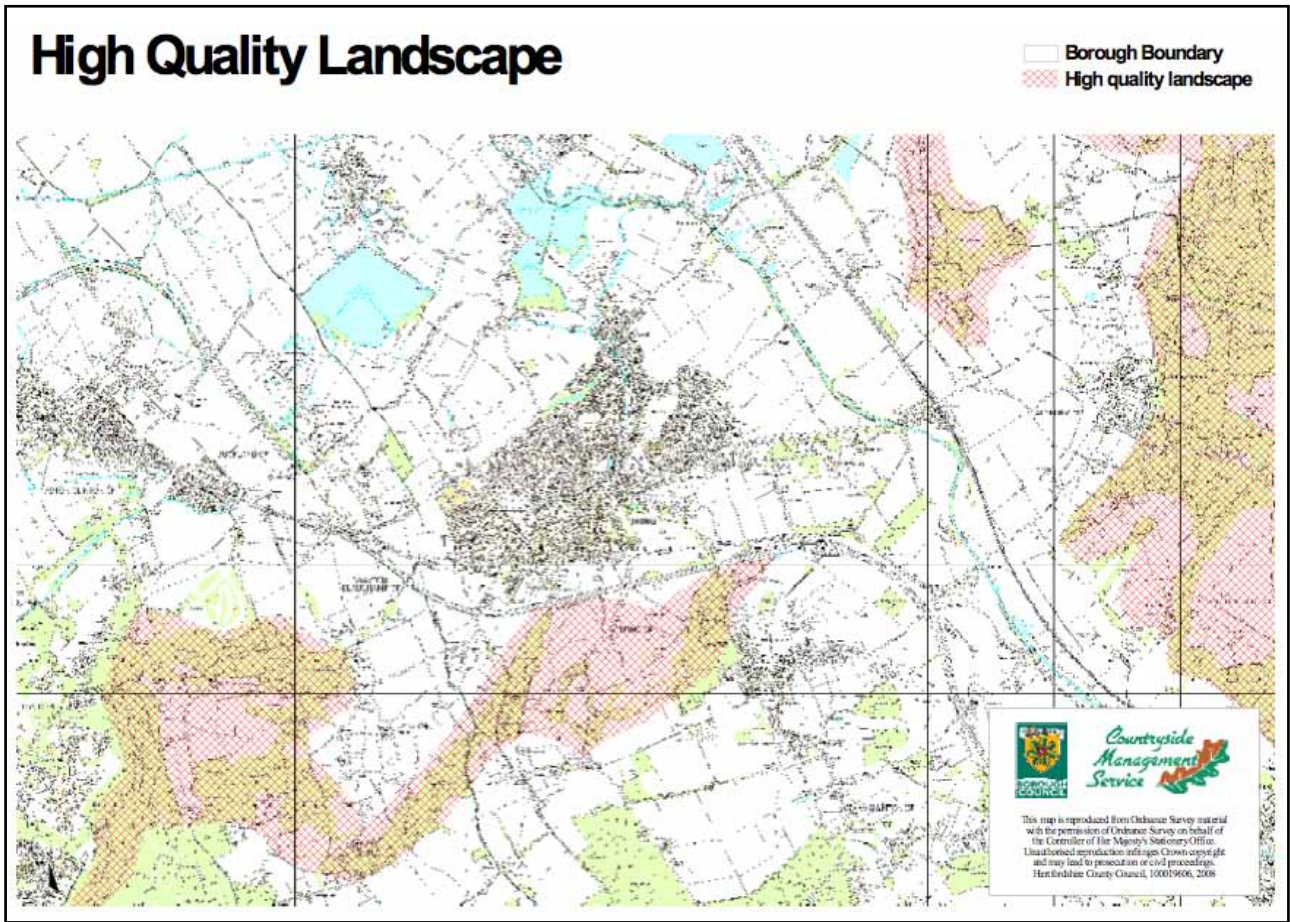
2.5.2 Landscape Quality and Recreation

Tring is located in the 'Tring Gap', a wide break in the Chiltern escarpment. This feature continues south east along the valley of the river Bulbourne, providing a natural transport route through the Chiltern Hills. Being positioned within this natural gap in the escarpment provides both an attractive setting for the town and the opportunity for informal recreation across a broad swathe of the adjacent countryside.

All areas of Dacorum were subject to a formal landscape character assessment in 2004. This identified both the Tring scarp slopes, Aldbury scarp slopes and Ashridge plateau as high quality landscapes. The reservoirs and surrounding area were felt to be of more moderate landscape quality, but it was noted that the reservoirs are highly valued locally by the community and no doubt provide a significant recreational destination.

This assessment of recreational resources at a landscape scale complements the site-based assessments and illustrates that a first class green space resource is available to the residents of Tring at almost all scales beyond the most local.

The high quality landscape adjacent to the town is well served by the public rights of way network, and this, combined with the availability of sites with public access, provides excellent opportunity for informal recreation in the surrounding countryside.



2.5.3 Links to the Countryside

Consultation, both specifically in Tring and across the Borough, suggests that access to the surrounding countryside is a priority for many residents. Though links are available via the public rights of way network the quality of these is variable. The link of prime concern here is the link into Tring Park which connects with the edge of the town and, other than an extremely rough and informal car park on Hastoe Lane, is only accessible on foot.

Action 14.

Improve access to Tring Park, including better access points to create a more welcoming impression.

At a greater distance from the town, gateway sites with suitable parking are abundant. These cover all of the larger sites discussed under the assessment against the ANGSt standard covered previously.

2.6 Consultation Summary

Within the range of proposals put forward, the two strongest themes were issues with the quality and the condition of facilities, plus concerns over protecting open space and the green belt from development.

Regarding specific requests, improvement to facilities for children and young people, and better cycling routes appear more than once. Improving access and signage to Tring Park and introducing more street tree planting was also raised. These findings are generally in line with the original consultation and support the direction of this strategy.

Details of the consultation responses received are within Section Four: Consultation and Appendices.



Green Space Area Study – Berkhamsted & Northchurch

3.1 Context

Berkhamsted is a small town of approximately 19,000 people situated midway between Tring and Hemel Hempstead in the Bulbourne Valley. The valley forms a natural transport corridor which has been utilised since Roman times. The location has historically had strategic significance, as demonstrated by the now ruined Norman Castle, and it boasts a rich history of famous associations. The Grand Union Canal, the London to Birmingham Main Line Railway and the historic Roman road of Akeman Street all pass through the town.

Constrained by the valley, the town has grown into a linear settlement extending four and a half kilometres along the valley floor and extending up a proportion of the valley sides.

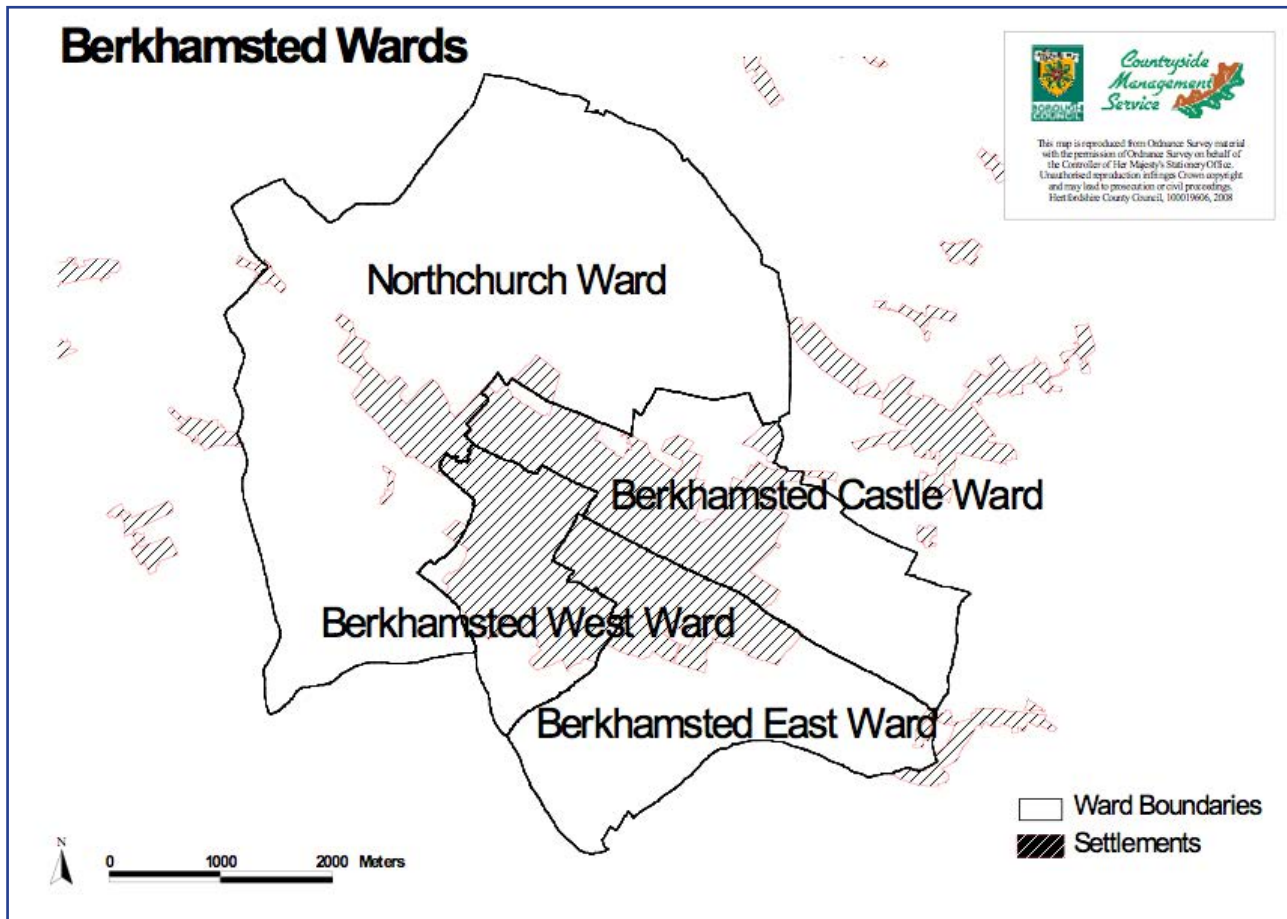
3.1.1 Social Character



Canal Fields

In the 2001 census, the four wards which cover the settlement of Berkhamsted and Northchurch had a combined population of 19,000. This equates to approximately 14% of the total population of the Borough.

The health of residents is better than the average for the East of England, but with some variation within the town. Northchurch residents are slightly below the Borough average while Berkhamsted East, West and Castle Wards are above the Borough average. Castle Ward in particular reports 10% more individuals with good health than Northchurch.



Economic activity shows a similar pattern, with Northchurch being slightly below the Borough average, which is in turn fractionally better than the East of England average. Berkhamsted East and West are similar to the Borough average and Castle Ward is above average.

Educational standards are high across the settlement, but they are extremely high in Castle Ward where 42% of the population have a high level qualification equivalent to a Degree, HND or similar. This is more than twice the national average and almost twice the Borough average. Berkhamsted East and West Wards show lower levels of attainment, but they are still 50% better than the Borough average. Finally, Northchurch, which has the lowest level of attainment in the settlement, is still 20% above the Borough average.

Regarding multiple indicators of deprivation, when considered against all wards nationally, Northchurch is in the 10% least deprived, closely followed by Berkhamsted West which is within the 8% least deprived. Berkhamsted East falls into the 3% least deprived while Berkhamsted Castle Ward sits comfortably ahead of its neighbours in the 0.01% least deprived, and therefore is by definition one of the very least deprived areas in the country.

There are variations in the age structure across the settlement. Northchurch has lower numbers of all age groups up to 44 and a much higher proportion of residents aged over the retirement age. The rest of the settlement has a population structure closer to the norm for the Borough, with slightly raised numbers of under-16s in Berkhamsted West.

Ethnic minorities account for a small proportion of the population at approximately 3% of the total.

In summary, while some considerable variations are present across the settlement, they all fall within a range which demonstrates exceptional levels of health, education and the absence of deprivation. On the whole Berkhamsted is healthy, well educated and with very little sign of deprivation. Where differences do exist they can largely be explained by the difference in age between the residents of Northchurch and the rest of the settlement.

3.1.2 Designations and strategic development issues

At the heart of the town Berkhamsted has an extensive conservation area. This is a result of its long habitation, the importance of the Castle, the key transport links which developed and the industries that have flourished over the centuries. Due to its size and complexity, the conservation area is divided into three areas incorporating the High Street; the Castle and Grand Union Canal corridor; and the Victorian and Edwardian residential areas around Charles Street.

The town is surrounded by the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Green Belt, which includes some of the schools in the town. Other schools are designated as open land or situated within the conservation area. The open spaces are designated as open land.

The Draft Core Strategy (November 2010) suggests either 1,130 (option 1) or 1,200 (option 2) new homes up to 2031. In both scenarios, homes would chiefly be provided within the town boundary.

Land at Durrants Lane, Shootersway is identified as a strategic site in both options, development beyond the town boundary includes land at Shootersway in option 2. The final allocation will be adopted as part of the Core Strategy in 2012.

The Urban Nature Conservation Study recognises the importance of the town's hinterland as a biodiversity resource. Part of the Chilterns Beechwood Special Area of Conservation (SAC) for habitats, a nationally important nature conservation designation, lies to the north of Berkhamsted. This includes land within the Ashridge estate, which is also designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (Ashridge Commons and Woods SSSI). North of the valley, the remainder of Northchurch and Berkhamsted Commons dominate the wildlife resource. To the south, there are other important wildlife areas such as Rossway parkland and woodland (with its mature hedgerows) and the ancient woodland at Dickshills.

3.1.3 Open Space Provision

Parks and gardens

Canal Fields 4.0 ha

Butts Meadow 1.5 ha

The Moor 0.7 ha

Total 6.2 ha (9%)

Semi natural green space

Berkhamsted Castle 7.0 ha
Sandpit Green 3.3 ha
Castle End Wood 3.2 ha
Brickhill Green 3.0 ha
Long Green 2.2 ha
Marlin Close Open Space 0.43 ha

Total 19.1 ha (28%)

Green corridors

The Grand Union Canal 9 ha (13%)

Outdoor sports facilities

Velvet Lawn 4.5 ha
Northchurch Recreation Ground 3.4 ha
Lagley Meadow 1.7 ha

Total 9.6 ha (14%)

Amenity green space

21 sites total area 6 ha (9%)

Provision for children

Normandy Drive 0.5 ha
George Street Play Area 0.13 ha

Total 0.63 ha (1%)

Note: Five other play areas are present but located within more general types of green space.

Allotments

6 sites total area 14.14 ha (21%)

Cemeteries and church yards

3 sites total area 3.2 ha (5%)

Grand Total 67.9 ha

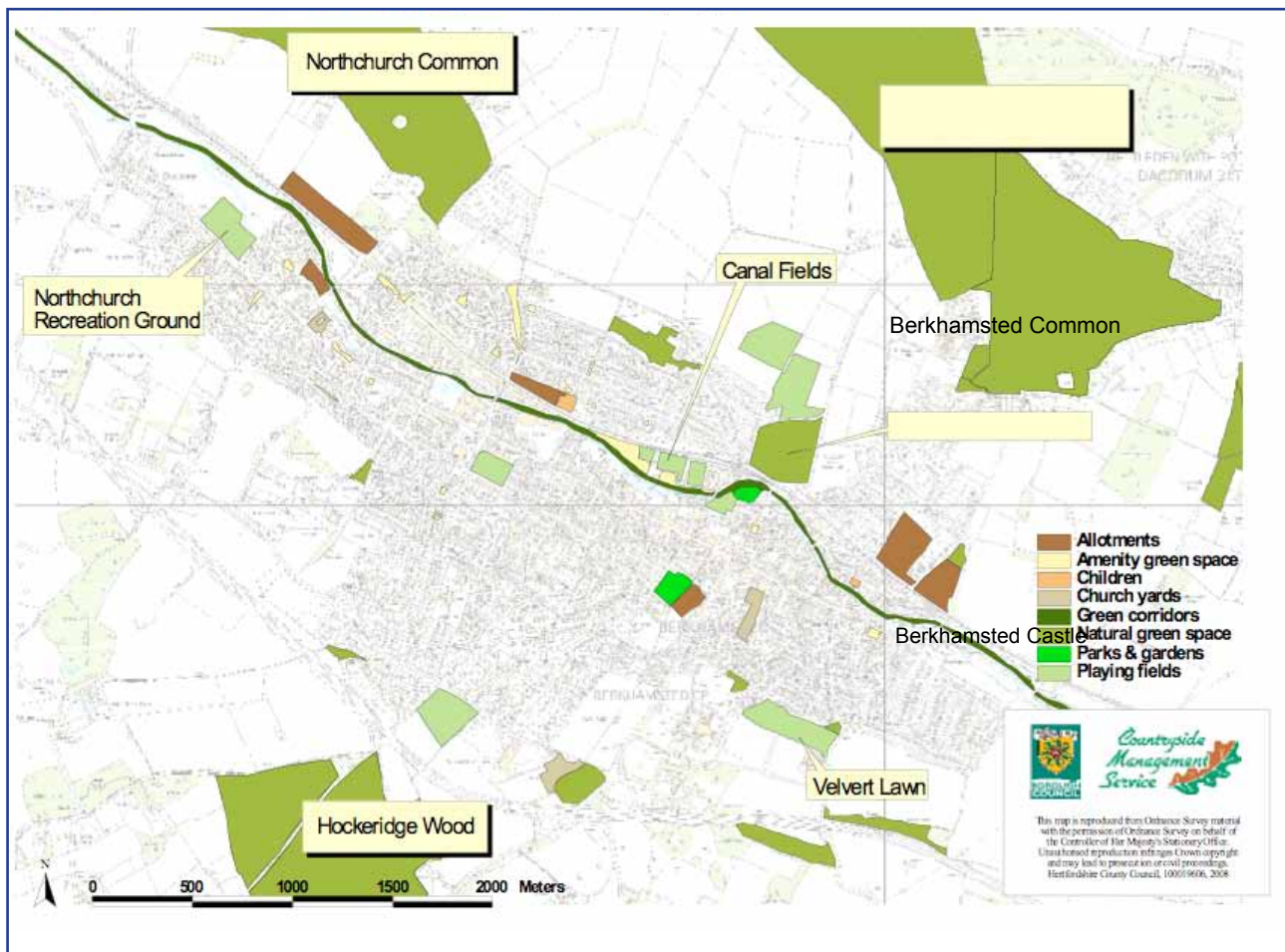
A further 350 ha of semi natural green space can be found within 2 km of the town's boundary.

Perhaps due to the restricted nature of the valley, there is relatively little public open space within the town. By far the largest form of open space available is used for school playing fields, followed by private sports facilities. School grounds are to be found throughout the settlement but the majority of large scale sites are located on the urban fringe.

The canal forms an important green corridor through the town which is complemented by a concentration of adjacent facilities in the town centre. The largest of these, known as Canal Fields, draws a significant number of visitors due to the range of facilities, the aesthetic appeal of the canal and a substantial car park.

Berkhamsted is deficient of leisure space as defined in the Local Plan. This definition covers public and private outdoor sports fields, parks and gardens, plus provision for children and young people. However, there is an abundance of accessible natural green space beyond the town's boundaries, with the southern tips of the complex of commons linked to Ashridge reaching the northern edge of the town. To the south of the town the 74 ha of Hockeridge and Pancake Wood are a little more than 150 m from the edge of the town.

Berkhamsted – accessible green space by type



3.2 Priority: Improve Quality

The following table contains a brief description and quality assessment of all the significant green spaces within the town and adjacent countryside.

Name	Area ha	Description	Quality inspection & score
Velvet Lawn DBC	4.5	A relatively large open playing field with a car park and pavilion which also contains a play area. A small copse of trees screens the entrance frontage.	<p>Good access from the road, but could be better from the nearby housing. There is almost no signage present.</p> <p>Some broken glass and graffiti was found. The enclosed car park may be a focus for anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>The playground is well equipped but a little isolated and lacking in shade.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>
Canal Fields DBC	4.0	<p>A varied park adjacent to the canal in the centre of Berkhamsted.</p> <p>It contains both informal areas to relax and explore complemented by the towpath, and provision for organised sport, including bowls, tennis and football.</p> <p>A play area is provided, along with a skate park for older children.</p>	<p>Some entrances are in need of improvement, but there is good access for pedestrians and vehicles.</p> <p>The signage could be better.</p> <p>A good range of facilities are present and all are in good order.</p> <p>Score: Good</p>

Northchurch Recreation Ground Northchurch Parish Council	3.4	<p>A traditional recreation ground on the northern edge of the town; catering for cricket, tennis and football, plus a small children's play area is available.</p> <p>A footpath leads out into the adjacent countryside, the immediate section of which is a wetland.</p>	<p>The signage is of good quality, but is charmless. The community information board is an advantage.</p> <p>The large car park is a good point, but inaccessible stiles and water-logged route into the countryside reduce accessibility. The recently refurbished playground provides a good facility for younger children.</p> <p>A good range of facilities are present for the location. Ground maintenance was reasonably good, especially the adjacent cricket ground.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Sandpit Green Leased to DBC	3.3	A wooded green lane in the countryside to the south of Berkhamsted.	<p>As a green lane it is open in character and relatively welcoming, with relatively good access. The site is clear of litter but fly-tipping is a problem.</p> <p>Score: Fair to Good</p>
Brickhill Green Leased to DBC	3.0	Woodland with a pond adjacent to the A416 Chesham Road.	<p>The woodland is very dense and unwelcoming, access is poor due to busy roads and edge of town location.</p> <p>There is reasonable signage present, but the terrain within is very poor and uneven.</p> <p>The woodland pond is of high value to conservation.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Long Green Leased to DBC	2.2	A wooded green lane in the countryside to the south of Berkhamsted.	<p>The green lane is open and relatively welcoming. Despite its isolated location, its rural setting and long sight lines make it feel safe.</p> <p>Score: Good</p>

Lagley Meadow DBC	1.7	A rectangular green space with trees along two boundaries and a play area.	<p>This area looks neglected. There are problems with dog mess, inadequate signage, and limited facilities.</p> <p>The play equipment is well maintained but limited. The Agora Sport space, to the rear of Berkhamsted Youth Club, is in poor condition with damage to the carpet and timber fence panels.</p> <p>The toilet block is in a poor state.</p> <p>Litter and fly-tipping are present.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>
Butts Meadow DBC	1.5	A modest park to the south of the town centre, predominantly given over to a playing field. It also contains a play area and the road frontage is complemented by mature formal tree planting.	<p>A generally attractive and welcoming site, but lacking in appropriate signage. There is some graffiti present, and some damage has been done to park furniture. The play area is limited in the range of equipment.</p> <p>The drinking fountain is in a state of disrepair.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

<p>Three Close Lane Cemetery Great Berkhamsted Parochial Church Council</p>	<p>1.2</p>	<p>A well established grave yard with a brick perimeter wall. The site is given over almost entirely to grave space with traditional stone memorials.</p> <p>A through route is present providing an alternative traffic-free path.</p>	<p>Broken gates, no signage, poor surfacing. Lower entrance is overgrown with ivy. Marked paths do exist but they are in mediocre condition and reverting to turf.</p> <p>The site is reasonably accessible, but given the likely age profile of users this could be improved.</p> <p>The poor quality of the space will deter responsible usage and the feeling of abandonment is likely to heighten a sense of personal insecurity in users. The grass on half of the site had been cut to an acceptable standard. However, the top half of the site was in a very poor state with long grass and numerous self-set trees.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>
<p>The Moor DBC</p>	<p>0.7</p>	<p>An attractive oval green space adjacent to the canal, containing a play area and surrounded by trees.</p>	<p>An open attractive site with good pedestrian access that provides a useful community space in the middle of Berkhamsted.</p> <p>Sign is dirty and graffitied, the play area is adequately maintained but the surfacing is poor with litter and detritus present. The park furniture and fencing is in poor condition.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
<p>Normandy Drive DBC</p>	<p>0.5</p>	<p>A small rectangular green space that provides a local play area.</p>	<p>Narrow entrance with steep ramp. Dirty sign with graffiti. The equipment is dated and the site lacks seating.</p> <p>The adjacent thicket is collecting litter and is in need of attention.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

Cox Dell (Marlin Close) DBC	0.43	<p>A small area of natural green space between the houses on Marlin Close and Durrants Lane. The site contains a grassed central area surrounded by trees.</p> <p>The trees are a mixture of native woodland and landscape planting of larch, and form a continuation of the small woodland immediately to the south.</p>	<p>The site has an unkempt appearance with little to suggest it is public open space other than an adjacent dog bin.</p> <p>The site has low usage, poor natural surveillance and forced entry points through the chain link fencing into adjacent woodland area.</p> <p>Widespread dog fouling on the open areas was present. Open areas were generally free of litter but the wooded edges of the site were strewn with litter, especially bottles and cans.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>
George Street Play Area DBC	0.13	A rectangular fence play ground amongst housing.	<p>There is adequate pedestrian access, but the site appears neglected.</p> <p>Basic signage is present. The range of play equipment and complementary seating could be better.</p> <p>Some litter and weeds were present.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>
The Beeches and Tunnel Fields DBC	2.2	Narrow belt of secondary woodland between residential area and open fields, with a compartment of rough former pasture.	<p>Encroaching scrub is compromising the value of the grassland.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>

While quite a varied picture is presented by the quality assessments with results ranging from poor to good, there are a number of recurrent issues. The most notable of these issues is signage which is either absent or, where present, dirty or graffitied. Litter also appears to be an issue.

In contrast to the common failings observed in the quality assessments, Canal Fields scores well across most categories. This site is well placed near the centre of the town, has a good range of facilities and is well used. It achieved the Green Flag Award in 2008, 2009 and 2010, and attracts residents from across the settlement.

Action 1.

Continue to manage and develop Canal Fields to the Green Flag standard, implementing the actions of the Canal Fields Management Plan to improve signage and the entrances.

Action 2.

Enhance Three Close Lane cemetery as an informal recreation resource within the town in partnership with Berkhamsted Town Council and Berkhamsted Community Partnership.

Action 3.

Improve access to and use of Cox Dell (Marlin Close) through the redevelopment of the Egerton Rothesay School site.

3.3 Priority: Increase Facilities**3.3.1 Provision for Children & Young People**

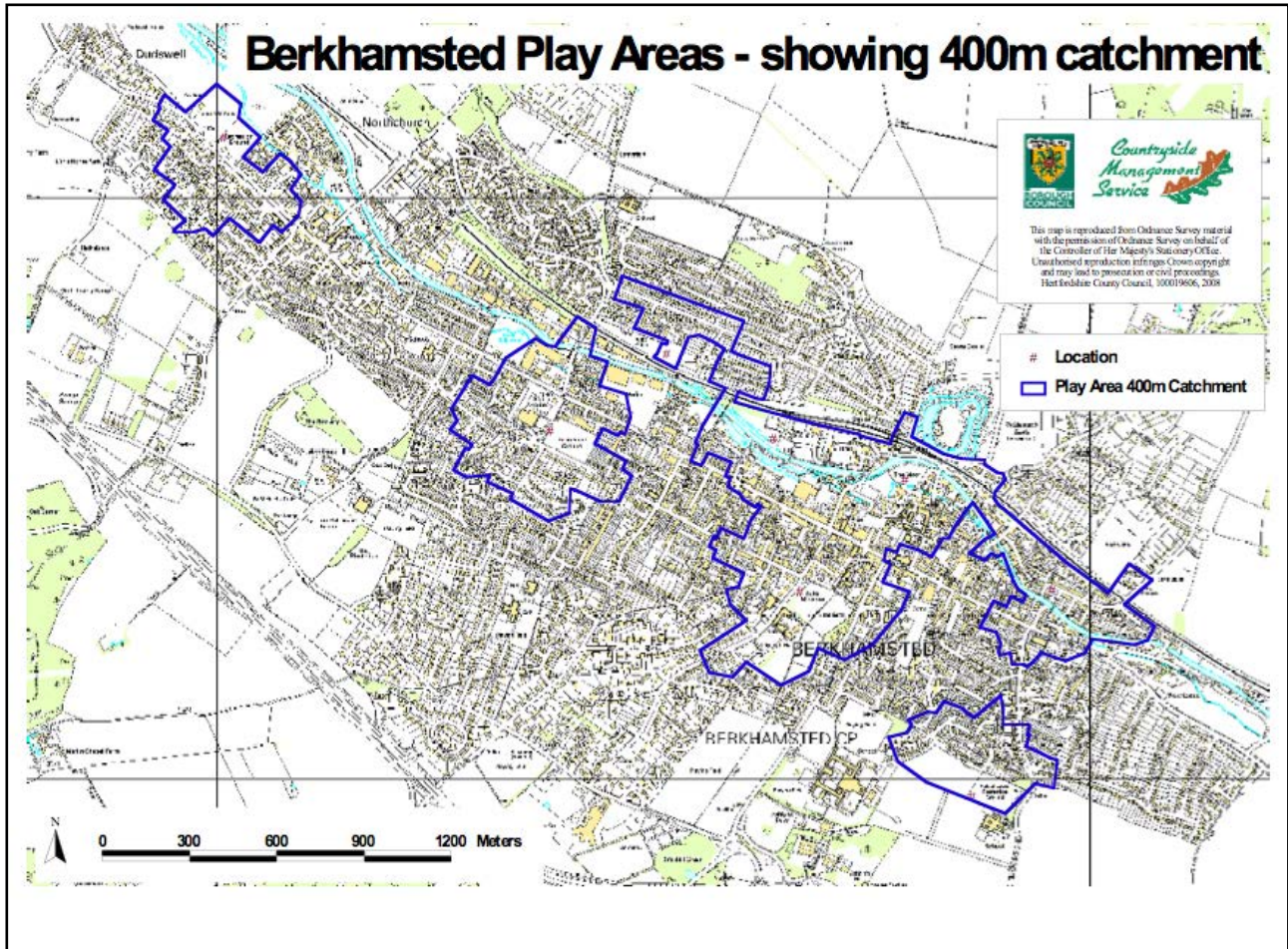
The following facilities, present in Berkhamsted, were evaluated as part of the development of the Play Strategy.

Quality Assessments			
	Site features (max 33)	Equipment (Max 41)	Accessibility
George Street	16	9	Accessible to all
The Moor	9	4	Some accessible features
Butts Meadow	12	5	Severely limited
Lagley Meadow	13	6	Some accessible features
Normandy Drive	9	5	Severely limited
Velvet Lawn	12	7	Some accessible features
Canal Fields	19	17	Accessible to all

In addition to these, the following facilities are available in Berkhamsted.

- Lagley Meadow - a youth shelter and basketball hoop, Agora sports area by Berkhamsted Youth Centre.
- Velvet Lawn - a basketball hoop and youth shelter
- Canal Fields - a skate park, youth shelter and fitness trail
- Northchurch Recreation Ground – play area with seven pieces of equipment, a basketball net, small goals and a skateboard half pipe.

From the following map it can be seen that the central portion of the town, particularly towards the south east, is reasonably well served by play areas. However, approximately two-thirds of the town lies beyond the 400 m target distance from a play area, and a large area of the town in the south towards Shootersway has no formal play provision. This area also falls into Berkhamsted West Ward which has the highest number of under 16 year olds.



Berkhamsted is unlikely to experience any considerable growth or redevelopment in the near future and therefore the opportunity of developing new sites to cover the outlying areas of the town is limited.

The next most frequent observation relates to play provision. In Berkhamsted, the four of the eight play areas (Lagley Meadow, Butts Meadow, Normandy Drive and George Street) were described as limited in range or dated. Northchurch Parish Council has recently upgraded its play area in Northchurch Recreation Ground. Prior to the refurbishment the play area had three items of equipment offering limited play value and had accessibility issues. The new scheme has a good range of equipment for toddlers and juniors, which compliments the youth provision on site.

Action 4.

Improve the playgrounds at Lagley Meadow and Butts Meadow as a priority because these play areas serve the area of the town with the least provision, to include inclusive play opportunities.

Action 5.

Improve the quality and play value of the remaining play areas (excepting Canal Fields), to mitigate for the greater distances people are being expected to travel to access the service, to include inclusive play provision.

Action 6.

Provide new play areas within the town through the development of the LDF.

Action 7.

Improve youth provision at Lagley Meadow as this site is located in Berkhamsted West which shows a slight concentration of under 16 year olds and the current youth provision is poor.

Action 8.

Support Berkhamsted Youth Town Council to develop more youth provision within the town.

3.3.2 Outdoor Sports

The following facilities are available in Berkhamsted and the surrounding area. These include facilities provided by Dacorum Borough Council, town or parish councils, schools and sports clubs.

Football pitches	Public	9 senior, 3 junior, 4 mini
	Private	4 senior, 1 junior, 2 mini
Rugby	Public	2 senior
	Private	2 senior
Cricket	Public	4 senior
	Private	4
Tennis courts	Public	32
	Private	32
Netball courts	Public	6
	Private	4
Athletics track	Public	2
	Private	1
Bowls	Public	2
	Private	1

The Outdoor Sport and Recreation Assessment, Strategy & Action Plan (2006) identified a shortfall of three junior and one mini football pitches. This is reflected by the continued demand for junior pitches from junior clubs who play at a variety of school, club and village sites. Overall there was a sufficient capacity of senior football pitches, although the Northchurch Recreation Ground pitch was being over-played. Having been out of use for a number of seasons, a junior sized pitch suitable for U11-U14 was developed at Lagley Meadow for the 2009/10 season.

Action 9.

Provide additional pitches through any development which occurs within or adjacent to the town in line with this strategy's approach to managing development.

3.3.3 Cycling

The Dacorum Cycling Strategy (2009) includes 14 improvements for Berkhamsted to create and improve the network of cycle paths running the length of the High Street, into/ out from the countryside from the four corners of the town and connections to schools and leisure facilities. The actions which would impact on open space are listed below:

Priority 2.

- Upgrade the bridleway from steps to a ramp to improve access between Bridgewater School and Northchurch Common Bridleway. *(Note: This does not form part of a safe route to schools route and the width is restricted between a fence and a hedge. This would result in cyclists potentially arriving at speed at the entrance to Bridgewater School. As an alternative bridleway B22 could be improved with additional junction safety works where it joins Bridle Way (road).)*
- Create cut-through from Canal Fields to River Park Industrial Estate. *(Note: This has been considered previously and not pursued due to land issues, which are likely to continue. As an alternative the links through Canal Fields and over the Grand Union Canal and River Bulbourne to the towpath could be improved to aid cycle access.)*

Action 10.

Improve cycle access to the Canal at Canal Fields as part of the review of the sites bridges, planned within the Canal Fields Management Plan.

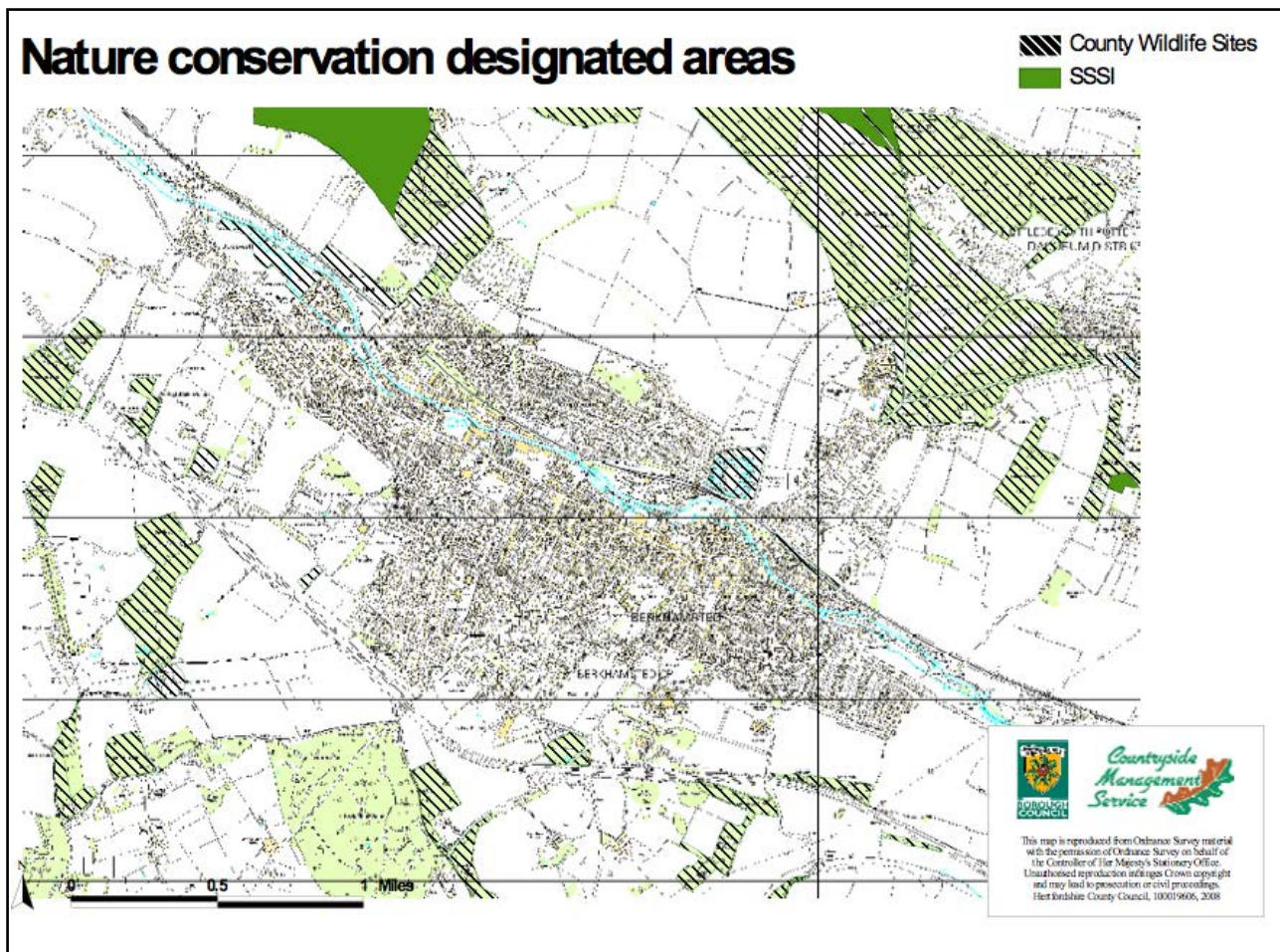
3.3.4 Allotments

At a Borough-wide level, there is adequate provision of allotments when considered against the levels recommend by the National Society of Allotments and Leisure Gardeners. In total there is 30% more allotment space than would be recommended. In Berkhamsted, the situation is even further above the recommended levels, as 14 ha are available to residents of the town compared with the recommended 4.75 ha. However in line with the national surge in the demand for allotments, there is a waiting list for all sites.

3.4 Priority: Nature Conservation

The built up areas of the town are lacking in ecologically valuable sites, although the canal does provide a wildlife corridor through the whole length of the settlement. The 2006 Urban Nature Conservation Study considers the town in detail and identifies the area around Cross Oak Road to the south and Swing Gate Lane in the east to be particularly deficient in wild space.

Moving out from the town centre, the situation changes markedly. The town fringes contain a string of Wildlife Sites, especially along the northern edge, and beyond this a substantial



ecological resource exists including areas designated SSSIs, which by definition are considered to be significant in a regional context.

To the north the complex centred on Ashridge Estate reaches Berkhamsted through Berkhamsted Common and Northchurch Common. Much of this complex of woodland and open commons is designated as a SSSI. To the south the substantial woodland of Hockeridge and Pancake Wood sits just beyond the A41.

Most of the County Wildlife Sites within or directly adjacent to the town are not directly under the control of the Council, with the exception of Tunnel Fields and woodlands close to the A41. Berkhamsted Castle, managed by English Heritage, is also an accessible site close to the town centre.

Many of the open spaces within the town are used as sports areas with limited opportunities to develop ecological interest. Cox Dell, Velvet Lawn and some of the cemetery and allotment sites have pockets of natural greenspace, which could be enhanced. Since 2004 the Bulbourne Restoration Project has focussed on improving the river corridor through Canal Fields.

Action 11.

Develop a management plan for Tunnel Fields, identified as both a County Wildlife Site and as a priority habitat under the BAP, to ensure the surviving open habitat is retained as calcareous grassland.

Action 12.

Implement management plans for Dacorum's woodlands in Berkhamsted which are identified as County Wildlife Sites – Sandpit Green, Long Green and Brickhill Green.

Action 13.

Develop a pond management plan for Brickhill Green Wood, to complement the existing woodland management plan.

Action 14.

Continue to develop the ecological interest at Canal Fields, through the implementation of the Canal Fields management plan.

3.5 Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside

3.5.1 Accessible Natural Green Space

Natural England's ANGSt standard states:

1. There should be at least 1 ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1000 head of population.
2. That no person should live more than 300 m from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2 ha in size
3. That there should be at least one accessible 20 ha site within 2 km from home
4. That there should be one accessible 100 ha site within 5 km
5. That there should be one accessible 500 ha site within 10 km

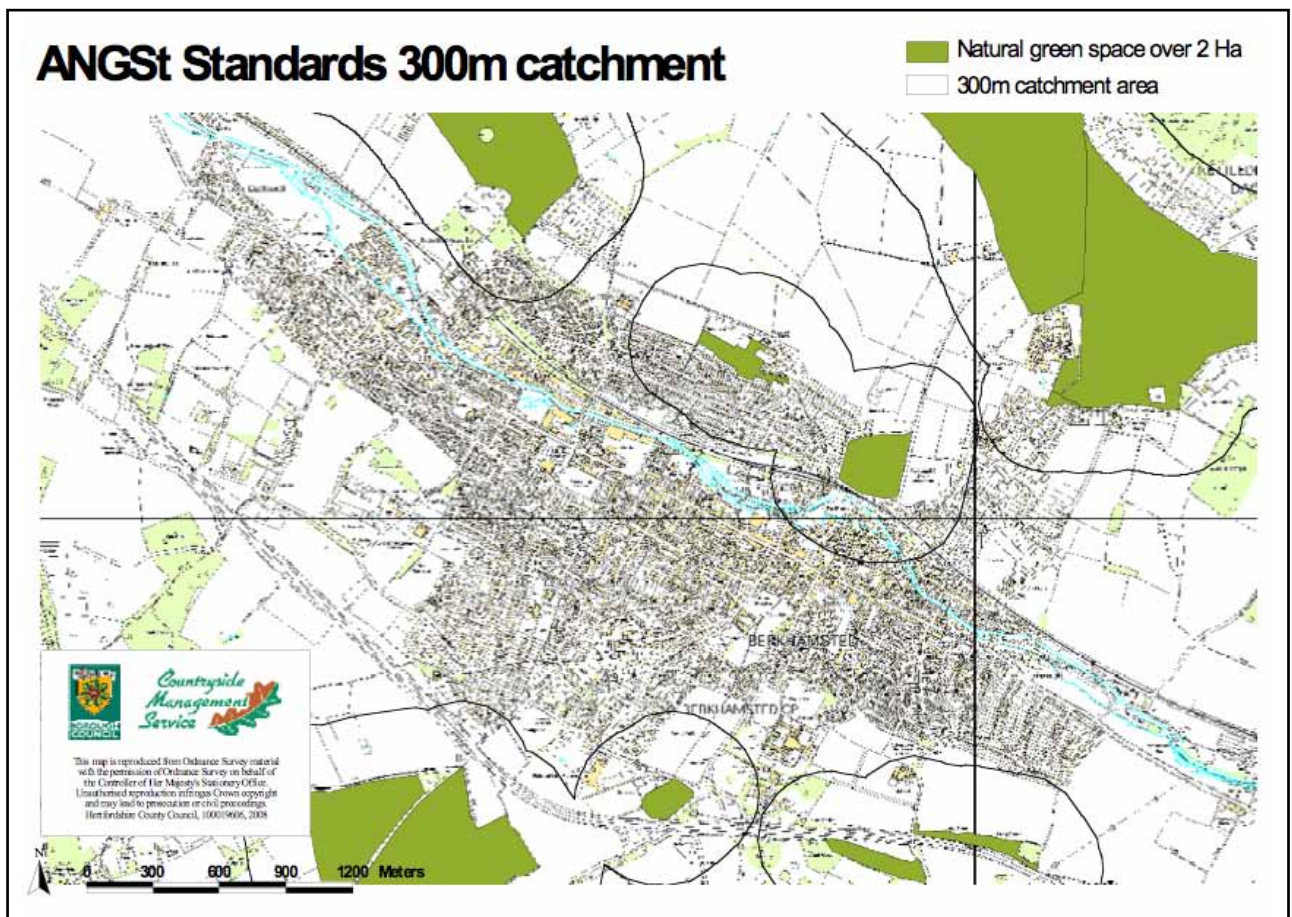
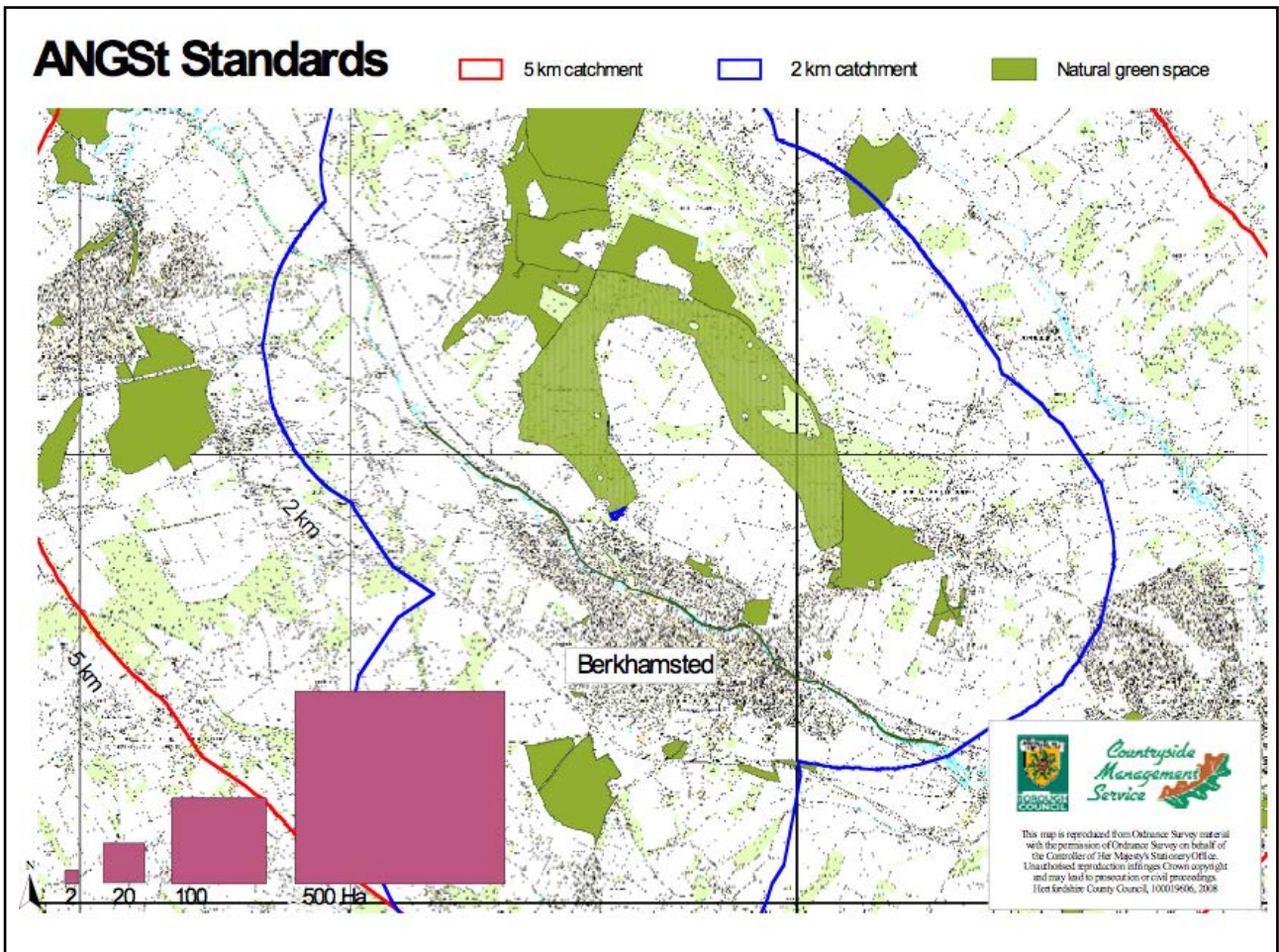
Considering these criteria in reverse order, the presence of the Ashridge Estate satisfies the requirement for a 500 ha site within 10 km of all residents. It also satisfies the next range of the criteria which requires a 100 ha site to be within 5 km of all residents.

A combination of Hockeridge Woods, Pancake Woods and Ashridge Estate satisfy need for a 20 ha site within 2 km of every home.

At the most local level the provision becomes much more sparse with the majority of the town falling outside the 300 m minimum distance from a site of natural green space at least 2 ha in size.

The following maps show that there is very little natural green space within Berkhamsted. However, it should be noted that this assessment excludes the canal, which provides a form of accessible natural green space serving a wide area of the town. Considering the sites included in the analysis, Berkhamsted Castle is a well maintained attractive site for informal recreation, but in contrast Castle End Wood and Brickhill Green are rather anonymous sites that are unlikely to appeal to residents.

There are no designated nature reserves in Berkhamsted. There are 21.9 ha of County Wildlife Sites, exceeding the target level for local nature reserves of 16.2 ha.



Action 15.

Improve access to Brickhill Green (wood), and Castle End Wood which are both low key sites at present, which appear little used. This would also support the play priority of increasing access to woodland.

Action 16.

Work in liaison with Natural England to designate Brickhill Green, Long Green and Sandpit Green woodlands as Local Nature Reserves. This would provide about half the ANGSt standard target of 1 ha of LNR per 1000 head population.

3.5.2 Landscape Quality and Recreation

Berkhamsted sits in a narrow and steep sided section of the Bulbourne Valley. Beyond the town to the north the valley sides give way to the Ashridge Plateau. This area of undulating woodlands and heath was considered to be a high quality landscape under the formal assessment carried out in 2004 and provides a wide expanse of attractive countryside with good public access. Due to the relative scarcity of public open space within the settlement, this area represents the most prominent local resource for informal recreation.

The Bulbourne Valley and the Ashlyns and Wigginton Plateau were both considered to be of more moderate landscape quality, but these areas are still not without appeal for informal recreation. The greatest impediment is probably the A41 trunk road, which passes close to the southern boundary of the town and impacts on its sense of tranquillity and aesthetic appeal.

3.5.3 Links to the Countryside

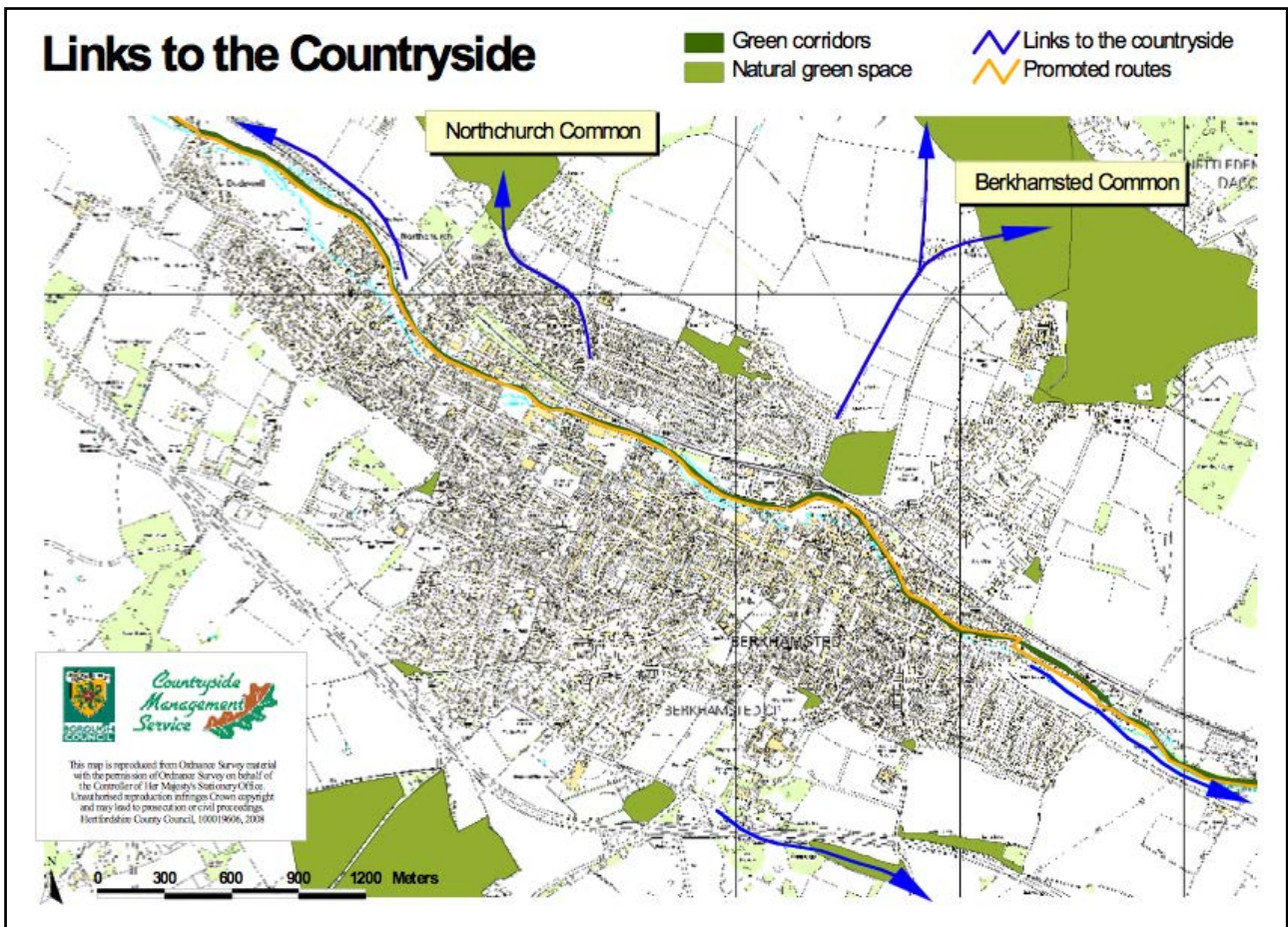
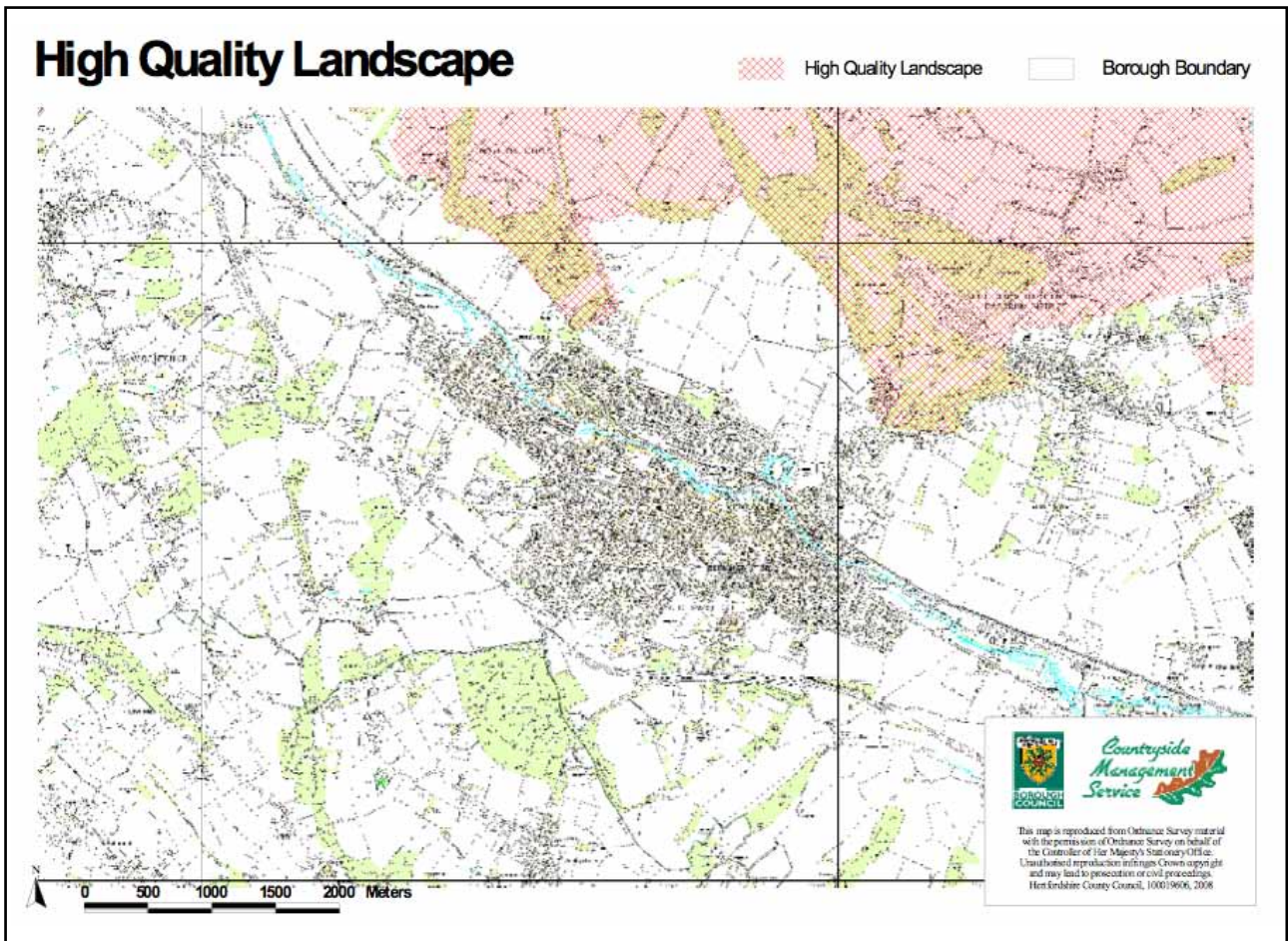
The Grand Union Canal forms a natural green corridor and link into the adjacent countryside. This is a considerable asset, and its level course will allow a broad section of the community to access areas much further away than otherwise would be the case.

From the north of the settlement two important footpath links allow access to Northchurch and Berkhamsted Commons. These are the primary areas of open land available to residents, providing extensive opportunity for informal recreation. Both routes are well signposted. The route through Northchurch Common links to a surfaced bridleway which provides all season access along the edge of Ashridge to the Bridgewater Monument.

From the southern boundary of the settlement access is more limited. This is in part due to the presence of the A41 dual carriageway which by-passes the town on this side. Despite this some links are present, most notably from Ashlyn's Farm via Sandpit Green and Long Green.

Action 17.

Ensure that the main links identified are maintained to a good and accessible standard.



3.6 Consultation Summary

The lack of open space in the centre of the town was linked to a strong desire to resist development that increased the density of the existing settlement. The existing green spaces were also strongly defended, with the canal and its immediate environment being seen as particularly important.

Improving facilities for children and young people was proposed consistently throughout the process, along with the need for any expansion of the town to provide additional play facilities, sports pitches, and open space.

Details of the consultation responses received are within Section Four: Consultation and Appendices.



Green Space Area Study – Hemel Hempstead - General

4.1 Context

With a population of 82,074, the New Town of Hemel Hempstead is the largest town within Dacorum. Situated in the east of the Borough it has developed around the confluence of the River Gade and the River Bulbourne and has grown to include several formerly distinct historic settlements. Despite the close proximity of the A41, M1 and M25, which provide good access to the surrounding towns and beyond to London and the Midlands, it remains surrounded by open countryside.

4.1.1 Designations and strategic development issues

Hemel Hempstead's conservation area centres on the historic Old Town. The building styles, dates and materials are typical of a busy High Street which has been occupied and provided a trading route since the medieval period, with the many inns and associated alleyways being a particular feature.

Part of Gadebridge Park falls within the conservation area, including the Walled Garden and Charter Tower which once formed part of Charter House. The park's open landscape provides an appropriate setting and views to the grade 1 listed 12th century St Mary's Church.

Maylands Business Park, the main employment area located to the east of the town close to the M1, is the subject of regeneration by Dacorum Borough Council. Smaller areas are located at Two Waters, Paradise and Apsley.

The town is surrounded by Green Belt, which includes some of the significant parks and playing fields in Dacorum Borough Council's ownership such as Gadebridge Park and Bunkers Park. The school sites within the town are designated as open land.

Hemel Hempstead was developed as a New Town in the early 1950s and '60s with new neighbourhoods continuing to be added up until the 1990s. Since this period, growth has slowed and has not kept pace with locally generated housing needs.

The Draft Core Strategy (November 2010) identifies Hemel Hempstead as a Main Centre for Development and Change, where new housing growth will be concentrated.

'New development will aim to enhance the pride and image of the town through high quality regeneration and development, and through the provision of new open space, outdoor leisure space, public realm improvements and co-ordinated

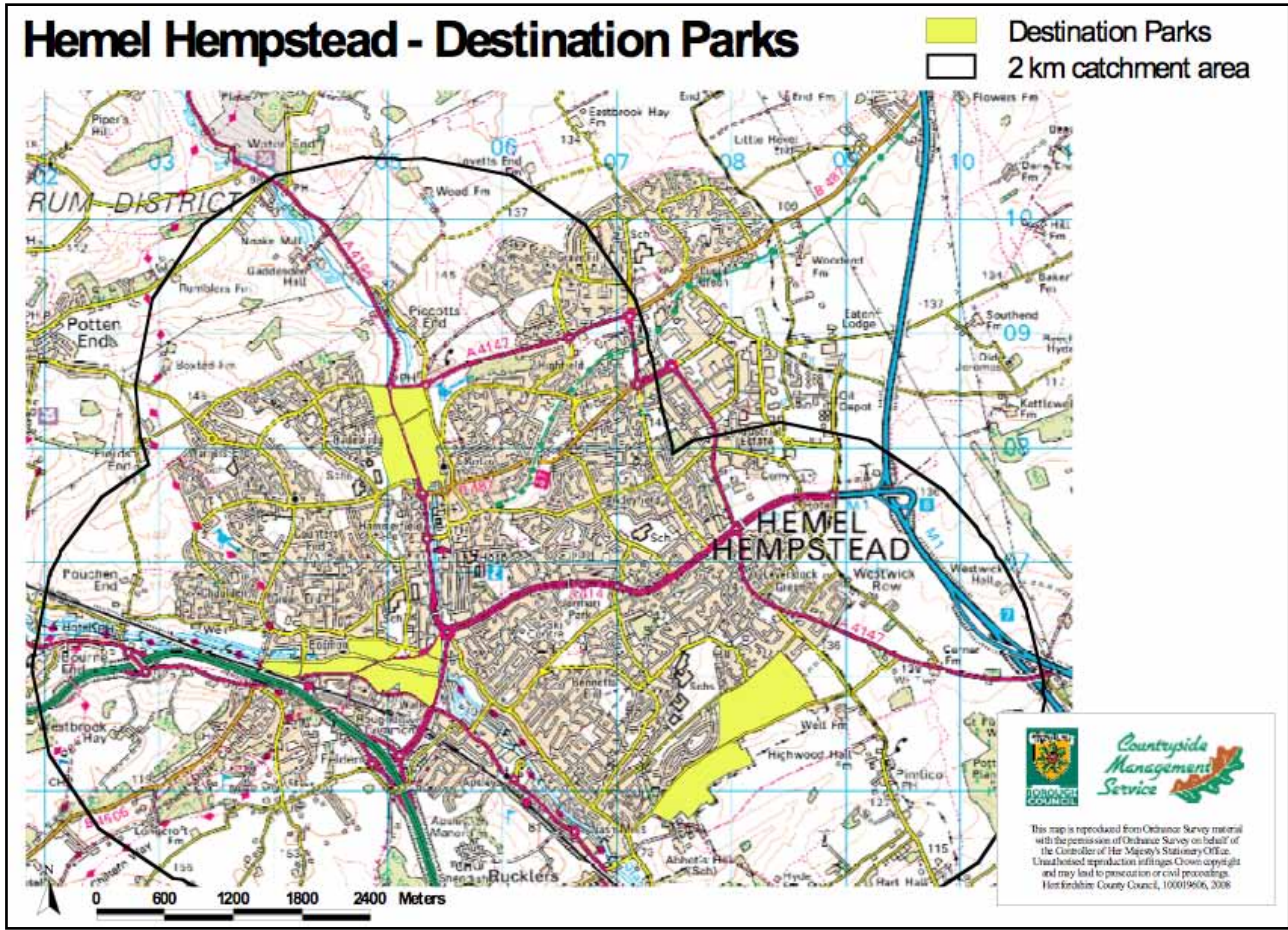
public transport interchanges. New development will also accommodate renewable energy generation and energy efficiency technologies to reduce carbon emissions. However, the greatest opportunities for zero and low carbon technologies are associated with high density developments, which will be delivered in the town centre and to the east of the town.'

New housing growth within the Borough will be concentrated mainly in Hemel Hempstead with opportunities on previously developed land¹ being maximised. Housing growth levels of either 7,530 (Option 1) or 8,800 new homes (Option 2) are proposed. Both options include around 1,800 homes in the town centre and 1000 in East Hemel Hempstead. Option 2 includes the strategic sites of Marchmont Farm (approximately 300 homes) and West Hemel Hempstead (between 450 and 900 depending on which areas are taken forward). The final figure will be incorporated into the Core Strategy to be adopted in 2012.

Other key areas of the Draft Core Strategy are the regeneration of Maylands Business Park and creating an attractive and vibrant town centre.

4.1.2 Open Space Provision

Hemel Hempstead has a small deficiency in leisure space (6.02 ha) compared with the 2.8 ha per 1000 population set by the Local Plan. In comparison with the other settlements it has a large provision of amenity green spaces, a legacy of the New Town development, and natural green space.



¹ Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure (excluding agricultural land or forestry buildings)

One third of the 591 ha of open space provision within Hemel Hempstead is provided by the Box Moor Trust.

The Box Moor Trust was established in 1594 to manage land purchased by local inhabitants for fishing and grazing. Over time additional land was acquired between Bovingdon and west Hemel Hempstead, and the estate now comprises of 487 acres (197 ha) of water meadows, woods, cricket pitches, a golf course, rugby field and fishing lake, houses and commercial properties.

The estate provides access to the natural environment on the edge of a highly urbanised area. Land is managed for biodiversity through traditional methods, including grazing by Belted Galloway cattle and Norfolk Horn sheep. The main purpose of the Trust now is to manage the estate for the use and enjoyment of the people in the area, which includes occasional special events. The Trust's role in providing environmental education has become increasingly significant over the past decade and facilities have been developed for school and community groups on the estate.

The Trust manages a significant proportion of the open space within the Borough, approximately just over 25%, if one discounts the more remote and separate contribution of the National Trust (Ashridge) and British Waterways (Tring Reservoirs). The Trusts owns and manages more than half of Hemel Hempstead's Wildlife Sites (in excess of 100 hectares).

The Green Space Strategy Section One: Policies and Objectives section identifies destination parks throughout the Borough of which three – Boxmoor, Bunkers Park and Gadebridge Park are within Hemel Hempstead². On the previous map the 2 km catchment distance is set to illustrate the relative distance from sections of the town.

At a 2 km catchment zone, these adequately provide for most of the town, excepting the far north east corner. If in the future Hemel Hempstead significantly expands in this direction a further high quality recreation space should be identified for residents within these neighbourhoods.

At present the destination parks are not being managed to the recommended Green Flag standard³. Improving the quality of destination parks is a high priority, supported corporately through the Hemel 2020 vision which identifies a new Urban Park at Two Waters and an extension and enhancements to Bunkers Park, within its project programme. Actions relating to these areas are detailed within the study areas to follow.

² Policy 3 – To create attractive, sustainable, accessible and well managed green spaces

³ Policy 3 Action 12 Seek external recognition for the quality and management of our green spaces through national award and accreditation schemes such as Green Flag.

4.2 Priority: Increase Facilities

4.2.1 Outdoor Sports

The 2006 Sport and Recreation Study indicated that football pitches at five locations were being overplayed, especially Pennine Way and Pancake Lane. However, it also noted that numerous pitches across Hemel Hempstead had spare capacity, particularly school grounds, which would ease the situation markedly if they could be accessed.

Rugby and hockey provision was felt to be adequate while the current cricket grounds were being considerably overplayed. Without linking into major expansion or redevelopment of green space in the town, options to improve the provision of cricket grounds may be limited.

Additional sports pitches may be developed at Bunkers Park, to the south east of the town. Dacorum Borough Council acquired Bunkers Park from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) in 1995 as a replacement for open space lost to development at Jarman Fields, where previously there were seven football pitches. The top field at Bunkers Park was identified as a reserve area for further football pitches should demand arise. Since this period, the field has become an important informal recreational space for visitors for activities such as kite surfing, with the remainder of the park being managed for nature conservation purposes. In February 2006 Dacorum Borough Council launched the Hemel 2020 Vision, with the aim of regenerating the town of Hemel Hempstead 50 years after it was formed as a New Town. Bunkers Park was adopted as one of the key projects, focussing on enhancing the park as a destination for residents and visitors and providing additional sports pitches on the area of land between top field and Bedmond Road, currently within the ownership of HCA. The intention would be to develop four senior football pitches, which would enable other venues to be dedicated to junior football.

The existing local plan recognises the need to provide a stadium complex to be a focus for the town's sporting aspirations, to meet future demand for sports facilities and to provide a sporting legacy following the 2012 Olympics. This is supported by Town Stadium Complex at Hemel Hempstead, Feasibility Study (June 2009) which confirmed the potential and deliverability of a Town Stadium Complex. The new venue could accommodate both community sports provision and Hemel Hempstead Town Football Club, currently based at a Vauxhall Road on a site leased from the Homes and Communities Agency.

Action 1.

Improve the quality and capacity of the existing sports pitches.

Action 2.

Develop additional football pitches at Bunkers Park, in line with the Hemel 2020 vision, as HCA's land becomes available through the redevelopment of their other landholdings.

Action 3.

Look to provide additional pitches through the Town Stadium Complex which is currently subject to feasibility work.

4.2.2 Cycling

At a strategic level National Cycle Network Route 57 runs from Cricklade in Wiltshire to Welwyn Garden City. It passes through Oxford, Princes Risborough, Thame and Aylesbury before entering Dacorum along the Aylesbury Arm of the Grand Union Canal. It continues south along the canal towpath or minor roads to Hemel Hempstead and then follows the Nickey Line to Harpenden.

Regional route 66 is planned to largely follow the canal between Aylesbury, Tring, Hemel Hempstead and Watford.

The Dacorum Cycling Strategy (Dacorum Borough Council, 2006) details local route recommendations for Hemel Hempstead. The impact of these upon Hemel Hempstead's green space is discussed in each of the detailed area studies.

4.2.3 Allotments

Hemel Hempstead has only 8.2 ha of allotment space, of which 16 sites (approximately 500 plots) are managed by Dacorum Borough Council. The level suggested by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners would require a little over 20 ha to be provided, which is more than twice the current provision. This is in contrast to the rest of the Borough where generally an abundance of allotment space is present.

The majority of the Hemel Hempstead sites were created as part of the development of the New Town neighbourhoods and are located in the central wards of the town - Adeyfield East (4), Adeyfield West (4), Bennetts End (2), Boxmoor (1), Chaulden (1), Hemel Hempstead Central (1), Leverstock Green (1), Nash Mills (1). There are no allotment sites to the north of the town beyond Warners End Road or Queensway.

There has been a resurgence of interest in allotments from 2007 onwards with a sharp increase in the number of enquires. All sites in Hemel Hempstead are now full with a minimum of three year waiting list.

The Hemel Hempstead Society for Allotment and Leisure Gardeners was formed in 2008 by a group of residents. Their initial impetus for forming was the prospect of developing an allotment site on Grovehill Playing Fields. They subsequently expanded their scope to cover all of Hemel Hempstead and became affiliated to the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners. HHSALG provides a forum for people with an interest in gardening, growing fruit and vegetables or in allotments and is open to all residents of the Borough. The Society has a membership of 50, of whom approximately 33 are allotment plot holders and 30 have expressed an interest in a plot at a new site at Grovehill.

HHSALG are also interested in reinstating the left hand side of Bennetts End allotments. This has not been in use for some years due to security issues as the site is easily accessed from the surrounding woodland. The site is now very overgrown and scrub is developing. The area is approximately 4000 m² and previously accommodated 23 plots.

Action 4.

Work in partnership with community groups to find new sites within existing local authority land to be developed into new allotment sites.

Action 5.

Maximise the use of existing allotment sites by recovering any areas which have become overgrown with vegetation.

Action 6.

Secure additional land for allotments through the LDF process to address the demand for plots and deficiency in allotment space.

4.3 Priority: Nature Conservation

Hemel Hempstead, in comparison with Berkhamsted and Tring, does not have the benefit of a significant ecological resource close to the town. However due to the nature of the town's development, many of the large parkland estates which predate the New Town still remain. The resulting network of open spaces and wildlife corridors, combined with the Gade and Bulbourne valleys, provide a valuable ecological network with a range of different habitats detailed below, many of which are publicly accessible.

Habitat Type	Location
Wetland and neutral/marshy grassland	Bulbourne Valley, including the Grand Union Canal and Boxmoor
Wetland and damp grassland	Gade Valley, through Gadebridge Park joining the Bulbourne at Two Waters and continuing to Apsley
Calcareous grasslands	Chalk river valley sides and dry valleys, including Roughdown Common SSI, Sheethanger Common, Shrubhill Common LNR, Paradise Fields and Long Deans.
Dip slope plateau grasslands	Found on higher grounds, such as Bunkers Park.
Ancient semi-natural woodlands and secondary woodlands	Often on former commons such as Howe Grove and Shrubhill Common LNR
Man made features	For example, the Nickey Line.

The Urban Nature Conservation Study also identified other 'wildspace' sites with local interest which support the wider ecological network. Actions relating to specific County Wildlife Sites and other environmental enhancements are discussed within the study areas to follow.

The Dacorum Chalk River Restoration Strategy (Environment Agency, 2010) identifies a number of improvements for the urban section of the Upper Gade and River Bulbourne as listed below.

Gadebridge Park

Restore original river channel at the low point of the valley through the park
Secure buffer zone to water course and maintain periodic vegetation clearance to channel

Bury Mill diversion weir and tunnel

Install a more robust structure to prevent water going through culvert

Water Gardens

Restore river channel

Boxmoor

Narrow channel and introduce habitat enhancements

Action 7.

Seek to implement the recommendations of the Dacorum Chalk River Restoration Strategy in Hemel Hempstead through the Hemel 2020 programme.

4.4 Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside

4.4.1 Accessible Natural Green Space

Natural England's ANGSt standard states the following:

1. There should be at least 1 ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1000 head of population.
2. That no person should live more than 300 m from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2 ha in size
3. That there should be at least one accessible 20 ha site within 2 km from home
4. That there should be one accessible 100 ha site within 5 km
5. That there should be one accessible 500 ha site within 10 km

The top three tiers of provision will be considered across the whole settlement of Hemel Hempstead to avoid repetition. The more local provision of LNRs and 2 ha sites will then be considered in three smaller study areas.

Considering these standards in reverse order: all of Hemel Hempstead is provided with a 500 ha site within 10 km, in the form of the Ashridge Estate. At the next scale down, the Ashridge Estate also provides for the presence of a 100 ha site of accessible natural green space within 5 km of every home, for the western half of the settlement. The dividing line passes in an arch from Two Waters in the south, running to the east of the town centre, past the start of the Nickey Line and out of the settlement at Highfield.

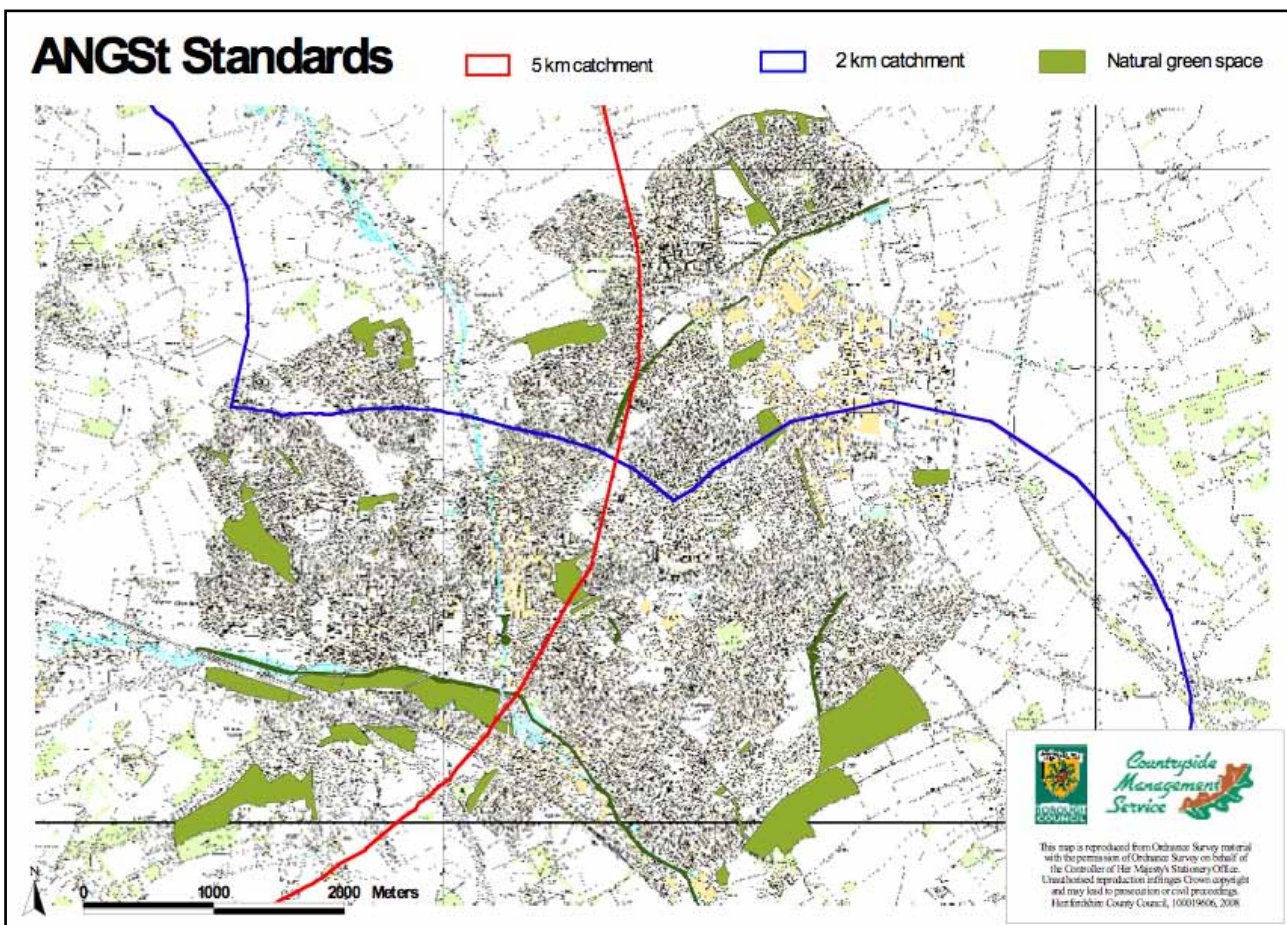
It can be seen that the residents of North East Hemel Hempstead are the least well provided for in terms of large strategic pieces of accessible natural green space. The close proximity of the countryside, of which the Gade Valley to the north is considered to be a high quality landscape, does mitigate this to some extent. However North East Hemel Hempstead is also beyond the two km catchment zone for a 20 ha site. The combined presence of the complexes at Boxmoor and Bunkers Park provides this for approximately two thirds of the town, covering much of the south, east and west of the settlement.

This spatial assessment strengthens the need for a substantial Country Park or similar facility to the north east of Hemel Hempstead. The new neighbourhood park proposed through the Three Cherry Trees Lane/North East Hemel Hempstead site could form part of this potential new resource. It also emphasises the importance of Boxmoor and Bunkers Park, reinforcing the need to improve their quality.

Action 8.

Seek to establish a new country park within the north east section of the town if growth opportunities arise in the future.

The town is deficient in Local Nature Reserves – Howe Grove and Shrubhill Common provide 19.3 ha, well below the target level of 82.1 ha. There is a significant wildlife resource within the town, with 24 County Wildlife Sites, providing a resource of 192.8 ha. Many of these are publicly accessible, including the sites managed by the Box Moor Trust, which form 92 ha. However half of the total provision is located around the edge of the town, leaving a deficiency in nine out of 15 wards.



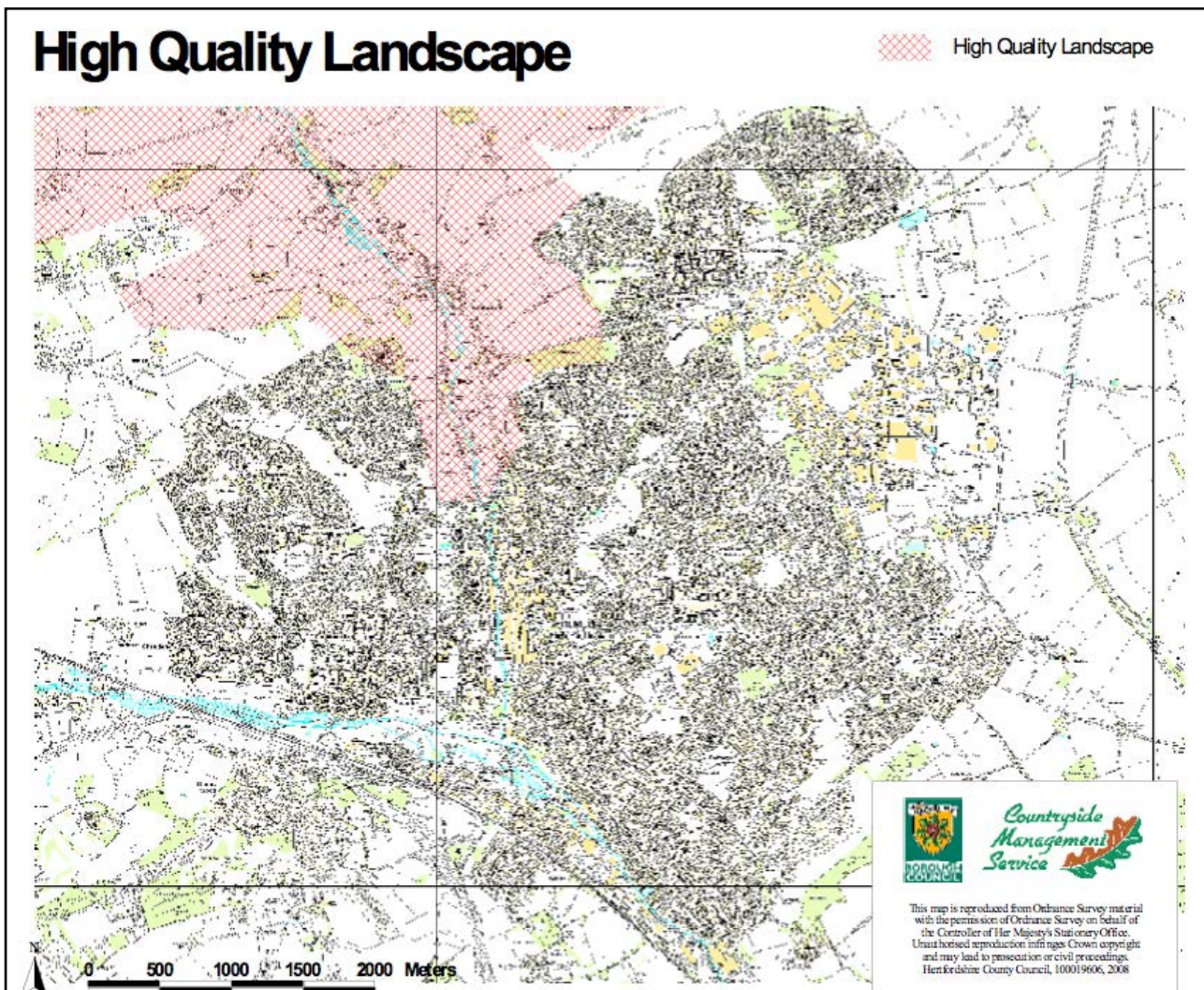
Actions identified for individual sites are highlighted within each of the Hemel Hempstead area studies.

4.4.2 Landscape Quality and Recreation

Hemel Hempstead is situated at the confluence of the River Gade and River Bulbourne, on the south east fringes of the Chiltern Hills.

The urban area covers much of the high ground above the river valleys as well as large portions of the valley floor. The upper reaches of the main river valleys however have not been developed and provide significant areas of public open space. The numerous dry valleys which cross the town to intersect with the main river valleys have also been preserved from development for much of their length providing green links through the town.

All areas of Dacorum were subject to a formal landscape character assessment in 2004. This identified The High Gade Valley and an area beyond its northern slopes, referred to as Gaddesden Row, as areas of high quality landscape. These areas cover a large portion of the ground to the north of the settlement and continue outwards as far as the Bedfordshire border. The other countryside boundaries to the town are considered to contain lower quality landscape with a resulting lower opportunity for informal recreation, but opportunities in these



areas are far from absent and will be considered in the following area studies. The landscape character assessment further reinforces the observations regarding the strategic spread of recreational opportunities around Hemel Hempstead's boundaries.

4.5 Consultation Summary

Addressing the quality and availability of facilities for young people, particularly for the older age group was a high priority. The request for more allotments reflects their popularity both locally and nationally.

The need for more green space was highlighted, especially in the town centre, Maylands Business Park and Apsley, to improve the quality of the environment for local residents, visitors and businesses.

Biodiversity was also important to residents of Hemel Hempstead, with requests for more tree planting, and improvements to the towns parks and playing fields and in particular the Nickey Line.

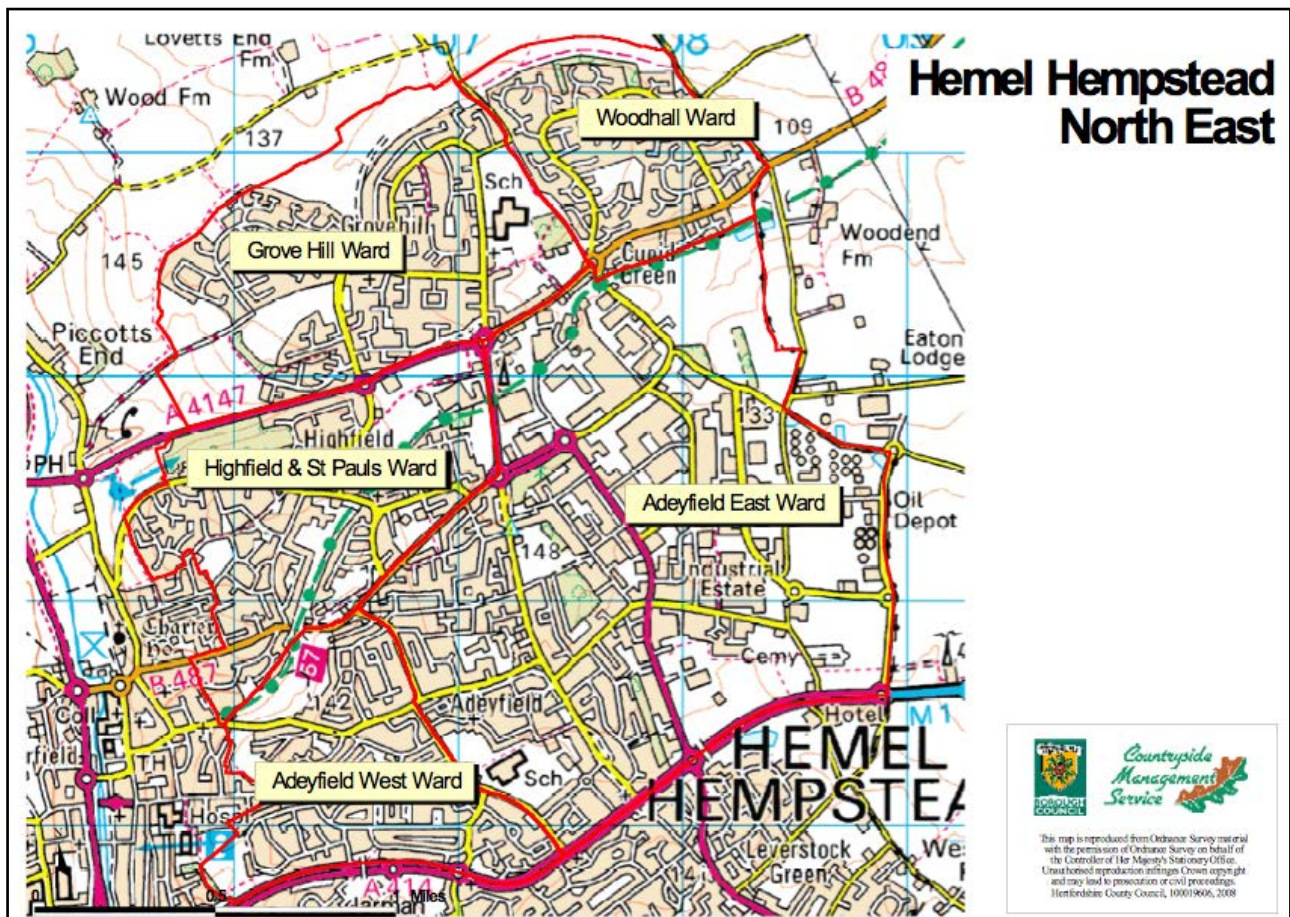
Details of the consultation responses received are within Section Four: Consultation and Appendices.



Green Space Area Study – Hemel Hempstead - North East

5.1 Context

The north east division of Hemel Hempstead under this study includes the wards of: Adeyfield East, Adeyfield West, Highfield and St Pauls Ward, Grovehill Ward and Woodhall Ward. These include a large proportion of the original neighbourhoods planned for the New Town as well as the bulk of Hemel Hempstead's commercial and industrial buildings. This area covers much of the higher plateau of ground to the east of the Gade Valley and Old Town.



5.1.1 Social Character

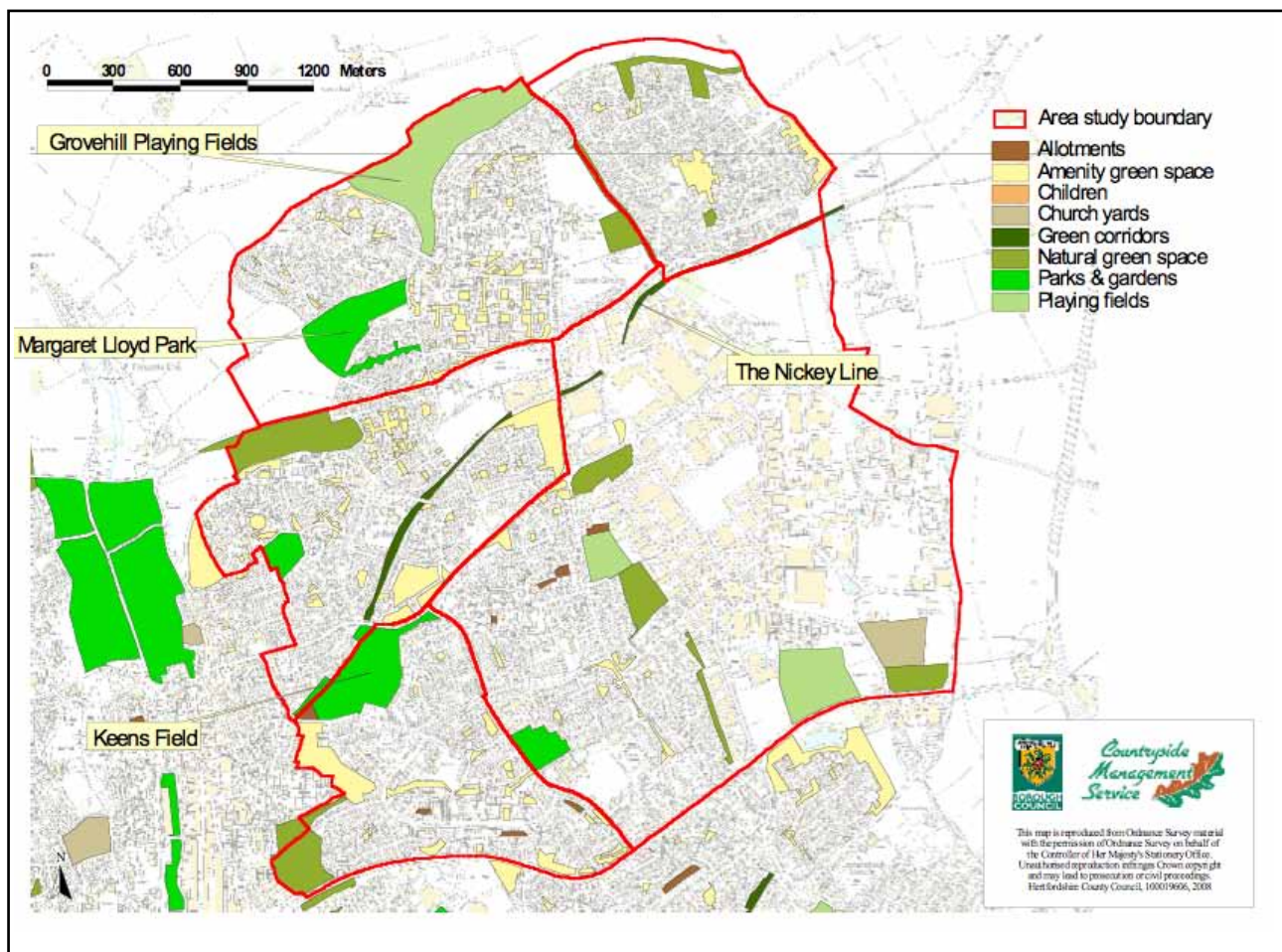
The social character of this portion of Hemel Hempstead contains some marked variation. Woodhall Ward shows health, education, employment and deprivation characteristics which are all in line with, but very slightly above, the Borough average. Adeyfield East is similar but performs slightly below the Borough average.

In contrast, Highfield & St Pauls Ward has multiple indicators of deprivation which place it in the 25% most deprived wards nationally. Educational achievement is also low with one-third of the adult population having no qualifications. Grovehill Ward and Adeyfield West also have higher levels of deprivation than the Borough average but to a less pronounced degree. Despite this, levels of employment are relatively high and consistent across the area.

Ethnic minorities make up a larger proportion of the population than the average for the Borough as a whole, varying from 5% in Adeyfield East to 9.1% in Woodhall. People of Asian origin make up the largest portion of the population, but Highfield and St Pauls has the highest number of people of mixed race in the Borough at 2.2% and Woodhall has the highest numbers of Chinese people in the Borough at 1.3%.

5.1.2 Open Space Provision

Hemel Hempstead North East Area Public Open Space



In common with much of Hemel Hempstead, the north east area of the town has a well distributed range of parks, playing fields and natural green space, plus an abundance of amenity green space. Despite the extensive range of sites, much of the provision is low-key with an emphasis towards natural and informal provision.

The parks and gardens provided are similar in character with only limited facilities. This may in part be explained by the presence of Gadebridge Park immediately to the west of the study area which provides a more formal experience, and also by the original design philosophy of the New Town, which sought to integrate large quantities of green space into the fabric of the development to allow people to connect directly with their natural environment.

The Nickey Line is a useful green corridor linking the urban area with the wider countryside, and much of the amenity green space also supports pedestrian links through the residential areas.

5.2 Priority: Improve Quality

The following table contains a brief description and quality assessment of all the significant green spaces within the study area of the town.

Name	Area ha	Description	Quality inspection & score
Grovehill Playing Fields DBC	17.6	An open area of playing fields situated on the northern edge of the settlement with a play area adjacent to the entrance.	<p>The play area at the front entrance looks tired and the functional boundary defences are starting to show their age. Very limited signage is present.</p> <p>The pavilion appears to be in good order, the car park areas and driveway are in acceptable condition, though some of the bollards are deteriorating.</p> <p>The pitches are level and appear reasonably well drained. The goal posts are quite rusty.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Keens Field DBC	11.3	A fairly large area of amenity grassland with a small car park and play area. The adjacent Nickey Line provides a traffic-free link to the countryside. The site provides views across the town centre.	<p>Very limited signage, poor surfaced footpaths lead from the track to the car park. Graffiti and litter were present. The play area and general park furniture looked worn and uninviting.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

Fletcher Way DBC	2.98	A sloping informal recreation space, forming a green buffer to the housing estate, with views to open land beyond.	<p>The footpath link from the High Street is in very poor condition, and is obstructed by growth in places. The slope limits recreation activities.</p> <p>Changing the site to a nature conservation area with an infrequent mowing regime may be a more appropriate use.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>
Margaret Lloyd Park DBC	9.5	<p>A semi formal park containing a play area, pond and a range of historic tree planting and landscaping.</p> <p>The eastern frontage is level and presents a wide open aspect to Aycliffe Drive. The western portion slopes steeply towards an informal entrance onto Marlborough Rise.</p>	<p>The Aycliffe Drive frontage is reasonably good, but no signage is present.</p> <p>The Marlborough Rise entrance gives a poor impression, being dominated by boundary protection.</p> <p>The play area is in good order and an asset to the park.</p> <p>The lower section of the park consists of good quality historic landscaping which complements the park.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Howe Grove Wood DBC	9.2	Woodland.	<p>A dense woodland which is difficult to access and contains no formal pathways.</p> <p>A welcome board is present.</p> <p>Fly tipping and litter are evident.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

The Nickey Line DBC	4.4	A green corridor created from an abandoned railway line.	<p>Good information boards were present at two locations. The community info boards with volunteering posters are also a very positive point. Better signage which is visible from the highway would be an improvement. A small finger sign on an adjacent lamp column points in the wrong direction.</p> <p>Minor entrances were not signposted and the extent of litter and dumping beyond them gave the impression of an unsafe and unmanaged area. The adjacent fencing was heavily vandalised at one entrance.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>
Woodhall Wood Part DBC	3.9	Woodland.	<p>The steel palisade looks unwelcoming. A name board is present. There are good, safe access routes.</p> <p>Some vandalism and litter is evident and there is dog fouling.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Maylands Wood DBC	3.6	Woodland.	<p>A relatively open area of woodland with good access from adjacent pathways. A welcome board is present.</p> <p>There are no formal paths within the site and the ground is very uneven. Littering and flytipping are evident.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

Reith Fields DBC	3.0	A small park with a play area and sports facilities. Mature trees line the boundaries.	A very good range of facilities but the lack of paths can be an issue in bad weather. Some litter is present along the hedgerow. Score: Good
Widmore Wood DBC	2.9	Woodland.	This area is open in character and comparatively welcoming. A welcome board with contact details is in place. However, there are no surfaced tracks and the terrain is variable. There is some evidence of litter and flytipping. Score: Fair
High Wood DBC	1.0	Woodland.	A small area of woodland which suffers from abuse. Access points are safe but there are no formal access paths beyond them. Litter and flytipping is present. Score: Fair
Turners Hill DBC		Part of an extended green corridor to the town centre, with an adventure playground and woodland.	The adventure playground provides activities for younger children. But there is a lack of facilities for other community members. The Queensway end is steep and isolated, though it provides good views to the town. This corridor forms part of a cycle route and right of way network. There is litter present. A dropped kerb from the car park would aid access. Score: Fair

High Street Green DBC	4.16	A sports area with play area and boundary woodland.	<p>A pleasant open space, close to housing and industrial areas, which has been recently improved through new seating.</p> <p>The entrances are informal, the pavilion unattractive, and there is no connecting path to the play area. The range of play equipment is dull, and the youth facilities are poor. However, the area is well-used due to the car park and proximity of the industrial area.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Saturn Way DBC	3.12	A field used for informal recreation, with mature trees along some boundaries.	<p>This is a large open area providing a welcome buffer between the housing estate and a busy road. The addition of signage, benches and a dropped kerb in recent years has improved the space. Formalising the desire line¹ leading to neighbourhood facilities would improve access.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Pluto Rise DBC	2.57	An informal recreation field.	<p>A pleasant quiet location, forming part of the green corridor through to the town centre. There are few facilities on site to support the high density housing area. Developing the area may conflict with overlooking housing.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

¹An unsurfaced trail that has developed through people's use, which is often a short or easy route across a space

Randalls Park DBC	2.5	Semi formal park with play area, goal unit, basketball post and small copse with a BMX track.	<p>Formalising the entrance points would make the park more welcoming. The new woodland planting requires a management plan.</p> <p>The park has an extensive range of play facilities, to appeal to young people. Improving the appearance of the original play area and adding visual interest to the park through tree planting, would complete this space.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>
Pennine Way DBC	9.32	A sports field which is bisected by an access road.	<p>There is a good range of sports pitches, brought down by the poor condition of the pavilion, car park and footpath.</p> <p>Surfacing improvements to the Nickey Line and Row would encourage more walkers and cyclists.</p> <p>The old hedgerow and Nickey Line require management plans to preserve the features and enhance biodiversity.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>
Woodhall Farm Open Space DBC	1.55	A neighbourhood park enclosed within the housing estate.	<p>The entrances are hidden, and the access footpaths are of varying quality, some uneven.</p> <p>There are limited facilities for young people and the quality of the play area could be improved.</p> <p>A lack of maintenance of the grassed areas by the garage blocks spoils the visual appearance.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

While there is a well distributed range of green space within the north east area of Hemel Hempstead, including parks, playing fields and a good number of small woodlands, a mediocre impression is created by the relatively low quality of the facilities and infrastructure. This is not to say that the green spaces are without merit - there are some small 'gems', such as the lower half of Margaret Lloyd Park and Reith Fields - but the character of the green space in general tends towards visual amenity.

The quantity of woodland present is a considerable asset and adds to the character of the area. Improving access to these features will make best use of them. This is expressed under 5.5.1 Accessible Natural Green Space. Unfortunately litter and flytipping appear to be a consistent problem in the urban woodlands.

Action 1.

Develop a management plan for Margaret Lloyd Park to improve its many features.



Keens Field

5.3 Priority: Increase Facilities

5.3.1 Provision for Children & Young People

The following facilities, present in Hemel Hempstead – North East, were evaluated as part of the development of the Play Strategy.

Quality Assessments			
	Site features (max 33)	Equipment (Max 41)	Accessibility
Adeyfield East Ward			
High Street Green	10	2	Severely limited
Reith Fields	11	8	Severely limited
Adeyfield West Ward			
Keens Field	9	5	Severely limited
Grovehill Ward			
Grovehill Playing Fields	12	4	Severely limited
Margaret Lloyd Park	18	15	Generally accessible
Highfield & St Paul's Ward			
Randalls Park	12	7	Generally accessible
Woodhall Ward			
Woodhall Farm Open Space	10	5	Severely limited

In addition to these, the following facilities are available in Hemel Hempstead North East.

- High Street Green - youth shelter and basketball post
- Reith Fields - youth shelter and basketball post
- Keens Field - youth shelter and basketball post
- Grovehill Playing Field – youth shelter
- Margaret Lloyd Park – youth shelter and basketball post
- Randalls Park – youth shelter, basketball post and goal unit and BMX track
- Woodhall Farm Open Space – youth shelter and basketball post

The distribution of play areas across the north eastern section of Hemel Hempstead is not in line with the expectations of the current Local Plan². The quality of the facilities is also quite poor, scoring on average just 16% of the points available when their equipment was assessed. This is despite the refurbishments of Margaret Lloyd Park and Randalls

Park which have taken place in recent years. To mitigate the greater distances required to access the play areas, improvements to the quality should be a priority.

With the exception of the goal unit at Randalls Park, youth provision through the study area is of poor quality, the majority of the shelters having been vandalised, and the basketball posts only having a small playing surface.

Opportunities to improve the current poor quality provision, through the planning process, should be maximised.

Action 2.

Complete the refurbishment of Randalls Park through tree planting and works to the original play area, as this is the only play facility within Highfield and St Pauls, a ward with a relatively high population of children and young people.

Action 3.

Improve the range and quality of play activities at Woodhall Farm Open Space.

Action 4.

Secure a new play area through the proposed Three Cherry Trees Lane/North East Hemel Hempstead development.

Action 5.

Improve youth provision through the study area with the support of local community groups and the community police team.

5.3.2 Outdoor Sports

The area benefits from a range of sports provision. Football is provided at High Street Green, Reith Fields, Grovehill Playing Fields, Cupid Green Playing Fields and Pennine Way. In addition there are two baseball pitches at Grovehill Playing Fields, tennis courts at Reith Fields and Cupid Green Playing Fields, cricket at High Street Green and rugby at Pennine Way.

5.3.3 Cycling

The Borough's cycling strategy includes the following actions which affect the areas green spaces.

Priority 1

- New Ramps to Nickey Line (*Note: the steps at Keens Field onto Queensway and across to Lower Adayfield Road limit access to less able users. Installing a ramp would be costly and require a large volume of material to be imported to achieve an acceptable gradient, altering the landscape. Further recommendations have been made by Sustrains for dropped kerbs, ramps and wheeling ramps.*)

² Dacorum Borough Council Local Plan 1991 – 2011

Priority 2

- Redbourn Road roundabout, Washington Avenue, Shenley Road, crossing and continuation to Woodhall Farm. (*Note: a route through Woodhall Wood would have a negative impact on the Wildlife Site*)

The Strategy also considered the Nickey Line, which in general is evaluated as a good signed route. The Line has 16 formal and many informal access points, many of which involve steps due to the steep embankments. The Nickey Line Management Plan includes a detailed assessment of the condition of the route. Both the Management Plan and Cycling Strategy note that the sets of steps at Keens Field onto Queensway and across to Lower Adeyfield Road limit access to less able users. Installing a ramp would incur a significant cost. Further recommendations have been made by Sustrains for dropped kerbs, ramps and wheeling ramps.

Action 6.

Create a new cycle way network through Woodhall Farm as development opportunities arise.

Action 7.

Seel opportunities to develop a cycle link through High Street Green.

Action 8.

Improve access and the entrances to the Nickey Line as funding opportunities arise, using the recommendations of the Nickey Line Management Plan, Dacorum Cycling Strategy and Sustrans evaluation.

5.4 Priority: Nature Conservation

North East Hemel Hempstead does not have the benefit of a significant and accessible natural area within or adjacent to its boundary. However the area is reasonably well catered for by wildlife sites, Howe Grove, Widmore Wood, Nickey Line, Maylands Wood, Paradise Fields and Woodhall Wood which are spread through the settlement. Shortfalls within Grovehill and Woodhall Farm, are partly compensated by other open space and their location close to the surrounding countryside. Both Margaret Lloyd Park and Grovehill Playing Field have areas which, with appropriate management, could provide habitats for more wildlife. Paradise Fields, owned by the Homes and Communities Agency, is an important resource for the southern section of the settlement. Future development in the town centre may provide opportunities to improve and protect the site.

There are other opportunities within the area to enhance local ecological interest, through sympathetic management to old hedgerows through Adeyfield, or changing the close mown regime of areas of Turners Hill and Keens Field.

Action 9.

Ensure all woodlands registered as County Wildlife Sites have an up-to-date management plan.

Action 10.

Develop a management plan for Grovehill Playing Fields to improve its habitats.

Action 11.

Identify further measures to support the ecological network, in particular to link to the County Wildlife Site woodlands.

5.5 Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside

5.5.1 Accessible Natural Green Space:

Natural England's ANGSt standard states:

1. There should be at least 1 ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1000 head of population.
2. That no person should live more than 300 m from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2 ha in size
3. That there should be at least one accessible 20 ha site within 2 km from home
4. That there should be one accessible 100 ha site within 5 km
5. That there should be one accessible 500 ha site within 10 km

The top three tiers of provision have already been considered across the whole settlement. At the most local level the provision of natural green space is reasonably even, but fails to meet the target of a 2 ha site within 300 m of each home. Perhaps more importantly, the quality of these sites are all ranked as either Fair or Poor. Little can be done to provide additional areas of natural green space due to the existing residential developments, but the quality of sites can be addressed.

Action 12.

Target three existing natural green spaces for access and interpretation improvements. Suggested locations are Woodhall Wood (due to its proximity to school and the adventure playground), High Wood (as it provides valuable open space within Woodhall ward and is in poor condition) and Howe Grove (to improve awareness of the local nature reserve). This also supports the play priority of improved access to woodland.

As with the rest of the Borough, the level of local nature reserves is below the target level of 31.2 ha, with Howe Grove the only provision. This is partly compensated by the 29.8 ha of wildlife sites.

Action 13.

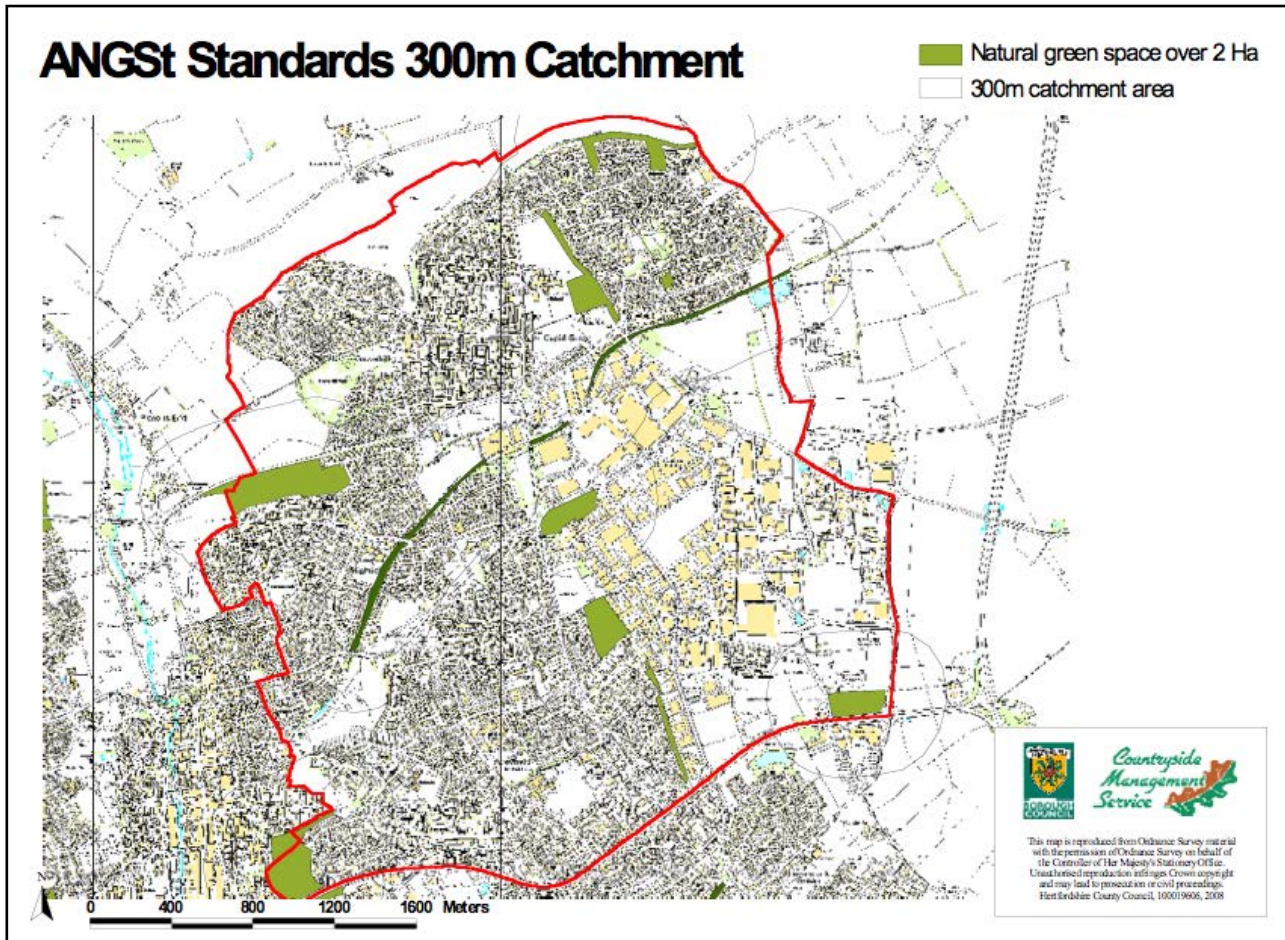
Raise the profile of Howe Grove Local Nature Reserve to the local community through a new management plan.

Action 14.

Consider designating further urban woodlands as Local Nature Reserves. The urban woodlands of High Wood, Maylands Wood, Widmore Wood and Woodhall Wood could be designated individually or collectively to provide an additional 11.9 ha of land managed as LNRs, equivalent of two-thirds of the target level.

Action 15.

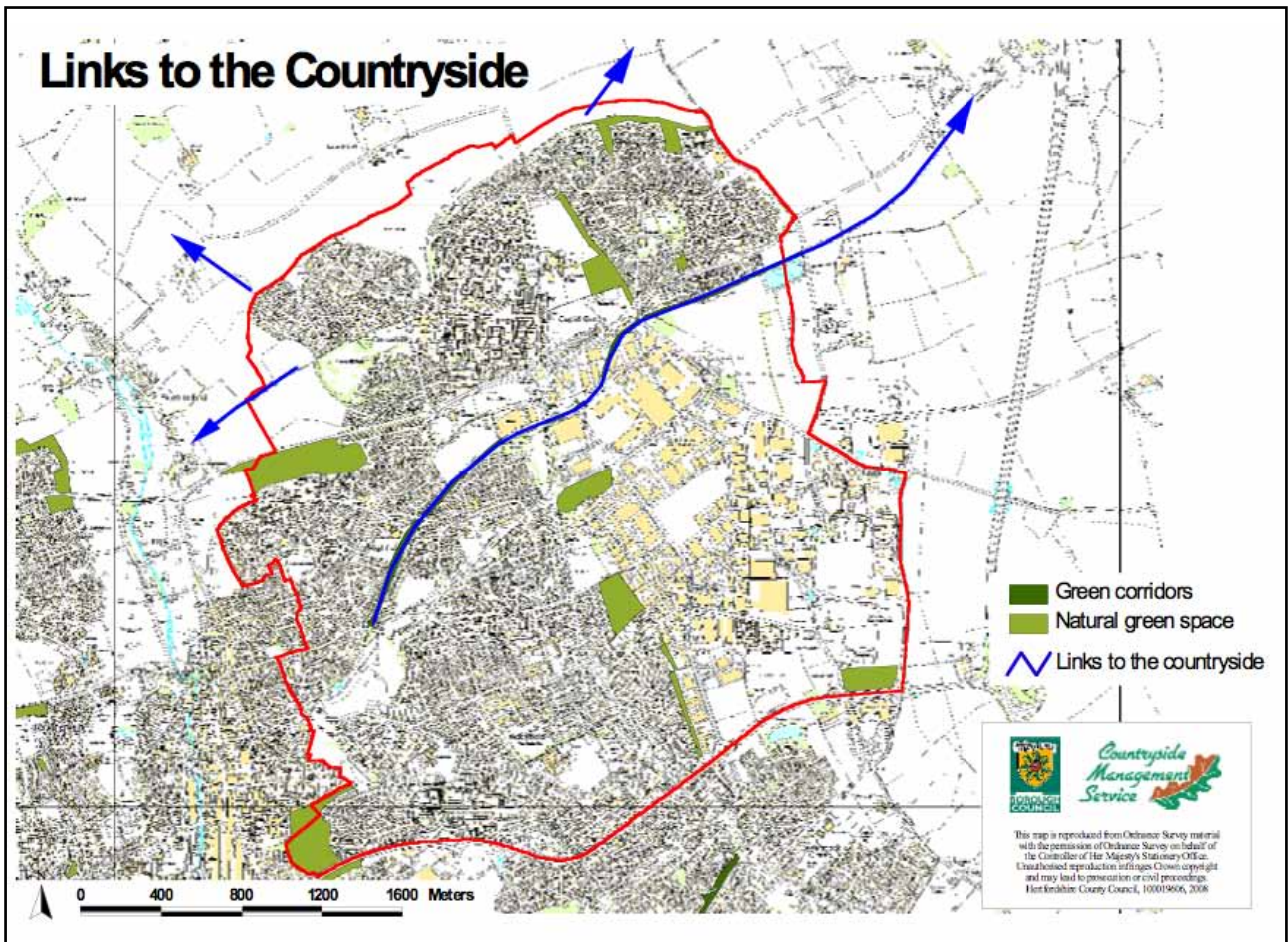
Implement the Nickey Line Management Plan with the support of the Friends of the Nickey Line. Seek opportunities to enhance its quality, and community and wildlife benefit with the aim of achieving LNR status.

**5.5.2 Links to the Countryside**

An extensive right of way network provides access to the attractive countryside to the north and west along the Gade Valley. The Nickey Line is also an excellent link, and passes through residential areas, ending close to the centre of town. Residents to the south are less well catered for, with St Albans Road and Maylands Business Park forming barriers. Maylands has very little green space of any quality and value. This is being addressed through the East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan which will promote economic development and business opportunities in Maylands and the immediate area, to include a network of attractive landscaped routes and small pocket parks. Further network improvements may be achieved through the two development sites to the east of Leverstock Green, to improve connections across St Albans Road.

Action 16.

Identify, improve and promote access routes through Maylands Business Park from the surrounding residential areas as part of the implementation of the East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan.



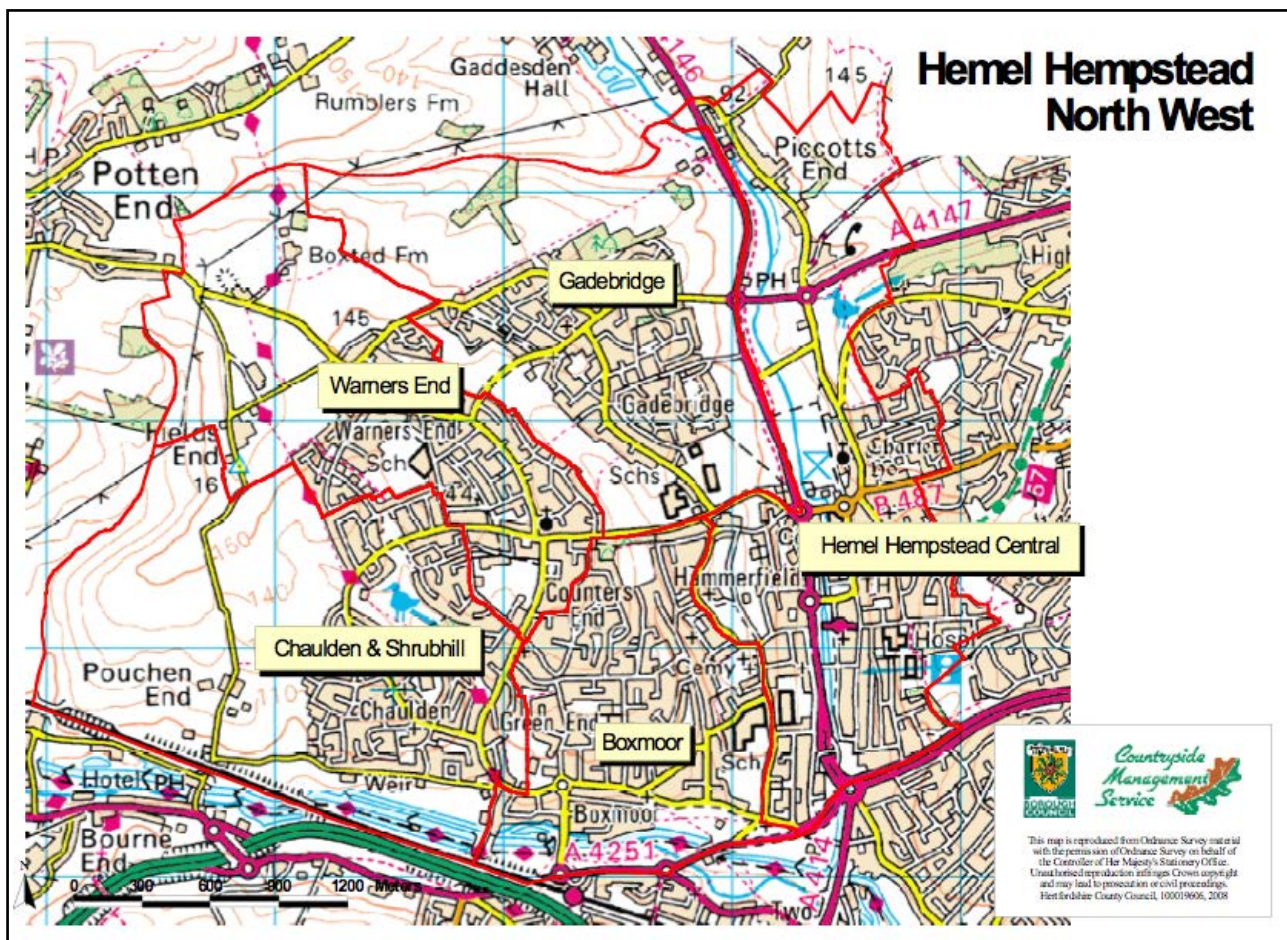


Green Space Area Study – Hemel Hempstead - North West

6.1 Context

The North West section of Hemel Hempstead contains the wards of Hemel Hempstead Central, Gadebridge, Warners End, Chaulden & Shrubhill Ward and Boxmoor. This area contains the town centre and base of the Gade Valley along with the high ground between the Gade Valley and Bulbourne Valley at Boxmoor.

The residential area of Boxmoor is a Victorian development linked to the presence of the railway. North of Boxmoor, the outer suburbs mostly date from the 1960s and constitute a later phase of New Town expansion, mirroring the development which had already taken place to the east of the Gade valley.

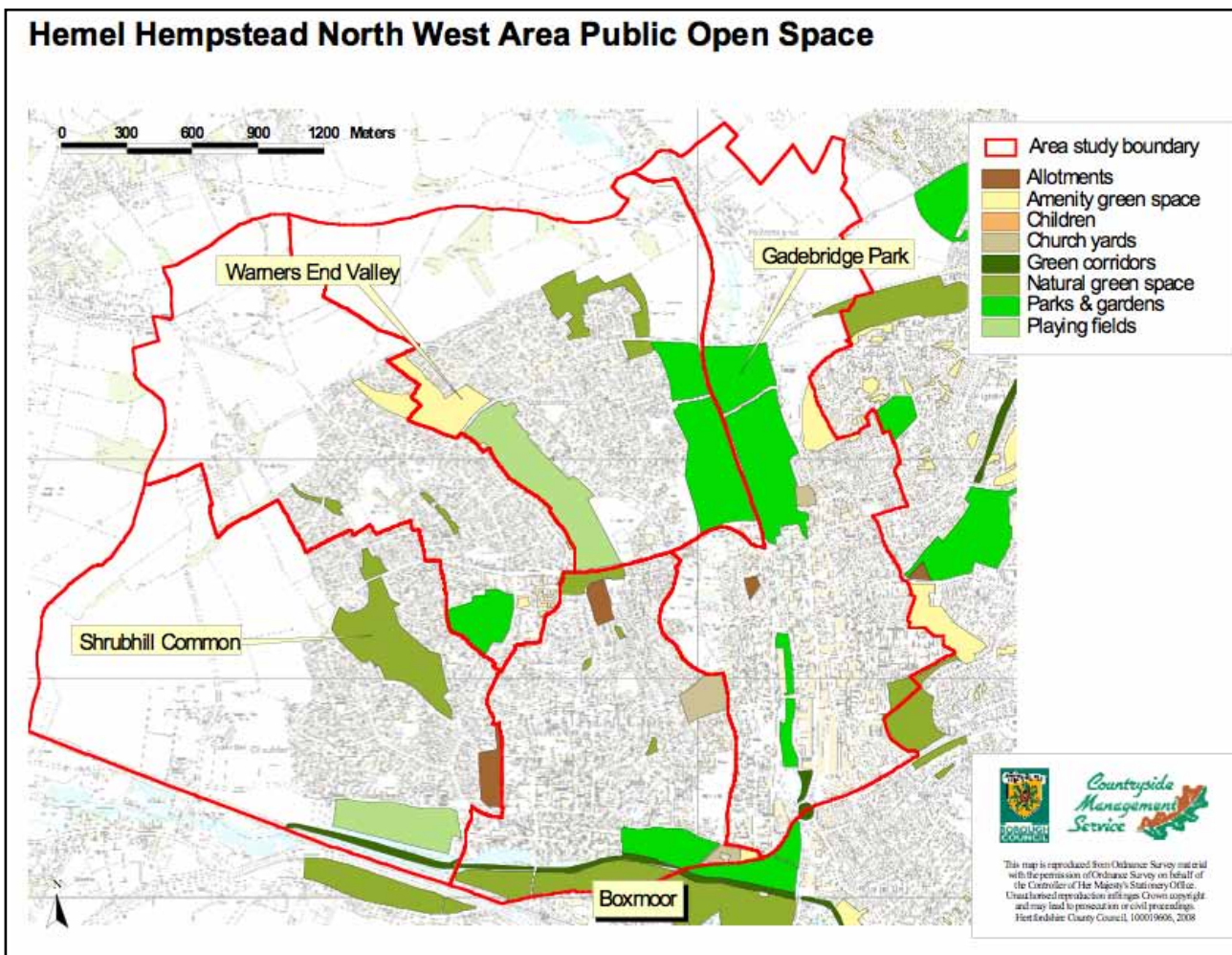


6.1.1 Social Character

This area of Hemel Hempstead contains a mixed social picture. Boxmoor exhibits very low levels of deprivation and crime, plus educational standards above the Borough's average. Chaulden & Shrubhill ward is close to the Borough average in terms of education, employment, health, crime and deprivation. Warners End is also similar to the average but with lower crime levels. Deprivation is more prevalent in Gadebridge and Hemel Hempstead Central, while crime is exceptionally high in Hemel Hempstead Central. The crime rate, however, is more likely to be associated with the town centre and the evening economy than the residential areas.

With the exception of Hemel Hempstead Central, ethnic minorities make up a slightly smaller proportion of the population than is the average for the Borough at 3.5%. The proportion in Hemel Hempstead Central is higher at 5.3%. People of Asian origin are the largest component of this population.

6.1.2 Open Space Provision



Unlike the original phases of the New Town development, these later suburbs contain relatively little amenity green space which is directly integrated within the housing areas. Instead larger strategic provision has been included through the area. This may in part be explained by the presence of the town centre, Gade Valley and part of the Bulbourne Valley, but it is also a reflection of the character of the development.

Dry valleys are preserved at Shrubhill Common and Warners End Valley. These provide both a valuable recreational asset and also help to define the character of the area. The inclusion of Gadebridge Park and Boxmoor along the river valleys further complements this, resulting in an almost ideal spread of large strategic green space sites.

6.2 Priority: Improve Quality

The following table contains a brief description and quality assessment of all the significant green spaces within the study area of the town.

Name	Area ha	Description	Quality inspection & score
Gadebridge Park DBC	37	<p>A large civic park based on the historic grounds of Bury House, with a traditional walled garden, broad vistas along the valley and mature tree planting.</p> <p>The site includes a range of public activities including crazy golf, croquet, petanque, giant chess and draughts and a public bowls green.</p>	<p>Good open aspects; however, the entrances are a bit anonymous and variable. The entrance from the town centre is acceptable, though the position of the bulk bin and evident rutting of the verges does detract from its appearance. The signage at entrances could also be improved.</p> <p>A good range of facilities are present, appropriate to the scale, location and character of the park. The main playground is in good condition, but the small playground has dated equipment and poor quality surfacing.</p> <p>The picnic benches are sited in a rather haphazard manner and without surfacing.</p> <p>The skate park is in good order.</p> <p>The historic bridge was suffering from dilapidation and in need of repair.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

Gadebridge Lane West Herts College leased to DBC	4.7	A sports field adjacent to River Gade surrounded by hedgerows	<p>A pleasant area with a good range of pitches for junior football.</p> <p>The entrance is hidden, and the car park, bins and fencing could be improved.</p> <p>Bottles/litter regularly left by footballers.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Warners End & Home Wood DBC	5.27	A woodland corridor linking Gadebridge Park to open countryside.	<p>The corridor is open and welcoming in character, but there are no paths or firm level ground to provide access for all. The proximity of housing has resulted in litter and flytipping issues.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Warners End Valley DBC	24.8	An expansive dry valley with tree planting on the margins. It is mostly given over to sport provision plus two small play areas.	<p>The wide open vistas, especially from Galley Hill, are a major asset. Unmanaged verge parking on Spring Lane is a minor detriment. The sports pitches and play areas are in reasonably good order.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

<p>Boxmoor (Part) Boxmoor Cricket Club Station Moor Blackbirds Moor The Box Moor Trust</p>	<p>17.4</p>	<p>A complex of green spaces covering most of the valley floor. The area maintains a traditional character containing substantial meadows, avenues of trees and a cricket ground.</p> <p>The River Bulbourne and Grand Union Canal pass through the area adding considerable aesthetic, recreational and conservation interest.</p>	<p>The generally open aspect allows good visibility onto the site and easy orientation by users. The entrances are fairly low key but numerous. The path network is variable in quality and may become difficult in wet weather.</p> <p>The level of signage is quite variable, with some areas better signed than others. One interpretation board was present but covered a very wide area beyond the park restricting the amount of site specific info.</p> <p>Kissing gates, some steps and wet ground in poor weather restrict access to the reasonably able and suitably equipped. However, some surfaced paths are present and degrees of accessibility will always be a fact on a site of this character.</p> <p>The extensive use of grazing to retain the character and diversity of this landscape is commendable.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
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Shrubhill Common DBC	14.3	<p>A substantial dry valley open space containing a combination of meadows, woodland and amenity green space.</p> <p>Generally open boundaries present a reasonably inviting aspect.</p>	<p>Good clear name boards at two locations are an advantage but could be more numerous. The alleyway entrance from Green End Lane is cluttered and rather uninviting, with large prohibition signs the most prominent feature. The info board at this point is damaged and needs replacement or removal.</p> <p>The other entrance points are generally low key and inconspicuous.</p> <p>The playground is a bit limited with just four pieces of equipment; however, this score is lifted by the presence of the adventure play area. The only detraction from this is that the adventure play area does not integrate well into the main site but appears to stand alone against the road frontage. Adding a footpath, and activities for the older age group would extend the use of the space.</p> <p>The retention of meadows in this suburban setting is a significant advantage and helps define the character of the site, while providing refuge for associated flora and fauna. Adding a buffer to the LNR would improve the site.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Gravel Hill Spring DBC	1.67	<p>A part secondary/ancient woodland at the start of a green corridor leading to open countryside.</p>	<p>Surfaced routes provide easy access into and through the woodland.</p> <p>Dog fouling, litter and fly tipping is evident.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

The Water Gardens DBC	2.6	A string of intimate landscape and horticultural features running north-south along the course of the River Gade, adjacent to the town centre.	The park is very open and accessible to pedestrians in Hemel Hempstead town centre. While the open boundaries footways and formal layout are welcoming, much of the horticultural features are past their best and give a rather gloomy impression. The formal rose areas are particularly disappointing. Score: Fair
Boxmoor War Memorial The Box Moor Trust	0.3	A small formal green space dedicated to the war memorial.	Totally open and welcoming in character with good visibility from all approaches. There are no obstacles or barriers to access. The new surfaced areas have a good quality finish. Score: Good
The Avenue, Fields End DBC	0.77	Linear open space providing green corridor to open countryside.	Open and accessible providing structural and amenity green space with footpath linkages. A review of shrub planting would improve the visual amenity. Score: Fair
Chaulden Lane DBC	4.8	A sports field with a play area, adjacent to the canal.	The field offers scenic views to open countryside and the canal, with good sports facilities and walks. The car park, footpaths, and pavilion are in poor quality, and the play area is dull with limited play value. The habitat along the river corridor could be enhanced, and water safety should be considered. Score: Fair

Northridge Park DBC	4.95	An open park close to the neighbourhood centre with a play area and attractive tree planting.	<p>The open and inviting appearance from the main road, with the varied tree planting makes it an appealing park to visit.</p> <p>Many of the entrances to the park are of poor quality, including the connections with the neighbourhood shopping centre.</p> <p>The play facilities are very limited for toddlers and inclusive play but youth provision is included.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
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The north west section of Hemel Hempstead contains the best examples of green space in the settlement, with the greatest potential to meet local residents' needs. Unfortunately their quality assessment scores are still consistently assessed as only 'fair'. This is largely due to ageing facilities and infrastructure. Like other areas of the Borough, worn uninviting play areas are again cited as an issue. Some very good play facilities are also present but the lack of consistency is reflected in the scoring. The war memorial was the only site to score positively for its quality infrastructure.

Action 1.

As part of the regeneration of Hemel Hempstead town centre, undertake a master planning exercise for Gadebridge Park to secure significant long term improvements to its design, infrastructure and historic features with the aim of bringing the park to Green Flag standard, in line with Policy 3 Action 13 (Seek external recognition) in Section One: Policies and Objectives.

Action 2.

Pursue the refurbishment of the Water Gardens horticultural features as part of the H2020 Waterhouse Square development.

6.3 Priority: Increase Facilities - Provision for Children & Young People

6.3.1 Provision for Children & Young People

The following facilities, present in Hemel Hempstead – North West, were evaluated as part of the development of the Play Strategy.

Quality Assessments			
	Site features (max 33)	Equipment (Max 41)	Accessibility
Boxmoor Ward			
Lockers Park	14	9	Severely limited
Wharf Road	14	11	Some accessible features
Chaulden & Shrubhill Ward			
Chaulden Lane	12	4	Some accessible features
Jocketts	11	6	Severely limited
Gadebridge Ward			
Warners End Valley (upper)	10	7	Severely limited
Warners End Valley (lower)	12	5	Severely limited
Woodview	12	4	Severely limited
Hemel Hempstead Central Ward			
Coombe Street	11	9	Some accessible features
Gadebridge Park	15	13	Generally accessible
Marlowes	6	1	Generally accessible
Warners End Ward			
Northridge Park	9	4	Severely limited

In addition to these, the following facilities are available in Hemel Hempstead North West.

- Chaulden Lane - basketball post
- Jocketts – basketball post and youth shelter
- Warners End Valley Lower - youth shelter and basketball post
- Woodview – youth shelter and basketball post
- Gadebridge Park – youth shelter and skate park
- Northridge Park – youth shelter, basketball post and goal unit

Play provision follows the pattern of the open spaces within north-west Hemel Hempstead: the play areas being located within large parks or green corridors rather than within the housing estates. As a result they do not achieve a distribution density in line with the expectations of the current Local Plan¹. In particular there are gaps within provision at Hammerfield, Boxmoor and Fields End Farm. The quality of the facilities is also quite poor, scoring on average just 16.2% of the points available when their equipment was assessed. To mitigate the greater distances required to access the play areas, improvements to their quality should be a priority.

Youth provision is centred at Gadebridge Park and Northridge Park, much of the remaining sites are of poor quality with vandalised youth shelters and basketball posts with a small playing area.

Action 3.

Northridge Park play area is set within an attractive open space near to local facilities. Its central location could benefit a wider area and therefore this play area should be targeted for improvements, focusing on accessibility and more adventurous equipment.

Action 4.

Identify a further play area within north-west Hemel Hempstead in which to target improvements to mitigate the travelling distances.

Action 5.

Develop new play facilities within the town centre corridor as part of the regeneration of Hemel Hempstead.

Action 6.

Improve youth provision within the area.

Action 7.

For the longer term seek additional play facilities within the west of the town, should development opportunities arise in the area.

6.3.2 Outdoor Sports

The structural green spaces within the neighbourhood provide scope for a good range of sports provision. Warners End Valley has 9 football pitches, with a further 4 junior pitches at Gadebridge Lane. Chaulden Lane has a football pitch and several rugby pitches of different sizes, to provide additional capacity for Hemel Hempstead (Camelot) Rugby Club's adjacent facilities where rugby union is played. Boxmoor Cricket Club is located to the south of the study area and offers both senior and junior cricket.

¹Dacorum Borough Council Local Plan 1991 – 2011

6.3.3 Cycling

Priority 1

- Railway station to town centre, River Park/Kingsland Road, cut through to St Johns Road. *(Note: part of the off road network may be provided as part of the Urban Park.)*
- New Riverside shared path as part of Waterhouse Square proposal. *(Note: to be developed as part of the Hemel 2020 project, surfacing should be sympathetic to the riverside environment and adjacent tree planting.)*

Priority 2

- Shared use of footpath, Shrubhill Common to Fields End Lane. *(Note: this is the route of the Green Lane, an old road, upgrading to a cycle path should be relatively straight forward.)*

Action 8.

Support the proposals of the Dacorum Cycle Strategy within the North West Hemel Hempstead settlement area.

Action 9.

Seek opportunities to improve the connections between the Hemel Hempstead town centre and the railway station as part of the Urban Park development.

6.4 Priority: Nature Conservation

Despite the significant structural green space through Hemel Hempstead North West, ecologically some sites are of limited value due to usage as sports fields or their maintenance regime. Gadebridge Park and Northridge Park, which at present provide local interest, could be enhanced through appropriate management. The extent of Gadebridge Park, presence of the River Gade and connecting green corridors mark it as an area with potential for improvement. This would also support the recommendations of the Dacorum Chalke River Restoration Strategy (Environment Agency, 2010) to develop a buffer zone to the River through the Park.

There are four County Wildlife Sites within the settlement, Warners End Wood, Shrubhill Common (also a Local Nature Reserve), Boxmoor (parts) and Gravel Hill Spring. Hemel Hempstead Central and Warners End lack natural areas, and there is limited potential to improve areas ecologically given the housing density of the central area and sports use in Warners End and Gadebridge.

Action 10.

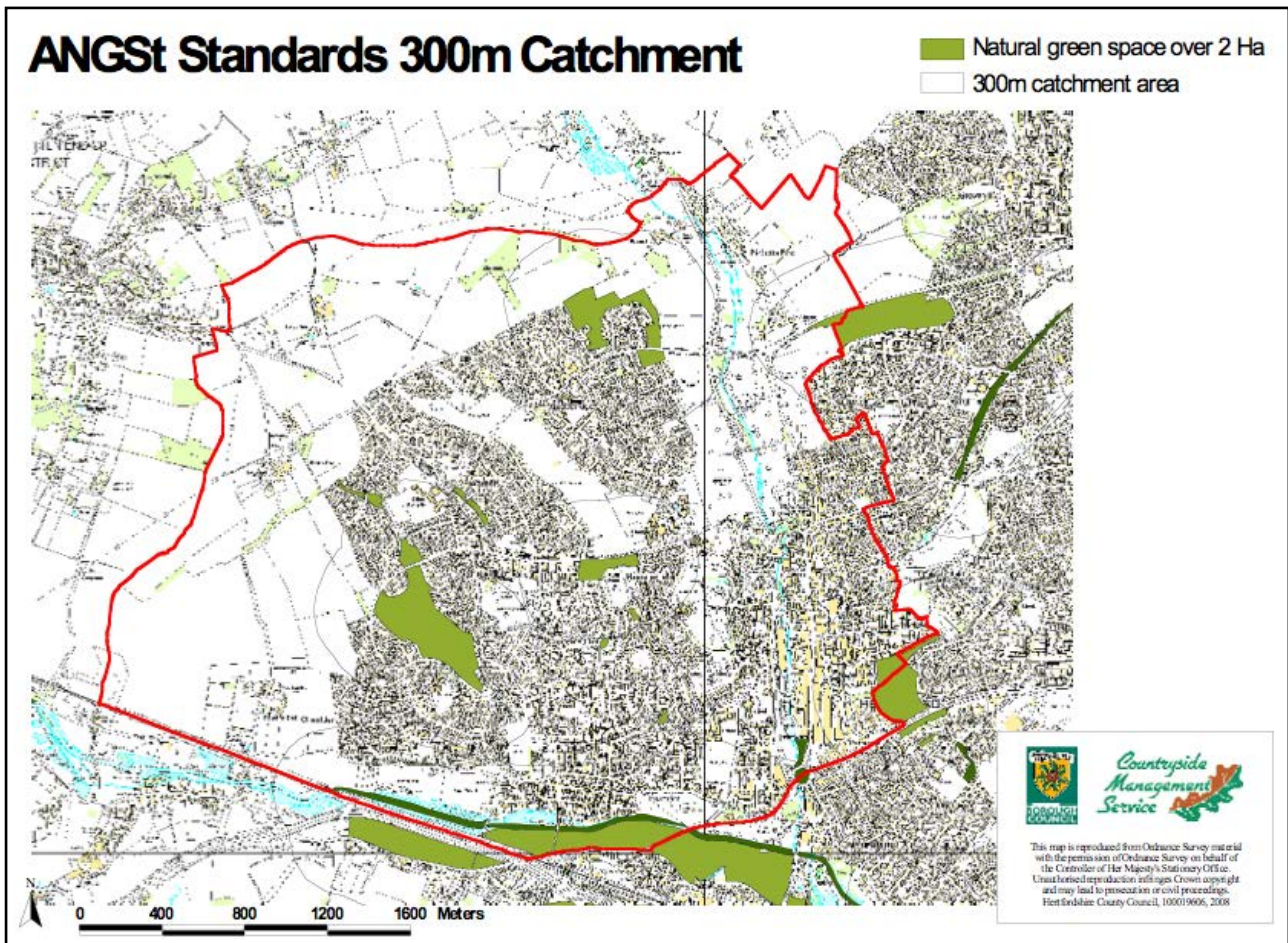
Introduce conservation grass cutting at targeted areas of Jocketts and Northridge Park to support the ecological network surrounding Shrubhill Common.

Action 11.

Introduce management regimes for Gadebridge Park's river corridor to improve the wetland habitat and the western slope grasslands to provide a buffer to the County Wildlife Site of Warners End Wood.

Action 12.

Ensure all woodlands registered as County Wildlife Sites have an up-to-date management plan.



6.5 Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside

6.5.1 Accessible Natural Green Space

While much of the study area is strictly outside the 300 m catchment area required by the standard, the presence of other substantial green spaces with a reasonably naturalistic feel largely mitigate this. To further compensate for distances involved, subtle enhancement to the planting schemes at Warners End Valley and the western slopes of Gadebridge Park could be undertaken.

The population within the area suggests a target level for local nature reserves of 25.5 ha. This results in a shortfall when compared with the provision of 10.8 ha at Shrubhill Common LNR. Shrubhill Common was designated a Local Nature Reserve in 1995 and has been in active conservation management since this period, supported by a Friends

Group. However there are also 48 ha of County Wildlife Sites, of which Boxmoor at 32.6 ha is significant in size. Boxmoor particularly benefits the wards to the south of the study area. The area to the north lacks accessible natural green space, though it does have good access to the surrounding countryside.

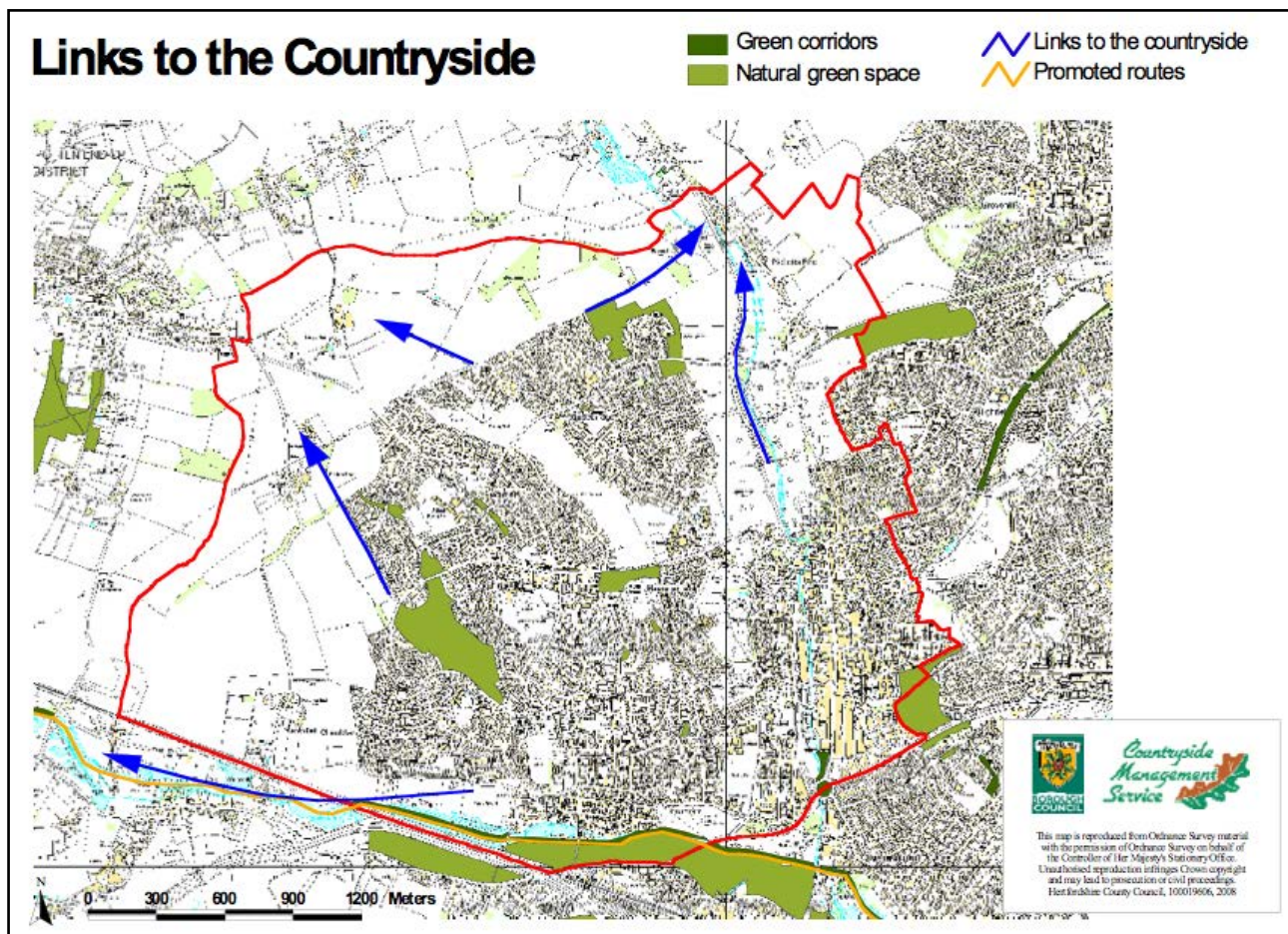
Action 13.

Implement the Shrubhill Common Management Plan in partnership with the Herts Biological Records Centre and the Friends of Shrubhill Common, raising awareness of the Local Nature Reserve.

Action 14.

Improve access and on site interpretation/information at Warners End Wood and Gravel Hill Spring (both designated as County Wildlife Sites).

6.5.2 Links to the Countryside



A good spread of links into the wider countryside can be found from the north west section of Hemel Hempstead. This, combined with the high quality of the adjacent landscape, is a real bonus to residents in this vicinity. The Hemel Hempstead north-west settlement area includes part of the area identified through H2020 as a new urban park. One of the aims of the Urban Park is:

'To provide a green, open space circulation route into and through the town and identify links beyond, with a clear sense of connection and continuity between the different sections and the wider greenspace network.'

Improving the connections across the central area of the urban park to the wider greenspace network will improve the links to the countryside.

Action 15.

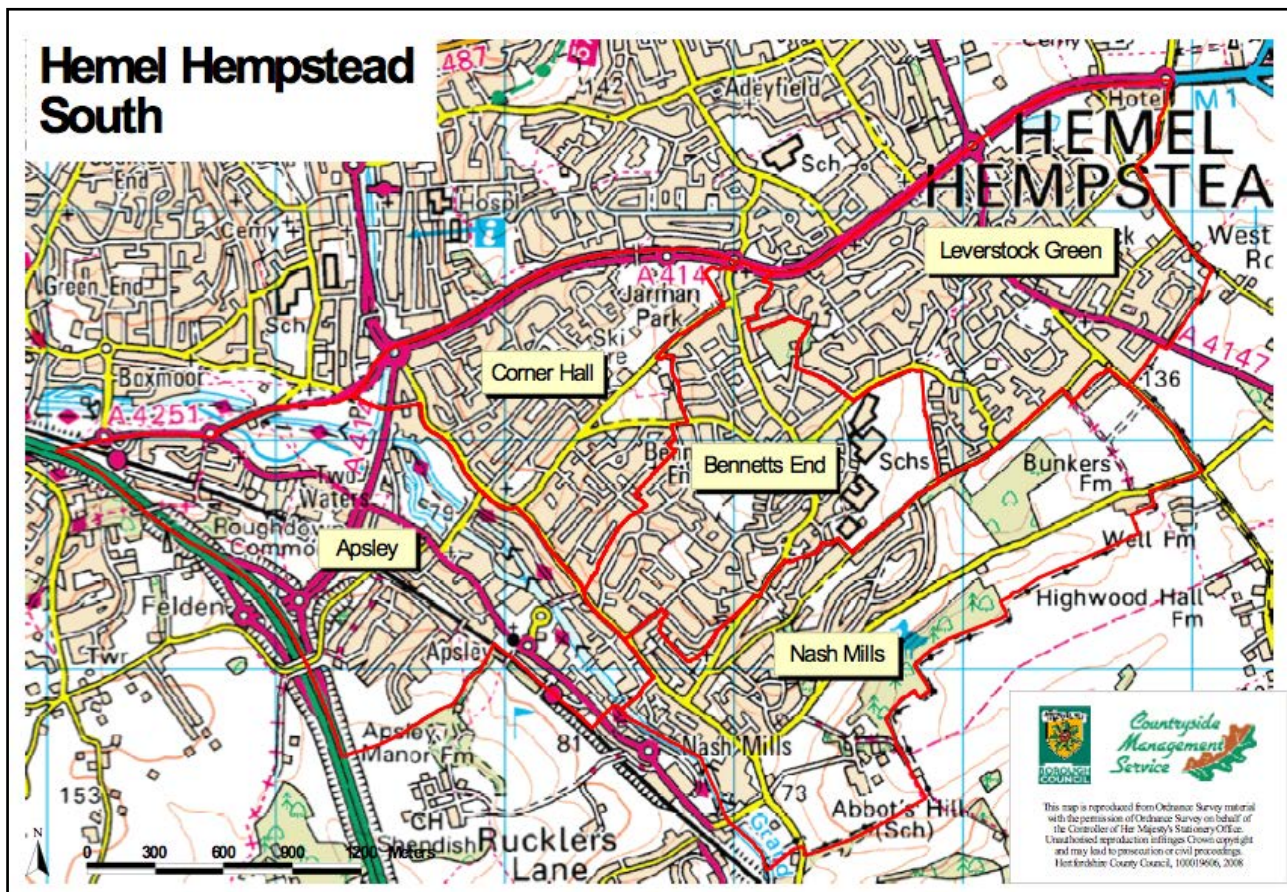
Improve access to the open countryside and Bulbourne Valley through the Urban Park proposal.



Green Space Area Study – Hemel Hempstead - South

7.1 Context

The southern study area contains the wards of Leverstock Green, Bennetts End, Nash Mills, Corner Hall and Apsley, each with an individual character. Leverstock Green was a village which predated the New Town and has subsequently been absorbed into it. Bennetts End was one of the original New Town suburbs dating from 1951 onwards, and Apsley was a Victorian mill town.



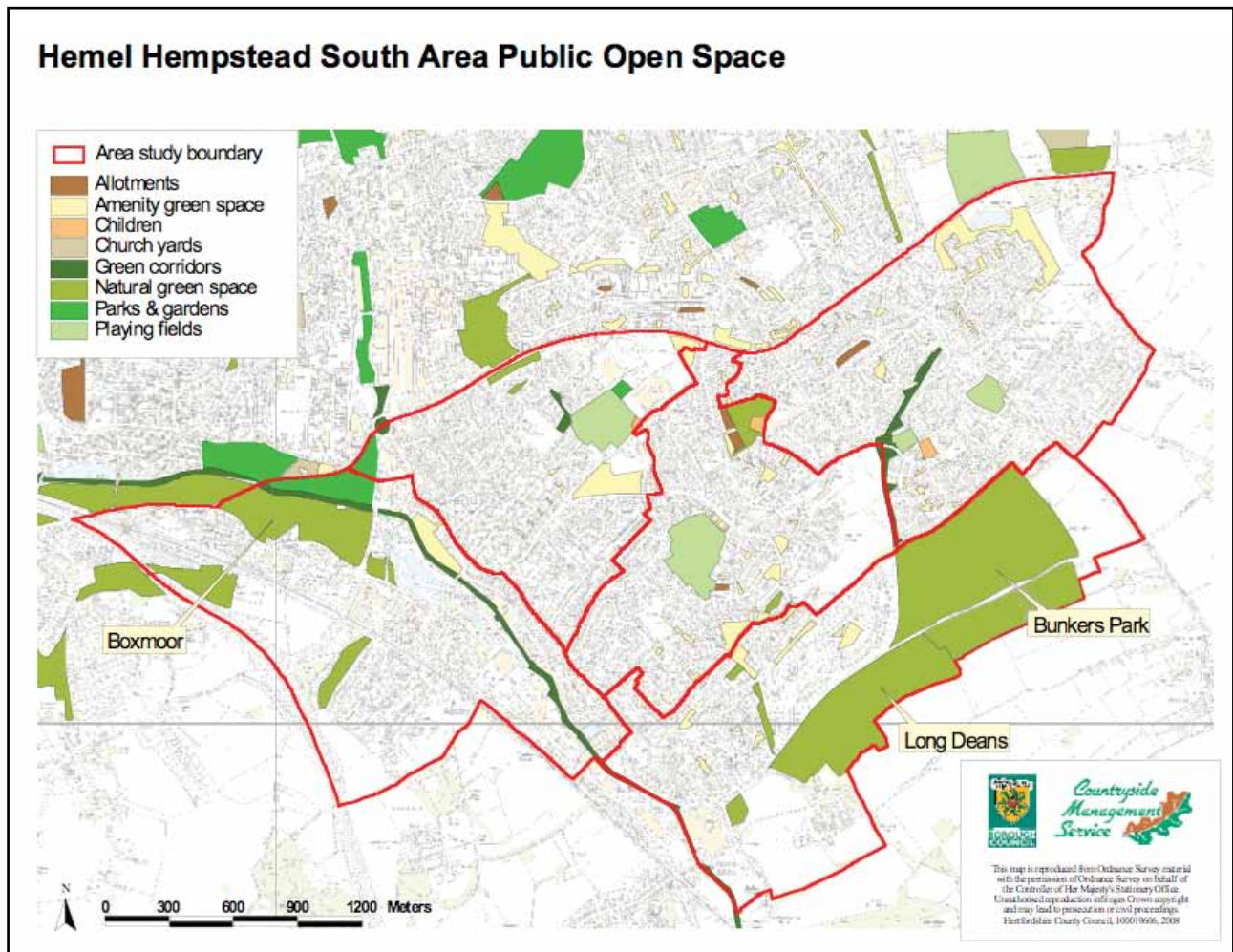
7.1.1 Social Character

Apsley, Corner Hall, Leverstock Green and Nash Mills wards all contain educational standards, employment rates, health, crime and indicators of deprivation which are fairly close to the average for the Borough as a whole. In contrast Bennetts End has multiple indicators of deprivation which would place it just inside the 50% most deprived wards nationally. Educational standards are also lower, with one third of all adults having no qualifications, compared with one quarter of the adult population of the Borough as a

whole. Bennetts End and Corner Hall also contain a higher proportion of under-16 year olds than the rest of the area.

Ethnic minorities make up a larger proportion of the population than is found in the Borough as a whole. This varies from 5.1% in Leverstock Green to 9.2% in Nash Mills. The local ethnic minority population is predominantly of Asian origin.

7.1.2 Open Space Provision



The southern section of Hemel Hempstead combines some of the characteristics of the other two areas. As it contains some of the original New Town neighbourhoods, it has a high proportion of amenity green space closely integrated with the housing, but it also contains two large strategically placed green spaces (namely the Two Waters half of Boxmoor, and Bunkers Park/Long Deans Nature Reserve), potentially benefiting a wider area.

The Hemel 2020 Vision document includes two specific proposals which affect this area: firstly, to extend Bunkers Park and introduce additional facilities to create an enhanced destination for residents and visitors, and secondly to create a new urban park at Two Waters, within the existing open space at the southern end of the town centre.

7.2 Priority: Improve Quality

The following table contains a brief description and quality assessment of all the significant green spaces within the study area.

Name	Area ha	Description	Quality inspection & score
Bunkers Park (Inc Long Deans) DBC/ Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust	58	A large county park with car parking, consisting of open fields, hedgerows and blocks of new woodland planting. The lower half adjacent to Long Deans Nature Reserve forms an attractive rolling landscape framed by woodland.	<p>There is no signage of any kind at the main road entrance and the entrance drive is in poor condition. The only visible signs at this point are the private land signs on the adjacent fields. This entrance point therefore gives no impression that a public park lies beyond. Good quality interpretation boards are located at the entrances to Long Deans.</p> <p>Most of the minor entrances are either anonymous or have prohibition notices attached.</p> <p>From the car park, the full scope of the site, its habitats and views, are not visible.</p> <p>At the time of inspection the site was exceptionally wet, limiting access to the site. To cater for a wider audience throughout the year, a degree of hard surfacing may be appropriate.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

Boxmoor inc: Heath Park, Hardings and Bulbourne Moors, Two Waters & Apsley Triangle Hemel Hempstead Town Cricket Club The Box Moor Trust	19.8	A combination of sports fields and meadows which straddle the river and canal adjacent to the A414.	The generally open aspect allows good visibility onto the site and easy orientation by users. The entrances are fairly low key but numerous. The path network is variable in quality and may become difficult in wet weather. Score: Fair
Barley Croft Open Space DBC	5.2	A broad fringe of amenity green space around a housing development, with a play area.	The open aspects are reasonably good, but the hard surfaces are crumbling, and the design and facilities are limited. The playground is very dated. Score: Fair
Leverstock Green Corridor DBC	4.1	A green corridor linking Bunkers Park to Leverstock Green.	Generally open aspect with no barriers but limited surfacing in parts. Recreation provision is limited to Leverstock Green Tennis Club. This is probably acceptable in the context of the site but may be questioned in a wider context. Score: Fair
Barnacres Road Open Space DBC	2.3	A collection of small amenity green spaces with a playground.	The site is a little obscured and fragmented. The hard surfaces are uneven, steep and deteriorating. The play area is in adequate condition, but is dated with a very limited range of equipment. Score: Fair

Heath Park Gardens The Box Moor Trust leased to DBC	1.4	A small formal park adjacent to the town centre containing bedding displays and a rose garden.	<p>The generally open aspect is an advantage and the retention of annual bedding and mixed perennial displays adds interest and visual appeal to the site. The virtual absence of benches combined with numerous empty bench plinths and localised deterioration in the hard surfaces creates a poor impression.</p> <p>The poor quality of the rose garden also detracts from the potentially welcoming appeal of this site and gives a general impression of neglect.</p> <p>The dark and heavily graffitied subway which forms the main access from the town centre will deter usage.</p> <p>The current parking arrangements on the grass verge at the southern boundary of the park also give a very poor impression due to the excessive mud generated and ad hoc nature of the parking.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>
Jarman's Park – Green Link DBC	0.6	A short green corridor.	<p>The site has reasonably open boundaries. There is no signage present. Some graffiti. The play area is in very poor condition and is of little play value with just one piece of equipment.</p> <p>Score: Poor</p>
Jarman's Park – Play Area	0.1	A small neighbourhood play area. An open aspect to the road allows a quick first impression.	<p>The site itself is a little uneven and the play equipment while extensive looks a little worn.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

Coronation Fields DBC	7.9	A neighbourhood park with sports pitches, tennis courts, play area and youth activity area.	<p>This is a well-used open space, surrounded by housing and close to neighbourhood amenities.</p> <p>It offers a good range of facilities, particularly with the recent addition of cricket nets.</p> <p>A footpath link from the car park and more seating would improve accessibility.</p> <p>The area around the changing pavilion is a target for anti-social behaviour. Further planting would add visual interest to the open aspect.</p> <p>Score: Good</p>
Westwick Field (Leverstock Green Playing Field) DBC	2	A rectangular park with football pitch, play area and youth activity area.	<p>The entrances are uninviting, though well located close to the neighbourhood centre. There is a good range of facilities.</p> <p>The tarmac surface within the play area and infrastructure is in poor condition, and there is limited seating.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Malmes Croft DBC	0.43	A combined amenity area/ play space surrounded by housing.	<p>A footpath leading through the space connects the play equipment and leads to the local shop. There is no provision for the older age range. The addition of a dropped kerb and more seating would aid visitors.</p> <p>It is a good space for informal play, but could be more attractive.</p> <p>Score: Good</p>

Lime Walk/ Leys Road DBC	3	A large expanse of structural green space by a road junction.	Facilities are limited. The proximity of the road and the gradients restrict use and accessibility. There is the potential to add to the landscape features and habitats; the existing thicket provides some diversity. Score: Fair
York Way DBC	0.59 (to Redwood Dr)	A small play area within linear open spaces between housing estates.	There is a very poor range of equipment, with limited play value. The facility is not overlooked despite the location within the estate, leading to anti-social behaviour issues. There are good footpath connections through open space. Score: Poor
Nash Mills Recreation Gd leased to Nash Mills Parish Council	1	A park with play equipment and games area within a tree-lined setting.	This is a secluded open space with a single entrance point of poor quality. The play equipment is of limited value, and there is only a single goal for youth provision. The woodland adds to the diversity of the site, and a management plan would improve safety. Score: Fair
Lawn Lane DBC	2.36	An informal recreation space with a wooded area next to Grand Union Canal.	A quiet green space with nature conservation potential. Access is difficult from Durrants Hill Road; improving this with new bins and benches would widen the areas appeal. A woodland management plan is required. Score: Poor

Durrants Hill DBC	0.3	A small open space with play area between the Grand Union Canal and River Gade.	Access from Durrants Hill Road is difficult, and the condition of the access road detracts from the space. More play equipment and new fencing, benches, and bins would make the site more appealing and usable. Score: Fair
Rant Meadow DBC	2.96	A mature woodland mostly enclosed by housing.	Although there is good access and a welcome board, the steel palisade fencing around the adventure playground gives a negative impression, as does the amount of vandalism and fly tipping. Score: Fair
Swan Mead DBC	0.5	Play area and linear amenity space next to the canal.	A pleasant green space within a small estate, with some mature tree specimens. The size and location of the play area limits it to a toddler facility. Extension of the area to an adjacent development is still to be resolved. Score: Fair

Despite the fact that the assessment used is quite a hard test derived from the Green Flag Award, the results clearly indicate that quality is an issue right across this area. To reverse this, a targeted approach to improving quality is necessary, focusing initially on the primary assets.

Action 1.

Prepare a new management plan for Bunkers Park in partnership with Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, with the objective of achieving Green Flag standard within three years. This should be linked to the development of the Hemel 2020 Vision proposals.

Action 2.

As part of the Hemel 2020 Urban Park project, develop a refurbishment plan for Heath Park Gardens to improve its features, use and biodiversity.

Action 3.

Prepare an improvement plan for Coronation Fields, to re-design the area as funding opportunities arise.

Action 4.

Seek re-development opportunities for poor quality land within the study area to improve the range and quality of facilities available.

7.3 Priority: Increase Facilities**7.3.1 Provision for Children & Young People**

The following facilities, present in Hemel Hempstead – South, were evaluated as part of the development of the Play Strategy.

Quality Assessments			
	Site features (max 33)	Equipment (Max 41)	Accessibility
Apsley Ward			
Durrants Hill	10	6	Generally accessible
Apsley Lock	16	11	Generally accessible
King Edward Street	10	6	Generally accessible
Bennetts End Ward			
Coronation Fields	14	9	Some accessible features
Corner Hall Ward			
Jarman Park	10	6	Generally accessible
York Way	9	2	Some accessible features
Leverstock Green Ward			
Barleycroft	12	5	Severely limited
Westwick Field	12	8	Some accessible features
Malmes Croft	12	8	Generally accessible
Nash Mills Ward			
Barnacres	12	6	Severely limited
Swan Mead	12	3	Generally accessible

In addition to these, the following facilities are available in Hemel Hempstead South.

- Coronation Fields – youth shelter, goal/basketball unit, cricket nets
- Westwick Field - youth shelter and goal/basketball unit
- Nash Mills Play Area – play area with four items of equipment and a goal post

The area contains a variety of play areas, but in line with the rest of the settlement many of these are quite limited in scope and showing their age. In response to the concentration of under-16 year olds, improvements should be concentrated on Apsley Ward and Bennetts End Ward.

Action 5.

Target improvements at Durrants Hill (selected due to its low play value and space for expansion). The focus should be on providing adventurous play and youth provision.

Action 6.

Target improvements at Coronation Fields, with a focus on the provision of inclusive play and improved accessibility.

Action 7.

Secure funding to improve play provision throughout the settlement area as development opportunities arise.

Action 8.

Identify further improvements to youth provision, to mitigate against the travelling distances.

Action 9.

Review the long term future of the play area at York Way, which has limited play value and is a target for anti-social behaviour.

7.3.2 Outdoor Sports

Hemel Hempstead South outdoor sports provision focuses on football at Westwick Field (Leverstock Green Playing Field) and Coronation Fields, with cricket being provided by Leverstock Green Cricket Club. There are also two publically accessible tennis courts at Coronation Fields, and club provision at Leverstock Green Tennis Club and Hemel Indoor Tennis Centre.

7.3.3 Cycling

The A414 forms a significant barrier to residents within Hemel Hempstead South wishing to cycle to the industrial area, town centre and facilities within Hemel Hempstead North East.

As part of the development of Bunkers Park a cycle route was identified around the edge of the park.

The Dacorum Cycle Strategy includes relatively few proposals relating to Hemel Hempstead South.

Priority 1

- Canal towpath route from Winkwell to Nash Mills and links to Apsley Station and Belswains Lane. *(Note: this will complete the towpath upgrading works which have been implemented through the development of new housing estates in Apsley. Connections between the towpath and routes into the town centre/local facilities remain difficult, often involving steps. The Urban Park will consider access from Durrants Hill Road to Two Waters Road.)*
- Two Waters, Apsley and Nash Mills Cycle Route (DBLP Proposal TWA18). *(Note: this provides an alternative route through Nash Mills and Apsley to the town centre and will be implemented as opportunities arise with the conversion of industrial and commercial units to residential areas.)*

Action 10.

Support the development of an improved cycle route along the canal corridor from the town centre towards Kings Langley as part of the Urban Park and as development opportunities arise.

7.4 Priority: Nature Conservation

Hemel Hempstead South has limited open space and ecologically valuable sites within the residential area, with the County Wildlife Sites of Rant Meadow and Holy Trinity Church, forming isolated pockets. However, to the edge of the study area are important wildlife corridors. In particular County Wildlife Site Long Deans Meadow and Wood, with the adjacent Bunkers Park form an ecologically important and high quality landscape on the eastern boundary. At Nash Mills, these connect with the Bulbourne Valley corridor, with links to the County Wildlife Sites of Harrisons Moor and Boxmoor and the Grand Union Canal.

Although not a wildlife site, Bunkers Park provides a valuable open space and wildlife resource to the wards of Leverstock Green and Nash Mills. Dacorum acquired Bunkers Park in 1995 as replacement for open space lost to development at Jarman Fields. The park was developed as a country park with habitat compartments of woodland, pasture and meadows created to be managed through traditional techniques such as coppicing, grazing and hay cuts. As it's developed it has become an important area for wildlife and people. Through continued management and monitoring, it is likely that part of the meadow areas at Bunkers would achieve wildlife site status.

There are opportunities for habitat development at sites adjacent to St Albans Road to provide a buffer to the road, improving the setting for residential areas and to provide a refuge for wildlife.

Action 11.

Continue to manage Bunkers Park to develop the nature conservation value of the site, with particular emphasis on gaining wildlife site status for the Bottom Field.

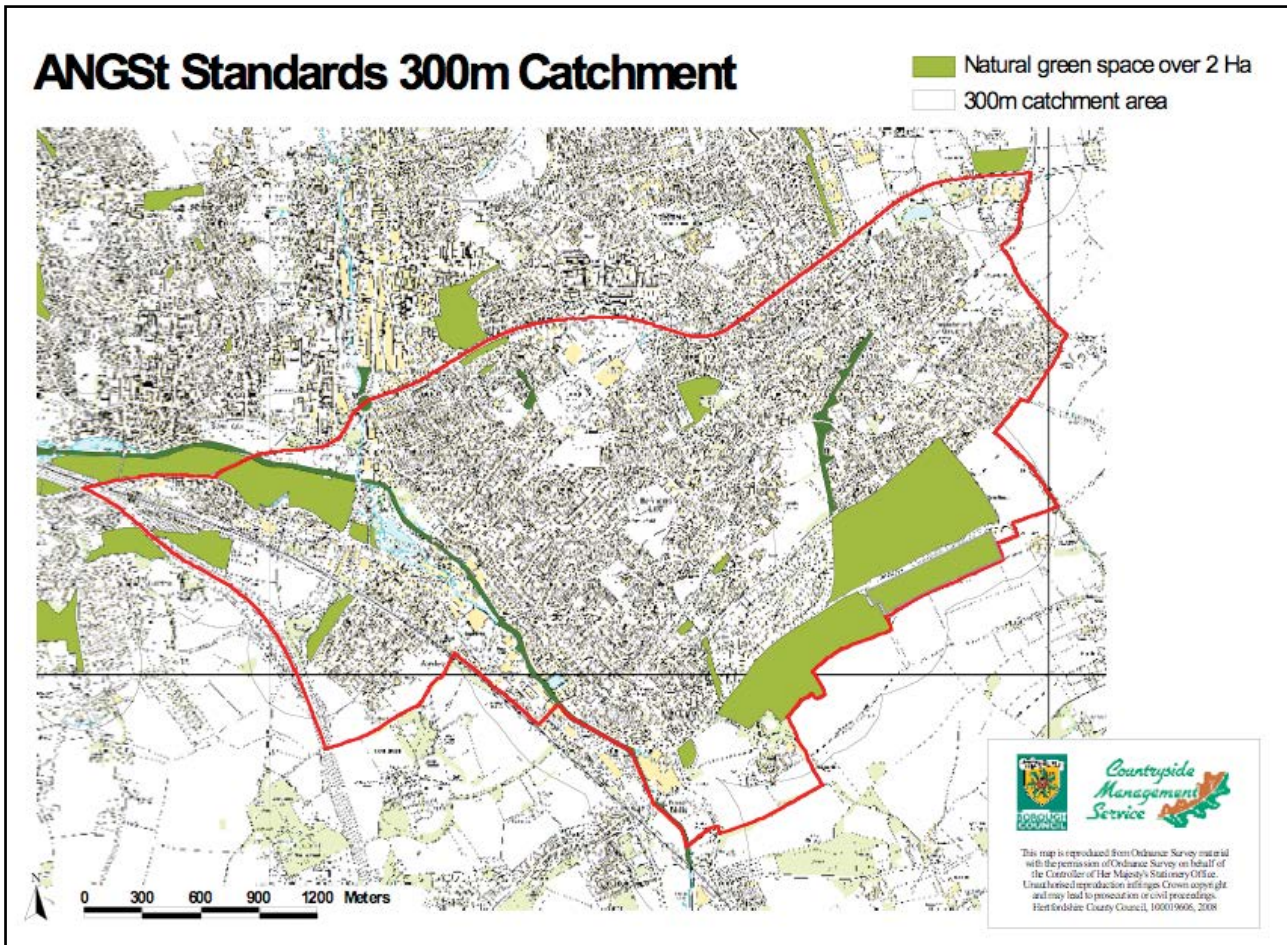
Action 12.

Prepare a new management plan for Rant Meadow, as the woodland designated a County Wildlife Site within the study area.

Action 13.

Develop nature conservation interest at DBC managed land adjacent to St Albans Road at Corner Hall and Leverstock Green.

7.5 Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside



7.5.1 Accessible Natural Green Space

From this plan it can be seen that much of the area lies outside of the 300 m catchment area for local access to natural green space. In comparison with the other settlement areas there are few areas of natural green space and woodlands within the neighbourhoods and limited opportunities to develop them. However, two of the towns best examples of natural green space are to be found in the area which helps to mitigate the deficiency, and these are complemented by the presence of green corridors running from their boundaries.

Although there are no local nature reserves, serving the settlement population of 24,418, there are significant wildlife sites in the area. In particular the presence of Long Deans and Harrisons Moor and Boxmoor (part), provide the majority of the 80.4 ha resource. This appears to be well above the target level of 24.4 ha, however this is misleading as the majority of Harrisons Moor and Boxmoor is located within Hemel Hempstead – North West.

In addition as many of the sites are on the edge of the settlement they may not benefit residents of Leverstock Green, Corner Hall and Bennetts End. Two reasonably large green spaces are present in this area: Coronation Fields and St Albans Hill / Leys Road Open Space, which could be enhanced by subtle additional planting. Significant changes to Coronation Fields may be difficult to achieve due to existing use patterns, and will require an improvement plan as detailed in Action 3. As a result St Albans Hill / Leys Road Open Space should be the focus of initial activity.

Action 14.

Focus improvements to access and on site interpretation/information at Rant Meadow, as the only County Wildlife Site within the housing estates. As Bennetts End Adventure Playground is located within the woodland, this also supports the objective of introducing adventurous play.

Action 15.

Evaluate the potential for Bunkers Park to be designated as a Local Nature Reserve and target the sites management and monitoring towards achieving this goal.

Action 16.

Introduce small scale native shrub and bulb planting at St Albans Hill / Leys Road Open Space. Ideally this should be linked to local schools and community volunteering.

7.5.2 Landscape Quality and Recreation

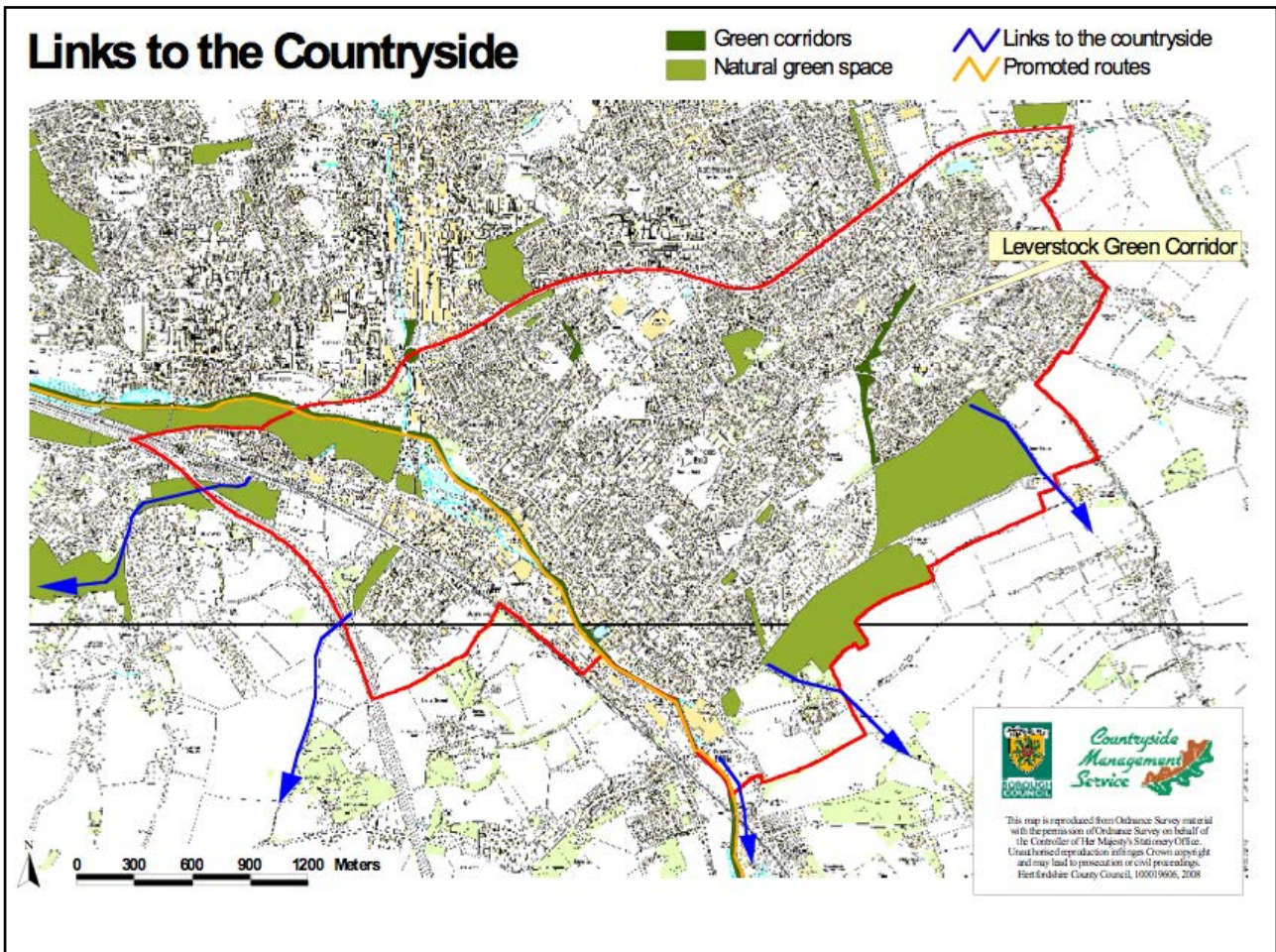
Many of the significant open spaces are on the valley slopes providing good views along the river valleys and to the surrounding countryside rising above them in the distance. Bunkers Park with Long Deans, and the canal corridor, are important structural green space within the town providing a recreational and biodiversity resource. This supports the focus on Bunkers Park and the Urban Park area identified through the Hemel 2020 Vision.

7.5.3 Links to the Countryside

Pedestrian routes leading into the countryside are well distributed from the south of Hemel Hempstead, despite the potential obstacles of the A41 trunk road and main line railway. The green corridor from Leverstock Green complements this allowing relatively traffic free access to the countryside from well within the urban areas.

Action 17.

Through the Hemel 2020 Bunkers Park project, improve the access point from the Leverstock Green corridor into Bunkers Park to provide a safe and welcoming entrance to the park.



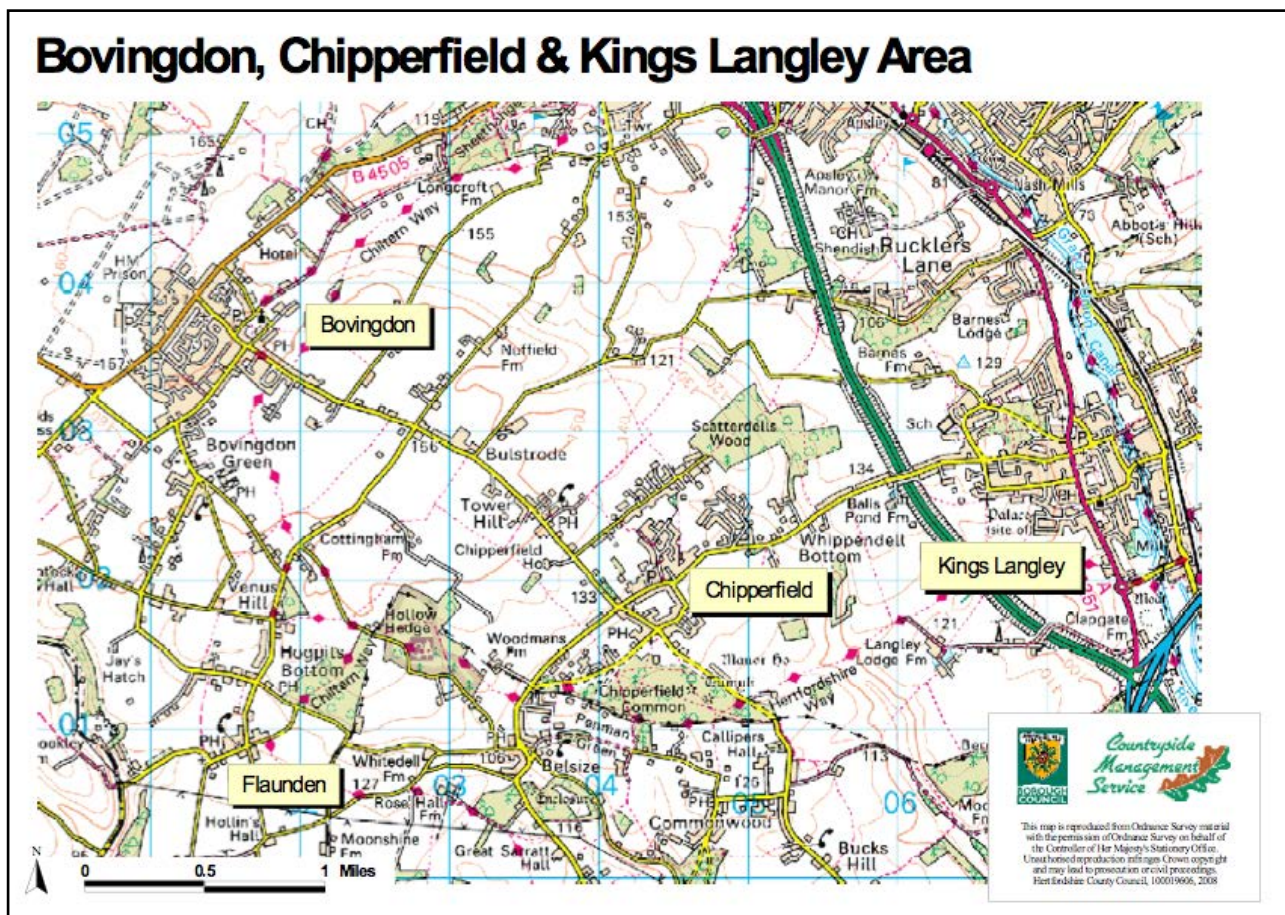


Green Space Area Study – Bovingdon, Chipperfield & Kings Langley

8.1 Context

The area consists of an expansive, gently undulating plateau located between the Gade Valley to the east and the Chess Valley to the south west. The settlements are rather fragmented with development spread across an extensive proportion of the area. These communities are linked by a fairly dense network of narrow lanes which create a rather intimate feeling to the interior of the area. The plateau is fringed by small woodlands which add to the appeal of the landscape.

Kings Langley is the largest of the settlements. With the presence of the A4521 trunk road into Hemel Hempstead, the M25 and a substantial local industrial estate, Kings Langley has the most developed feel, but beyond the main thoroughfares and industrial centre the sense of more remote traditional countryside soon returns.



8.1.1 Social Character

The area is covered by two wards with a combined population of 13,900, which equates to about 10% of the total population of the Borough.

Across the area the health of residents is slightly better than the average for the Borough which in turn is slightly better than for the East of England as a whole. Educational standards are also high with one quarter of the adult population holding a degree-level qualification.

Multiple indicators of deprivation in Bovingdon, Flaunden and Chipperfield are in line with the Borough average, being ranked in line with the 25% least deprived wards nationally, while Kings Langley shows less deprivation, being just beyond the 12% least deprived wards nationally.

Some differences in age structure are present, with Kings Langley having fewer residents in their late teens and twenties than the rest of the area.

Ethnic minorities account for 5.4% of the population of Bovingdon, Flaunden and Chipperfield, with Black people making up the largest section of this population. Ethnic minorities account for 3.4% of the population of Kings Langley, with people of mixed ethnicity accounting for the largest portion of this population.

In summary, the residents of the study area are fairly healthy, well educated, and experience reasonably low levels of deprivation.

8.1.2 Designations and strategic development issues

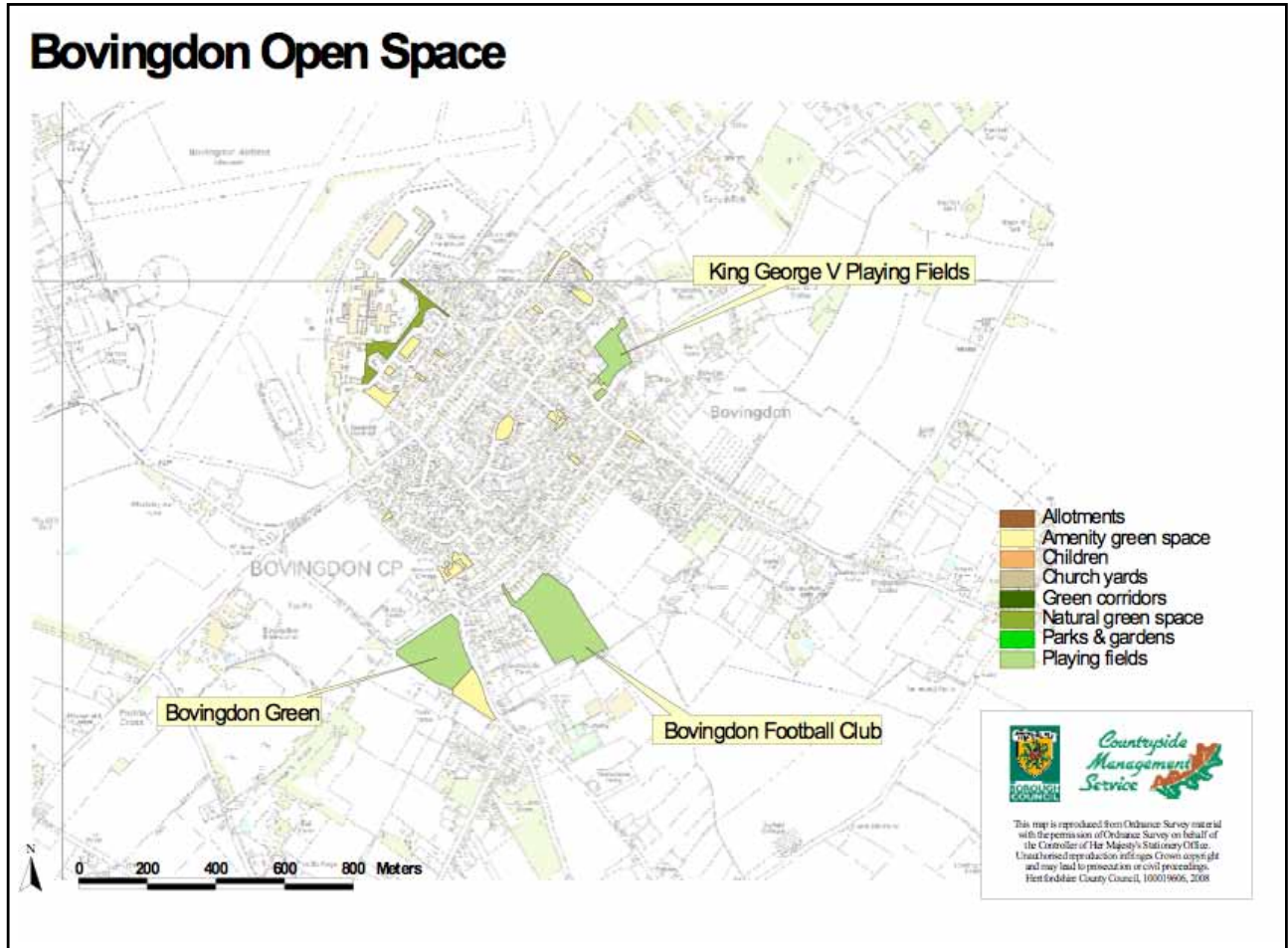
Bovingdon conservation area covers the southern end of the High Street, the Church and grounds, and parts of Bury Farm and Vicarage Lane. The village is surrounded by Green Belt farmland and bordered by the Chilterns AONB to the north-west. The Draft Core Strategy (November 2010), suggests modest levels of new housing of either 90 (option 1) or 150 (option 2) dwellings in the village up to 2031. Option 2 includes a local allocation of up to 60 new homes on the edge of the village, north of Chesham Road, which would also provide an area of public open space.

Much of Chipperfield village is within the conservation area, excepting the small housing estate to the north and the outlying area of Tower Hill. The whole village is within the Green Belt. The Draft Core Strategy (November 2010) proposes limited new developments in the countryside, through small levels of infilling, changes in use and the identification of rural exception sites.

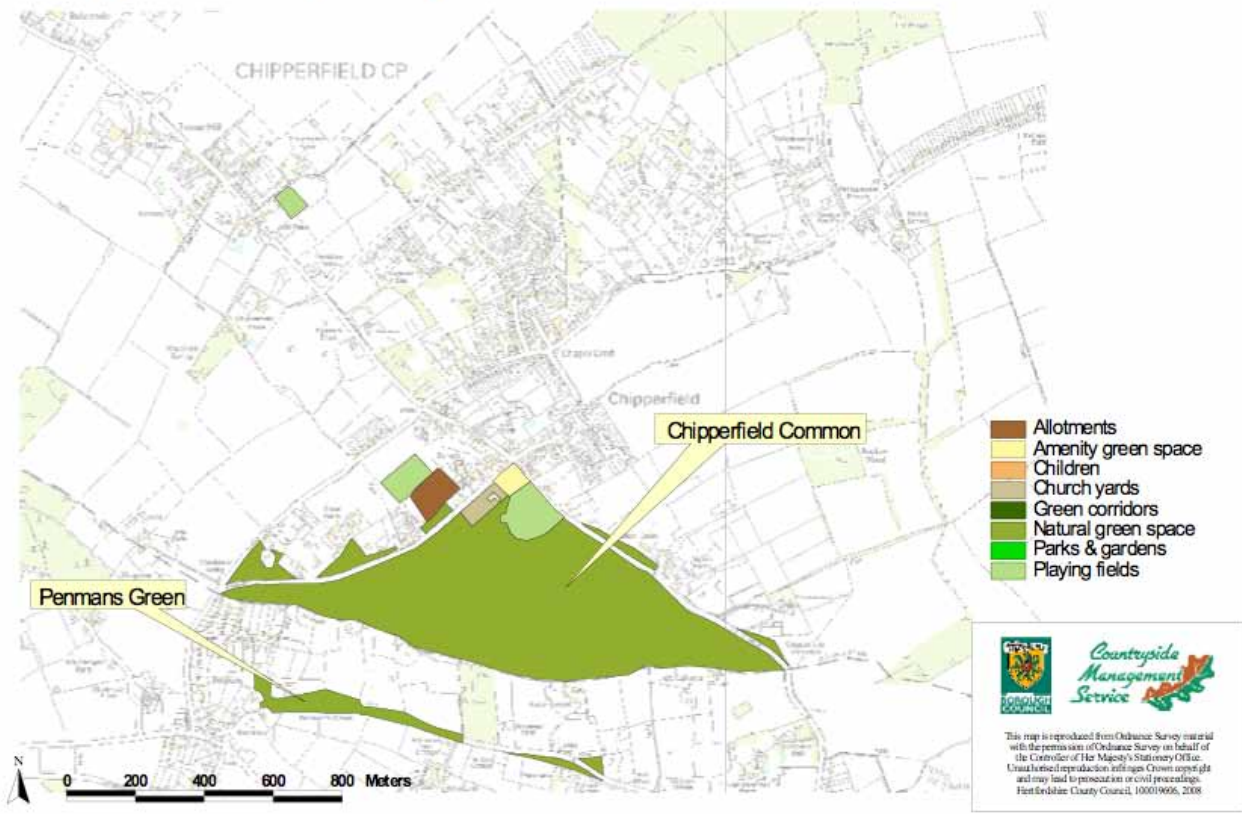
Kings Langley has three conservation areas which together cover the village centre and church, and parts of the Common including the cricket pitch. The land surrounding Kings Langley is Green Belt countryside. The Draft Core Strategy (November 2010) proposes growth of 100 dwellings over the period up to 2031, which can be accommodated within the boundaries of the village.

8.1.3 Open Space Provision

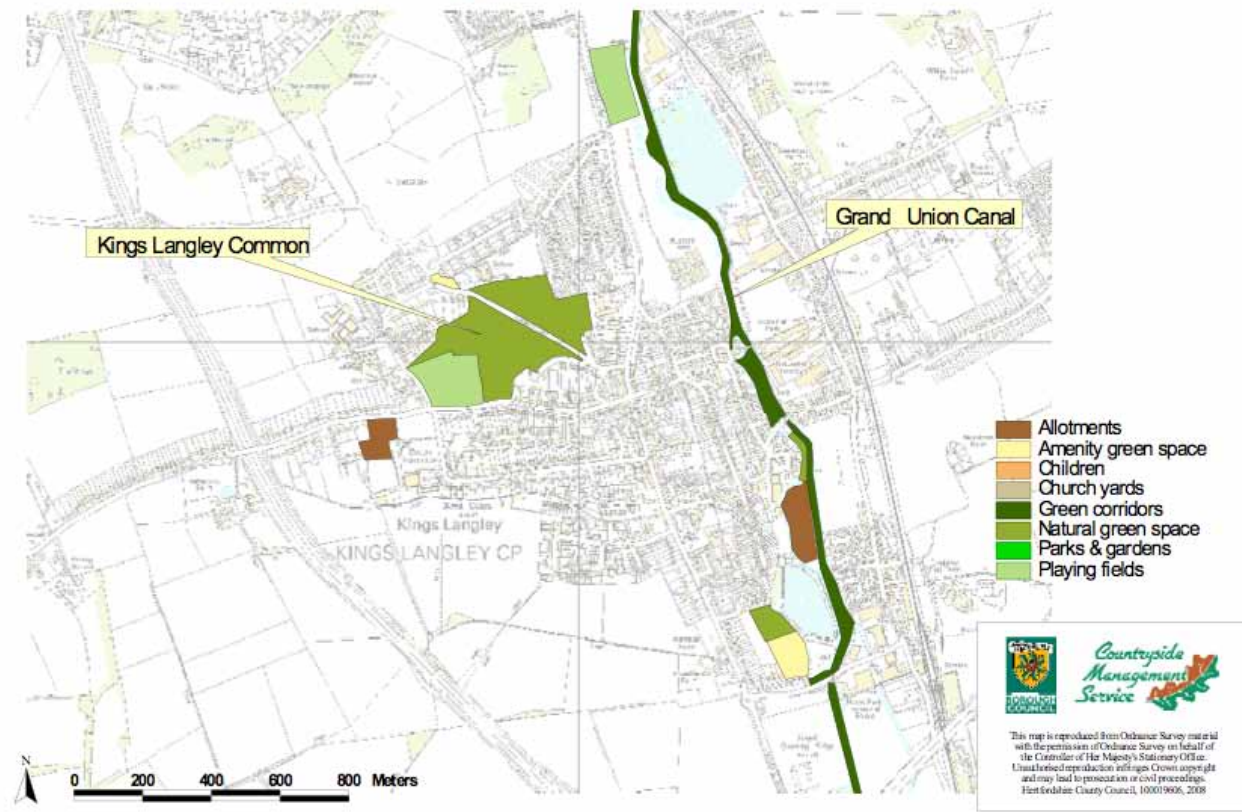
Kings Langley has a good provision of open space in the form of allotments, the Common, outdoor sports facilities the churchyard and cemetery, school playing fields and the canal corridor and lakes. Chipperfield similarly benefits from its substantial common. In contrast, Bovington has a significant under provision of open space and lacks allotments, green corridors, parks and gardens and space for children and young people. It does have more playing fields than the other villages.



Chipperfield Open Space



Kings Langley Open Space



8.2 Priority: Improve Quality

The following table contains a brief description and quality assessment of all the significant green spaces within the town and adjacent countryside.

Name	Area ha	Description	Quality inspection & score
Chipperfield Common DBC	42.5	An expansive area of common land now mostly given over to woodland. The northern corner is maintained as a cricket ground and open area forming a focal point to the village.	<p>The generally open boundaries from the road side give a positive impression. The pathways are mostly open in character and the network easy to follow. The car parks are in reasonably good order.</p> <p>The information board by the cricket club car park, plus good way-marking and the easy access trail allows simple navigation on good surfaces. Retention of veteran trees is a bonus.</p> <p>The pollarding around the pond is good to see. Some areas of developing cherry laurel could do with control.</p> <p>Score: Good</p>
Croft Meadow DBC	0.15	Play area within amenity green space.	<p>The area is open and overlooked, with access from an informal footpath at the rear, but there is no pavement along the road. New play equipment has improved the area. A woodland management plan for the adjacent area would improve biodiversity.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Tower Hill leased to DBC	0.5	Play area within sports field.	<p>The entrance from the lane is discreet, and the tarmac is damaged. The play area is of limited value, and the fire damaged portacabin needs resolving.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

Kings Langley Common DBC	11.5	An area of old common land included within the settlement. It has now mostly developed as mature woodland, but with a cricket ground provided against the western boundary.	<p>The generally open aspects are welcoming. Parking in the main car park is a little disorganised. The old rails are heavily included in the dead beech tree. The benches and bins adjacent to the car park and cricket field give a slightly ad hoc impression. The name boards are a good feature, but they are not visible from the first point of entry.</p> <p>The pavilion, cricket square and outfield are in good order. There was some build up of litter in the undergrowth adjacent to the cricket ground. In the context of the site this was quite localised but does affect the score.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Station Footpath – Kings Langley DBC	1.9	An informal green space linking Rockcliffe Avenue with Station Footpath (road). The site is half mature woodland and half amenity grass.	<p>The southern entrance is dominated by improvised boundary defences which were graffitied. There was no signage and the entrances are obscure. The new woodland compartments and footpath have improved the environment. There is some littering but within acceptable limits.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Rucklers Lane DBC	0.1	Play area within housing estate.	<p>The play area is of limited value, and the equipment and surfacing are ageing. The external footpath links are good, though the internal slope makes access difficult.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

Beechfield DBC	0.2	Play area adjacent to housing estate.	<p>The access points are blind including a shared vehicle route. There is a limited range of equipment and facilities, no footpath to the play area or activities of older age group.</p> <p>There was evidence of dog fouling. Views to open land beyond are pleasant, and hedges and brambles provide habitats.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Green Park, The Nap DBC	0.63 (yth & play) 0.32 by car park and elsewhere	Small park with play area and youth facilities.	<p>A pleasant park, close to the High Street and local facilities. There is poor visibility and signage at access points. A good range of facilities, including youth provision, is present. The compact size limits quiet areas and different habitats. The poor condition of the toilet block and lack of footpath through the play area reduces the appeal of the area.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Bovingdon Green DBC	2.4	A traditional village green largely given over to cricket.	<p>An attractive setting, but car parking, pavilion and bins are in poor condition.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
King George V Playing Fields - Bovingdon DBC	1.0	An area of playing fields adjacent to the school.	<p>The area has a good layout, and is well maintained with a good range of facilities. The area is rather let down by the entrances.</p> <p>Score: Good</p>
Church Lane DBC	0.97	A small sports field with play area.	<p>A pleasant open space in a quiet location. There is a good range of facilities, though there's little play equipment for toddlers. The entrance is not signposted from the High Street.</p> <p>Score: Good</p>

Flaunden Recreation Gd DBC	1.6	A sports field with play area next to the village hall.	A pleasant open location, though there is little natural surveillance. There is a reasonable range of activities, though there are limited facilities for the older age group. Repairs to fencing and the car park are required. A buffer along hedgerows would aid biodiversity. Score: Fair
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Chipperfield Common scores highly, reflecting its status as an important historic and conservation feature in the landscape. Of the remaining sites, King George V playing field is rated 'good' due to its concentrated range of facilities close to the centre of Bovingdon village. Given that there are fewer green spaces within the villages, the quality and range of facilities they provide becomes more important.

Within Kings Langley, improving the range and quality of facilities has been focussed on Green Park, a compact site with a mix of recreation uses. By comparison Station footpath has been used as informal open space and for access to the station. In 2009 developers contributions enabled new links from the main path to the surrounding housing to be installed and new woodland planting to be introduced. There remains potential for further biodiversity enhancements.

Kings Langley Parish Council has been working on a landscape improvement project to upgrade the infrastructure, resolve issues and improve landscaped areas in the village. Proposals still to be implemented include completing the replacement of benches and bins throughout the green spaces and neighbourhoods. Improvements to the car parks on the Common by the cricket pitch and parking issues on the corner of Langley Hill have also been highlighted.

Action 1.

Develop a plan to improve the facilities, management and habitats at Station Footpath.

Action 2.

Support Kings Langley Parish Council in their efforts to secure funding and implement their landscape improvement project.

8.3 Priority: Increase Facilities

8.3.1 Provision for Children & Young People

The following facilities, present in the Bovingdon, Chipperfield and Kings Langley area, were evaluated as part of the development of the Play Strategy.

Quality Assessments			
	Site features (max 33)	Equipment (Max 41)	Accessibility
Bovingdon			
Hyde Lane	11	5	Severely limited
Church Lane	13	9	Severely limited
Boundary Cottages	10	2	Severely limited
Chipperfield			
Croft Meadow	11	10	Severely limited
Tower Hill	8	3	Severely limited
Flaunden			
Flaunden	10	6	Generally accessible
Kings Langley			
Beechfield	12	6	Generally accessible
Green Park / The Nap	11	9	Generally accessible
Rucklers Lane	9	6	Some accessible features

In addition to these, the following facilities are available in Bovingdon, Chipperfield and Kings Langley.

- Church Lane – goal unit, youth shelter and basketball post
- Green Park/The Nap – basketball post and two goal units
- Rucklers Lane - basketball post

While the distribution of play areas does not match the expectations of the current local plan, given the dispersed nature of the settlements, the spread of play areas covers the majority of the local population to a reasonable extent. With the exception of small hamlets, the residential area least well served is the northern fringe of Kings Langley. Overall however Bovingdon has the lowest level of provision for children and young people per 1000 population compared to all the settlements in Dacorum which were evaluated as part of the Open Space Study.

A significant concern is also the low quality of the current equipment provided, with only three play areas scoring above the Borough average of 6.4 for the quality of equipment, which in turn is quite low in absolute terms.

Action 3.

Work in partnership with Bovingdon Parish Council to improve the quality and accessibility of the play areas in Bovingdon.

Action 4.

Work with Kings Langley Parish Council to improve the play facilities at Kings Langley.

Action 5.

Seek opportunities for funding to improve play provision through the study area.

Action 6.

Utilise the Core Strategy process to secure new play facilities at Kings Langley and Bovingdon.

Action 7.

Improve youth provision within the study area.

8.3.2 Outdoor Sports

The Dacorum Sport and Recreation Study (Knight, Kavanagh and Page, October 2006) identifies that there are sufficient football pitches within study area but that two sites, Gaywood Park and Green Lane, were being over-played. In contrast, all the school sites and the Community Hall Playing Fields had spare capacity, so the potential to redistribute the pressure exists if agreement can be reached with the teams and schools.

In terms of other sports, cricket is available through the clubs at Kings Langley, Bovingdon and Chipperfield and tennis through Chipperfield Tennis Club and Bovingdon and Flaunden Tennis Club.

8.3.3 Allotments

Chipperfield has 1.05 ha of allotments and Kings Langley has 2.73 ha of allotments, both approximately double the provision recommended by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners. Bovingdon has no allotments and is clearly deficient. It is not realistic to expect people to travel from Bovingdon to the other settlements to access allotments and therefore this deficiency should be considered as part of any expansion of green space planned for the village.

Action 8.

Utilise the LDF process to secure an allotment site for Bovingdon.

8.4 Priority: Nature Conservation

Bovingdon has no County Wildlife Sites within the settlement or adjacent to its boundaries and the village is largely deficient in biodiversity. The pond and margins at Bovingdon Green and the churchyard of St Lawrence's Church have the most potential for improving habitats for wildlife within the village.

Further afield the extensive network of County Wildlife Sites associated with the woods and meadows managed by the Box Moor Trust are a valuable resource for the local area and the Borough as a whole. Bovingdon Brickworks, the meadows at Little Hay and the hedgerow network in the fields and woods surrounding the village are also ecologically important.

In contrast Chipperfield benefits from Chipperfield Common which is a County Wildlife Site with full public access from the heart of the village.

Similarly the County Wildlife Site of Kings Langley Common contributes to the high local provision of natural green space, supported by a further eight Wildlife Sites located within 1km of the village. The corridor of the Grand Union Canal and River Bulbourne also provides ecological interest. The south of the village has the least access to nature conservation areas, which further supports the action to develop the habitats of Station Footpath from Action 1.

Action 9.

Working in partnership with Bovingdon Parish Council develop and implement a management plan to improve the pond and surrounding margins at Bovingdon Green.

Action 10.

Working in partnership with Dacorum Sports Trust, secure an ecologically sensitive management regime for the meadows at Little Hay Golf Complex.

Action 11.

With the Parochial Church Council explore opportunities for developing wildlife habitats within the churchyard of St Lawrence's.

Action 12.

Continue to work with Chipperfield Parish Council and the Friends of Chipperfield Common to maintain the Common at Green Flag standard, recognising its importance within the local landscape and as a Destination Park within the Borough.

Action 13.

Develop a new management plan for Kings Langley Common to enhance and protect the County Wildlife Site.

8.5 Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside

8.5.1 Accessible Natural Green Space

Natural England's ANGSt standard states the following:

1. There should be at least 1 ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1000 head of population.
2. That no person should live more than 300 m from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2 ha in size
3. That there should be at least one accessible 20 ha site within 2 km from home
4. That there should be one accessible 100 ha site within 5 km
5. That there should be one accessible 500 ha site within 10 km

Like almost the entire Borough, the Ashridge Estate provides a 500 ha accessible site within 10 km for the whole study area. Below this level, provision is more patchy when compared against the ANGSt standards. The Ashridge Estate also provides the next level down for the northern half of Bovingdon, and Whippendell Woods provides for most of Kings Langley and the southern half of Chipperfield.

Chipperfield Common is the only 20 ha site within the study area. Due to the dispersed nature of the area a 2km catchment only provides for the village of Chipperfield but not the other settlements.

At the most local level, the 300 m maximum distance from a 2 ha site; about half of Kings Langley is covered, a small proportion of Chipperfield and none of Bovingdon.

While the area does not satisfy the ANGSt standard, this is in part mitigated by the generally low density of development and integration into the rural landscape. From this analysis, Bovingdon appears to be the least well provided for settlement.

Radical changes to the current availability of accessible natural green space are extremely unlikely at present, and therefore greater emphasis should be placed on the quality and accessibility of existing sites.

There are no local nature reserves within any of the villages within the study area. The scale and public access to the County Wildlife Sites at Chipperfield and Kings Langley provides a good resource for these villages, with the opportunity to progress to become local nature reserves in the future.

Action 14.

Discuss the potential for designating Chipperfield Common as a Local Nature Reserve with Chipperfield Parish Council.

Action 15.

Focus access and interpretation improvements at Kings Langley Common, as the significant wildlife resource within the village and a County Wildlife Site within the public domain.

¹¹ Hertfordshire Landscape Strategy, Landscape Character Assessment for Dacorum, Supplementary Planning Guidance May 2004.

8.5.2 Landscape Quality and Recreation

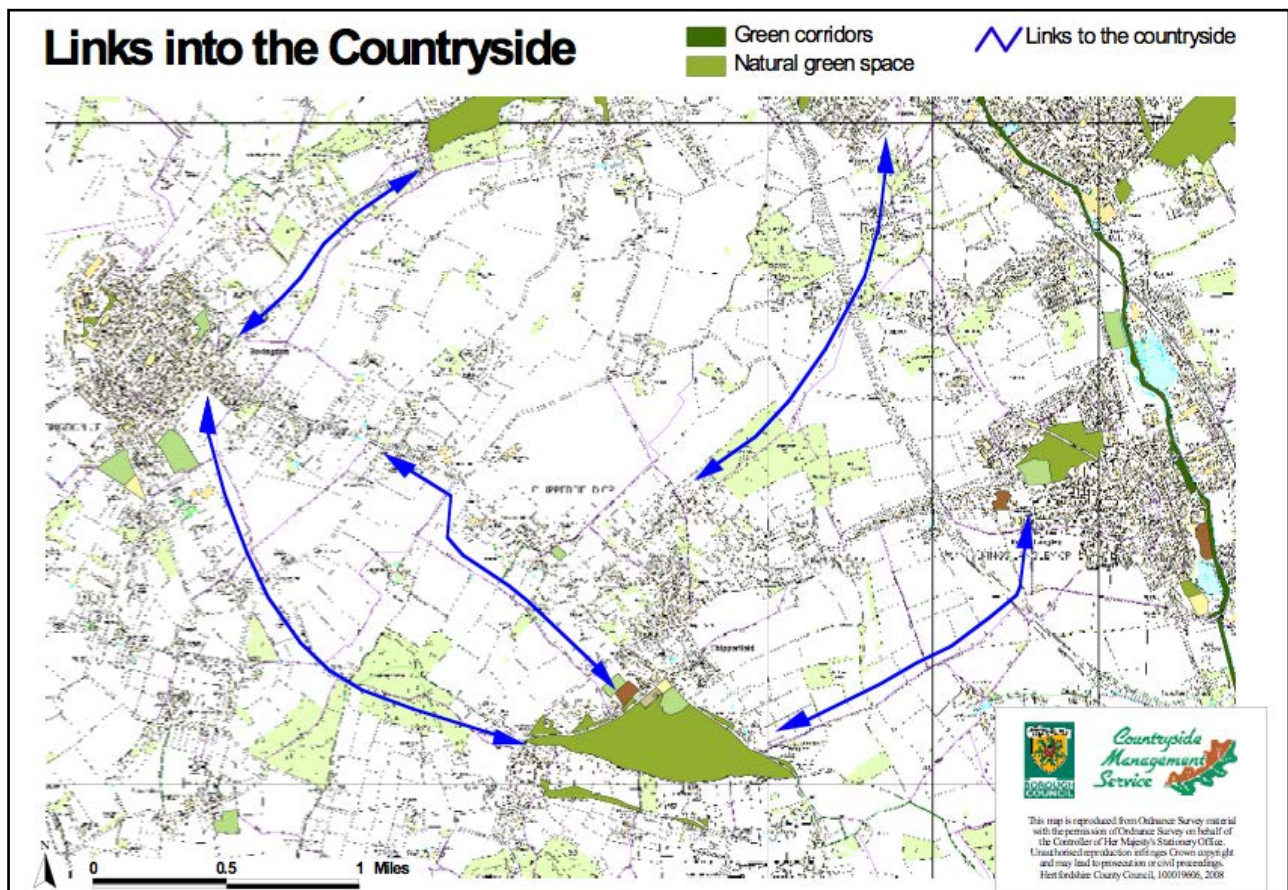
The undulating plateau which forms the bulk of the area contains relatively mixed farming, plus numerous small fragments of woodland. Though it is not considered to be amongst the best landscapes in the county it is not without opportunity for informal recreation. The centre is crossed by numerous narrow tree lined lanes though it is less well served by footpaths.

To the south west, the dry valley of Flaunden Bottom leading into the Chess Valley is considered to be a high quality landscape¹¹. This feature is a real asset to the residents of the village of Flaunden and for the physically active from further afield. At its nearest point this area is approximately one mile from the edge of Bovington and one and a quarter miles from the edge of Chipperfield.

8.5.3 Links to the Countryside

Though the settlements are located in the countryside and fairly dispersed across the area, good quality links both into the countryside and to the settlements and their services are important. The following chart identifies some of the more strategically important routes across the area.

Kings Langley Parish Council has highlighted the entrance to ROW 17 which leads out from Love Lane circling the village to the north, as an area for improvement. Similarly the verge and hedgerow along the rural section of Rucklers Lane heading west are often overgrown and restrict access.



Action 16

Support Kings Langley Parish Council's proposals to improve access to the countryside from the village.

8.6 Consultation Summary

The lack of accessible green space forms a consistent subsidiary theme within the feedback. While it did not constitute anyone's top priority, it was mentioned 38 times across most of the discussion groups and therefore is clearly an important element of local opinion.

The proposals can be consolidated into the following themes: protection of existing green space, more informal green space, play provision for 'toddlers', better youth facilities, more allotments, more tree planting, and better access to the countryside and specific sites within it.

The issue of supply of allotments and green space appears to be specific to Bovingdon, which has no allotments and comparatively little green space compared with other nearby settlements. However, the other comments are in line with the broad approach of this strategy.

Details of the consultation responses received are within Section 4: Consultation and Appendices.

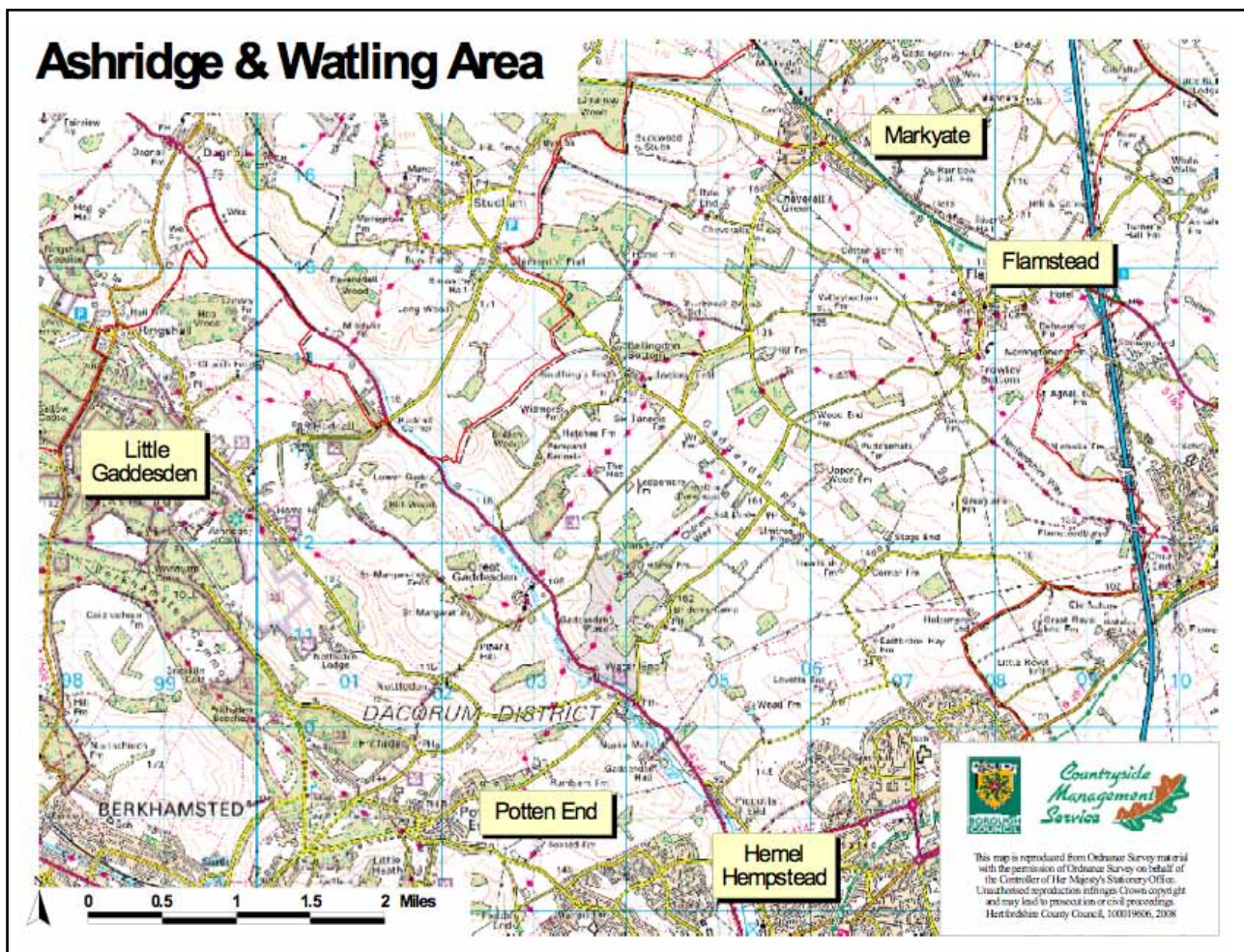


Green Space Area Study – Ashridge & Watling

9.1 Context

This area covers the settlements of Markyate, Flamstead, Potten End and Little Gaddesden. The area consists of a series of parallel valleys running from north west to south east away from the Chilterns escarpment. The pattern of valleys is separated into two halves by an undulating plateau known as Gaddesden Row. To the south, the largest of the valleys, the Gade Valley, cuts through the Chilterns carrying the A4146 main road to Leighton Buzzard. To the north of the plateau, the Ver Valley carries the A5 towards Dunstable. The M1 motorway also passes through the eastern fringe of the study area.

Despite the presence of strategic transport routes, much of the area retains a remote rural feel of undulating hills and intimate valleys. The dry valleys flanked by numerous small woodlands form a typical Chilterns landscape considered to be amongst the best in the Borough.



9.1.1 Social Character

The two wards which cover this area have a combined population of 7,923 which equates to about 6% of the Borough population as a whole. The ward of Watling covers Markyate, Flamstead and south west to a line including the Gade Valley. Beyond this is the ward of Ashridge, which covers Little Gaddesden and Potten End.

The population of the area is by comparison relatively healthy, well educated and with very little sign of deprivation. They are much more likely to be self employed than is average for the Borough. However economic activity as a whole is lower in Ashridge Ward, which in part is explained by a higher number of residents of retirement age.

Education standards are high, particularly in Ashridge where one third of the adult population holds a degree-level qualification.

There are comparatively fewer individuals in their late teens or twenties as a proportion of the population, than is found elsewhere in the Borough, and relatively more between the ages of 45 and 75.

Ethnic minorities represent a very small proportion of the population at 2%.

9.1.2 Designations and strategic development issues

The countryside around Markyate is designated as Green Belt, Rural Area or Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. To the north east, Markyate Cell is recognised as a park with special historic interest. Markyate High Street is designated as a conservation area.

The smaller villages of Great Gaddesden, Little Gaddesden, Gaddesden Row, Potten End and Flamstead follow a similar pattern of being Green Belt, within or next to the Chilterns AONB, and having a conservation area which as a minimum covers the centre of the village.

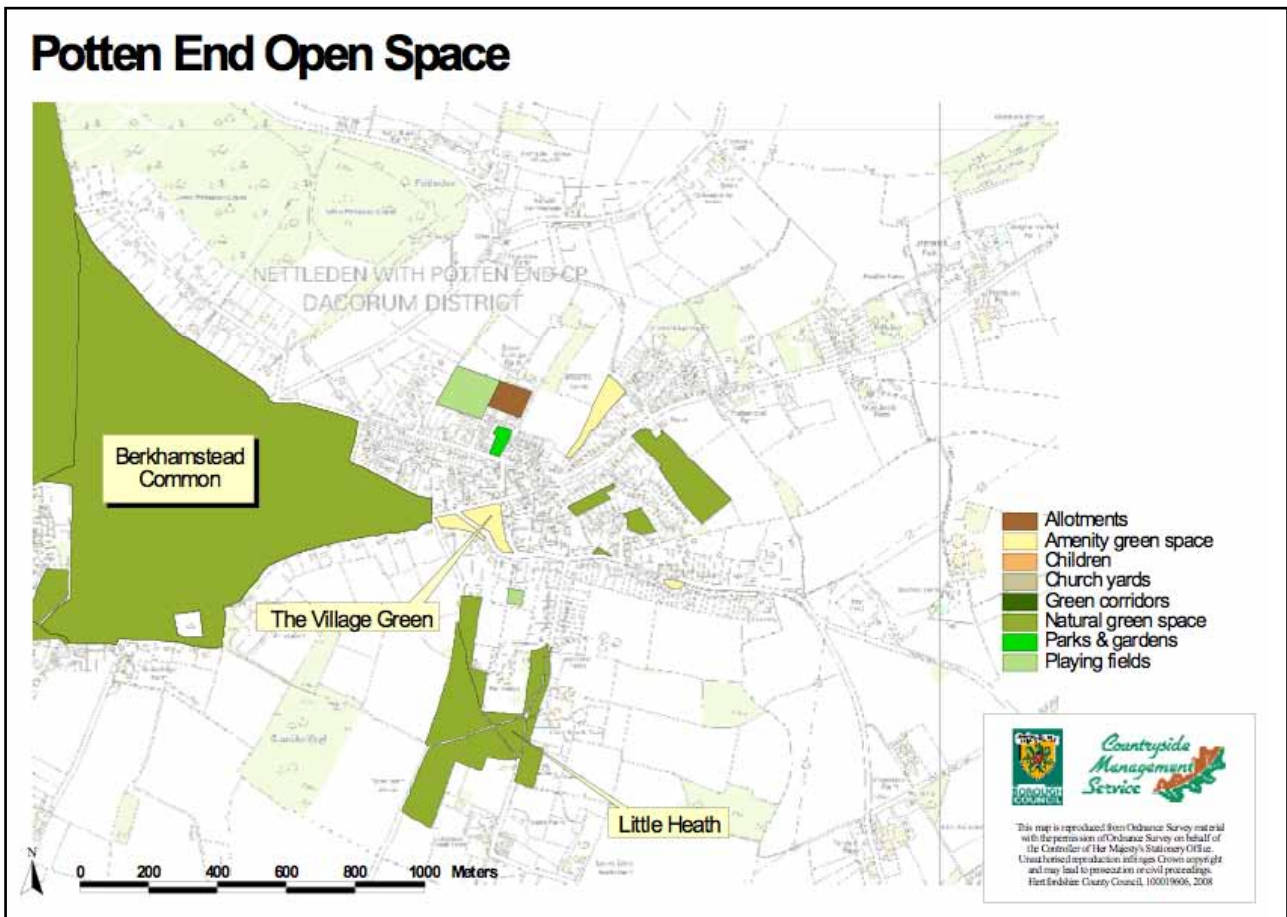
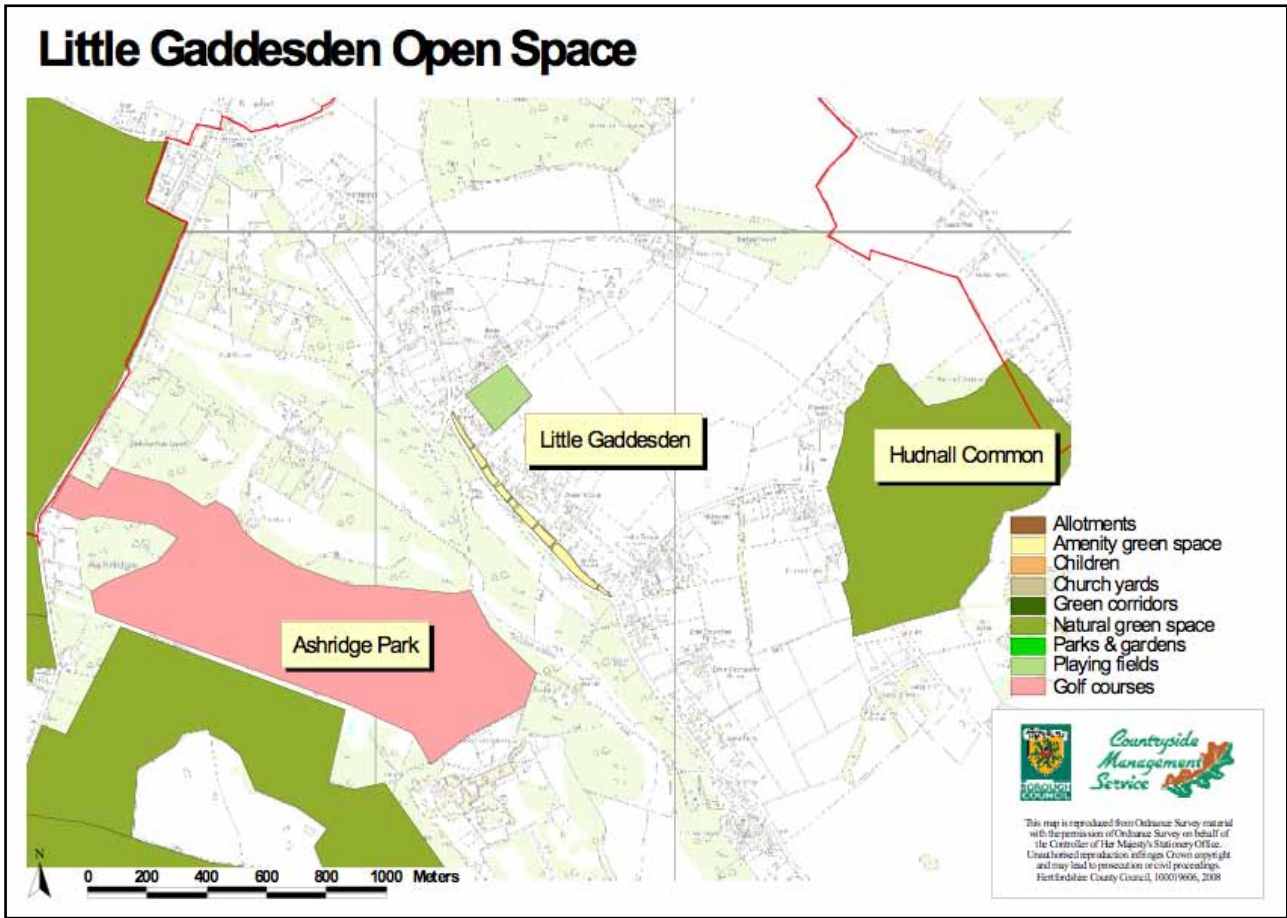
The Draft Core Strategy (November 2010) proposes limited new development within the countryside, through small levels of infilling, changes of use and the identification of rural exception sites. The new housing would be spread among existing small villages including Flamstead and Potten End. Within Markyate, two housing growth options are suggested, each of which would provide around 190 new homes to 2031. It is likely that much of the new housing provision will come from redevelopment of a brownfield site.

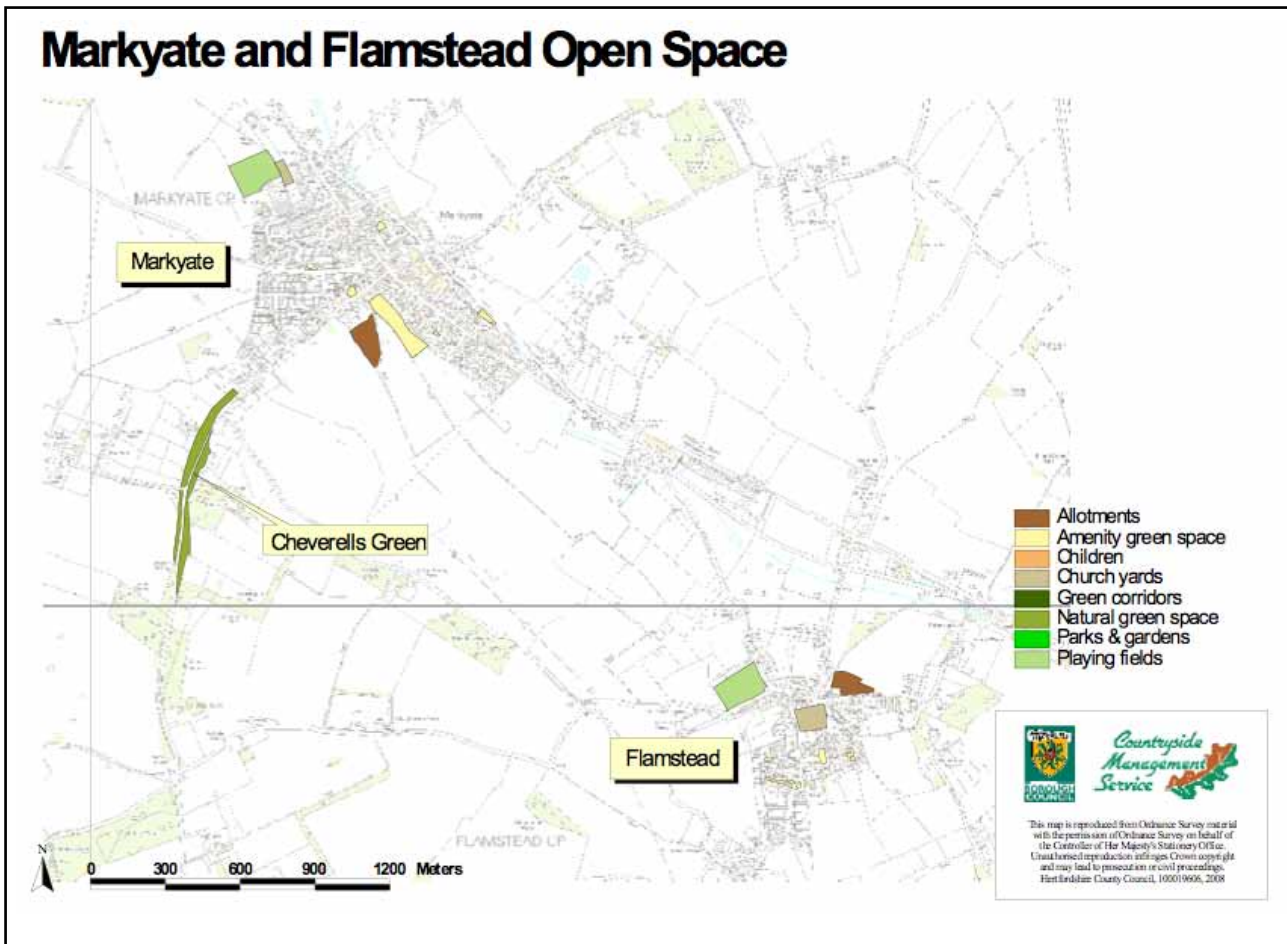
9.1.3 Open Space Provision

Little Gaddesden and Potten End have abundant accessible green space provided by the adjacent commons.

In comparison Markyate and Flamstead have much less, though the provision of playing fields and play areas is similar. Flamstead has a quantitative shortage of open space and Markyate is deficient of 2.5 ha of leisure space.

9.2 Priority: Improve Quality





The following table contains a brief description and quality assessment of all the significant green spaces within the town and adjacent countryside.

Name	Area ha	Description	Quality inspection & score
Little Gaddesden Recreation Ground	2.5	A rectangular playing field accommodating cricket, tennis and bowls.	The field has generally open boundaries but no indication that it is public open space. There is a reasonable range of facilities and play provision.
Little Gaddesden Parish council			Score: Good

Cromer Close, Little Gaddesden DBC	0.22	A local play space, for the surrounding housing, adjacent to Ashridge.	<p>The space is clean and well maintained and its setting forms a tranquil environment.</p> <p>There is a small range of play equipment, some of which is dated. The direct access to the Ashridge estate provides opportunities for informal play and experiencing nature.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
The Green, Potten End Nettleden with Potten End Parish Council	1.2	An attractive village green with a pond.	<p>The open boundaries and aspects to this attractive site are welcoming, with appropriate provision of seating. Capacity for car parking is an advantage. The current provision of facilities is appropriate in the context of the site. However, it is difficult to justify a higher score given the limited extent of the site.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>
Potten End Recreation Ground Nettleden with Potten End Parish Council	0.3	A rectangular grassed area with a play equipment and trees at the periphery.	<p>The entrance points are a bit haphazard without anything to mark them. The play equipment is old but brightly painted. Plenty of litter bins are provided, but there is some graffiti present.</p> <p>Score: Fair.</p>
Gaddesden Row Recreation Ground DBC	0.4	An approximately square grassed area with play equipment.	<p>Visually bright but let down by entrances, uneven footpaths and limited signage. The safety surface is showing its age.</p> <p>Score: Fair</p>

Cavendish Road, Markyate DBC leased to Markyate Parish council	2.6	A sports field with play area.	There is a reasonable range of facilities and footpath routes. The sports pavilion and in particular the football shelter are in poor condition. The fenced area next to the play area lacks purpose. Score: Fair
Peggy's Field (Pickford Road), Markyate Parish Council	1.3	An informal park with play area.	The park is hidden behind housing, with access via public footpaths, some of which are surfaced. Access is difficult due to the poor condition of the footpaths. Within the park low hanging branches obstruct footpaths and benches. Score: Fair

Action 1.

Secure new public realm at Markyate through the Core Strategy process.

9.3 Priority: Increase Facilities**9.3.1 Provision for Children & Young People**

The following facilities, present in Ashridge and Watling, were evaluated as part of the development of the Play Strategy.

Quality Assessments			
	Site features (max 33)	Equipment (Max 41)	Accessibility
Markyate			
Cavendish Road	11	6	Generally accessible
Ashridge			
Great Gaddesden	8	6	Severely limited
Gaddesden Row	10	7	Generally accessible

In addition to these, the following facilities are available in Ashridge and Watling.

- Peggy's Field (Pickford Road), Markyate – six items of equipment, and combined goal/ basketball ball post
- Cavendish Road – youth shelter on sports field
- Gaddesden Row – basketball post and youth shelter
- Flamstead – eight items of play equipment
- Potten End – five items of play equipment, a goal and a basketball post
- Little Gaddesden Recreation Ground – seven items of play equipment
- Cromer Close, Little Gaddesden – three items of play equipment and a goal

The play areas in Peggy's Field (Pickford Road), Potten End and Little Gaddesden were not assessed for the Play Strategy.

The play areas are all fairly limited in scope as is typical for the Borough as a whole. Added to this the area of play space for children and young people is low when compared to both the Local Plan standards and provision across the Borough. To address this, attention should be focused on improving the quality of the facilities. In particular this should focus on Markyate in response to its larger population and comparative scarcity of alternative open space to provide informal play opportunities. The priority should be the provision of youth facilities and more adventurous play equipment. Potten End, as the next largest settlement, should also be targeted.

Action 2.

Improve the quality of play provision at Cavendish Road, Markate.

Action 3.

Improve the access to Peggys Field (Pickford Road), Markyate through upgrading the footpath links.

Action 4.

Extend the range of youth facilities and adventurous play available in Markyate.

Action 5.

Extend the range of play equipment available at Potten End to include toddler and inclusive play opportunities.

9.3.2 Outdoor Sports

The football pitch in Little Gaddesden was being over-played when assessed in 2006, but this was thought to be largely due to the poor condition of the pitch rather than the amount of usage. The other football pitches in the area, at Cavendish Road, Markyate Primary School and Hollybush Lane, were considered to be in adequate condition.

There is no provision for rugby or hockey in the area but these are catered for elsewhere in the Borough. Cricket is well catered for with five pitches available, two of which were not being used during the 2006 assessment.

9.3.3 Allotments

With the exception of Little Gaddesden which has no allotments, Flamstead, Markyate and Potten End all have areas of allotments in excess of the recommended standard. Despite this the need for further allotments was reported during local consultation in Markyate and provision should be considered as part of any significant development of the area.

Action 6.

Support the local desire for the provision of further allotment sites within Markeyate as opportunities arise.

9.4 Priority: Nature Conservation

Little Gaddesden and Potten End have access to substantial areas of wildlife sites including SSSIs within the Ashridge Estate complex. A regular spread of woodland wildlife sites continues to the east along the parallel valley sides, but becomes sparse around Markyate and Flamstead.

There are no sites of recognised ecological value within Markyate. To the west lies Cheverell's Green a County Wildlife Site due to the quality of its unimproved grassland. In addition there are a number of County Wildlife Site woodlands (Fairless, Broomhill Leys and Friendless) within 1 km of the village which are partly accessible through the rights of way network. Markyate Cell, a private country house situated to the north of the A5, is a park of special historic interest and forms part of the wildlife corridor to the north east.

The River Ver is mostly culverted through the village, restoring a section is highlighted by the Dacorum Chalk River Restoration Strategy (Environment Agency, 2010) and may be achieved through the future development proposals for Hicks Road.

Of the open spaces within Markyate, Peggy's Field (Pickford Road) has the most opportunity to enhance biodiversity through hedgerow or edge management. The playing field at Cavendish Road and adjacent cemetery also have potential.

Action 7.

Support Markyate Parish Council in improving the hedgerows at Peggy's Field (Pickford Road), Markyate.

Action 8.

Explore opportunities for developing biodiversity areas around the cemetery, Cavendish Road Playing Field, and the Manor Farm development.

9.5 Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside

9.5.1 Accessible Natural Green Space

Natural England's ANGSt standard states the following:

1. There should be at least 1 ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1000 head of population
2. That no person should live more than 300 m from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2 ha in size
3. That there should be at least one accessible 20 ha site within 2 km from home
4. That there should be one accessible 100 ha site within 5 km
5. That there should be one accessible 500 ha site within 10 km

Considering these in reverse order, Ashridge provides a 500 ha site across the whole of the area, as it does for the majority of the Borough. At the more local levels a strong distinction between the two halves of the area becomes apparent.

Little Gaddesden and Potten End benefit from the presence of Ashridge Estate and Berkhamsted Common, which satisfy the need for a 100 ha site within 5 km and a 20 ha site within 2 km. The majority of Potten End is also satisfied at the most local level due to the close proximity of Berkhamsted Common and Little Heath.

For Markyate and Flamstead, the greatest level of deficiency is at the 100 ha size. The eastern sides of both villages are within the catchment area of a 2 ha size site and half of Markyate is within 2 km of a 20 ha site. In addition there is a significant deficiency in open space with an ecological interest in Markyate. There are a number of wildlife corridors in and around the village, along the Ver river valley, Cheverell's Green and Markyate Cell.

There are no Local Nature Reserves within the study area. Focussing on Markyate as the largest settlement, this has a target level of provision of 2.9 ha. Due to its location the County Wildlife Site of Cheverell's Green cannot be considered towards this figure. Given the lack of opportunities to develop new local nature reserve sites on the current open land, and options likely to be presented as part of the Core Strategy, this position is unlikely to change within the current strategy period.

9.5.2 Landscape Quality and Recreation

Markyate lies at the convergence of two well-defined valleys at the head of the River Ver, on the dip slope of the chalk. To the north west there are two dry valleys which lead towards the chalk scarp slope of Whipsnade and Dunstable Downs. The surrounding countryside is predominately mixed arable use with scattered pockets of pasture, some common land and woodland, and parkland. There are strong views from the western and northern sides of the village out into the countryside.

9.5.3 Links to the Countryside

All the settlements within the area are well connected to the surrounding countryside through the rights of way network. In Markyate the village is dissected by the A5 which forms a barrier to travelling east – west into the countryside.

Action 9.

Improve connections through Markyate village to the A5 crossing points to aid access to the countryside to the north east.

9.6 Consultation Summary

While issues relating to green space were forthcoming when participants were asked directly about them, almost none were subsequently listed as a priority. However, the issues that were reported included the need for better recreation grounds, provision for children and young people, more allotments and improvements for local nature conservation. The only priority related to cycling, which is covered in a separate strategy.

Details of the consultation responses received are within Section Four: Consultation and Appendices.



Green Space Strategy

Section Three: Action Plan



1 Introduction

The following table consolidates the actions listed within Section One: Policies and Objectives and Section Two: Area Studies to form a comprehensive plan and working document for service delivery. The table indicates the key organisations involved in delivery and an indication of how the action will be achieved with progress to date.

Following formal adoption of the final strategy document by Dacorum Borough Council an annual work programme will be prepared from the action plan as part of the implementation process. This will also support the preparation of individual service plans.

Regular monitoring of the document will take place through the Hemel 2020 framework. The Strategy will be refreshed on a five year cycle and the action plan updated.

Relevant individual actions will be used in the reporting mechanisms being established by the Dacorum Environment Forum for the Nature Conservation Strategy and the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust to monitor NI 197 for County Wildlife Sites.

2 Actions from Policy and Objectives

Policy 1: To protect green space from development		Achieved by
1	For each relevant proposed development, evaluate the impact on green space using the principles adopted for Policy 1 To protect green space from development. Strategic Planning and Regeneration	Detail from Section One Policies and Objections and Section Two Area Studies to be used to support the development of the LDF. Specific requirements to be provided for individual development briefs. Project proposals and planning applications to be evaluated using principles. Ongoing as development briefs and planning applications arise.

Policy 2: To protect and enhance our natural environment, heritage and habitats		Achieved by
2	<p>Support the DEF in their review of the Nature Conservation Strategy – ‘A Local Biodiversity Action Plan’.</p> <p>Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group. Partnership & Customer Insight, Neighbourhood Delivery, Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)</p>	<p>DBC officer to join the Action group. Provide a regular update to the DEF review working group with information on DBC actions and site management.</p>
3	<p>Ensure SSSIs in local government ownership have appropriate management plans and these are being implemented to ensure they remain in good condition.</p> <p>Woodland Trust, Environmental Services, Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)</p>	<p>Arrange regular contact with the Woodlands Trust (Tring Park, Oddy Hill). Update and implement management plan for Tring Woods. Advice to be sought from Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group</p>
4	<p>Enhance the landscape through the appropriate management of significant landscape features under the control of the Council such as Tring Park, Tring Woods, Bunkers Park and Chipperfield Common.</p> <p>Chipperfield Parish Council, Nash Mills Parish Council, Friends of Chipperfield Common, Friends of Bunkers Park, Woodland Trust, Environmental Services, Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)</p>	<p>See above. Continue to manage Chipperfield Common to Green Flag standard with the support of Chipperfield Parish Council and Friends. Prepare management plan for Bunkers Park 11/12.</p>
5	<p>Through the area studies, identify opportunities to improve natural habitats in other green spaces where appropriate.</p> <p>Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>Implement actions identified within Section Two: Area Studies, use the Urban Nature Conservation Study as a further reference. Advice to be sought from Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group</p>

6	Ensure County Wildlife Sites managed by Dacorum Borough Council have appropriate management plans. Environmental Services, Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC), Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group	Woodland management plans in place update in phased programme. Secure English Woodlands Grant for additional works with advice from Dacorum Environmental Biodiversity Group. Continue to support the Woodland Warden Scheme. Provide regular update to Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust for evaluation of NI 197. Management plan to be prepared for Dundale.
7	Through the area studies, identify sites with wildlife site potential, and develop five year management plans for these. Environmental Services, Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC), Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group	Develop a phased programme from sites recommended from Section Two: Area Studies. Prepare management plan for Bunkers Park 11/12 Seek advice of Herts Biological Records Centre and Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group on future sites.
8	Through the settlement action plans, identify a programme of sites to be designated as local nature reserves. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services, local partners	Develop a phased programme from sites recommended from Section Two: Area Studies. Focus to be on Chipperfield Common, Dundale and Bunkers Park within plan period. Within existing resources.
Policy 3: To create attractive, sustainable, accessible and well managed green spaces		Achieved by
9	Include the provision of inclusive play equipment within the refurbishment of play areas, as capital or external funding allows. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC)	Refurbishment programme established, funded by five year capital programme committed by DBC (from 2009/10) and site specific S106 funding and external grants (BIG Lottery, Playbuilder). Woodhall Farm Open Space to be focus in year 1, further years to be determined. S106 funding available for Lagley Meadow (2011-2013), and Kings Langley. Further contributions to be sought through the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.

10	Consider physical access and aides to accessibility such as information, seating and shelter in individual site management plans, with associated actions detailing planned improvements. Environmental Services, Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Residents Services (DBC)	Accessibility audits undertaken for Canal Fields and Chipperfield Common. Audits for further sites to be included within individual management plans. Basic DDA assessment undertaken for DBC managed play areas. New seating for Randalls Park 2010/11, funded through s106.
11	Develop and implement an annual ROW improvement plan to improve access to the countryside and the green space network. Environmental Services (DBC)	Ongoing additional capital funding sought on an annual basis for resurfacing and signposting projects, and separately for schemes which form part of HCC's Rights of Way Improvement Programme.
12	Promote paths and trails which meet BT countryside for all standards through the Millenium Miles initiative. Environmental Services Strategic Planning and Regulation (DBC).	Easy Access Route at Chipperfield Common developed by HCC Rights of Way as the first route within Dacorum. To be included in the Field Fare Trusts website as part of the implementation of the Chipperfield Common Management Plan.
13	Promote accessible routes and provision within green spaces through the Dacorum Borough Council website, and individual site signage and leaflets. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services, Partnership & Customer Insight (DBC)	Relevant web pages to be developed through a phased programme, linked to the Area Studies actions. Accessibility information to be included on new signage and leaflets. Signage planned at Dundale. Woodland grants to be sought for woodland signage and interpretation.

<p>14</p>	<p>Seek external recognition for the quality and management of our green spaces through national award and accreditation schemes such as Green Flag. Environmental Services, Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)</p>	<p>Submission of Canal Fields and Chipperfield Common into the Green Flag Award Scheme to continue. Development of management plans, community engagement and improvements to quality of provision and nature conservation value to continue at selected sites for further possible submissions. Urban Park to be developed to Green Flag standard as part of regeneration initiatives. Further opportunities for accreditation to be identified as initiatives are launched, such as the proposed Green Borough.</p>
<p>Policy 4: To manage our green spaces with community involvement to ensure they are fit for purpose Achieved by</p>		
<p>15</p>	<p>Write and implement a promotion and marketing strategy for the Council's Green Spaces by 2010. Environmental Services, Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Communication & Consultation</p>	<p>Marketing plans to be prepared for destination parks. Marketing section within Canal Fields and Chipperfield Common management plans annually updated. Marketing section to be included within new management plans for Bunkers Park and Dundale.</p>
<p>16</p>	<p>Develop the Dacorum Borough Council website to include information on all significant sites with public access. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services, Partnerships and Customer Insight. (DBC)</p>	<p>Relevant web pages to be developed through a phased programme, linked to the Area Studies actions.</p>

17	Undertake consultation at a service level every 3 years, with the aim of achieving a 10% rise in resident satisfaction by 2016. Environmental Services, Partnerships and Customer Insight (DBC)	Utilise annual Citizen Panel surveys, and other existing communication mechanisms such as Dacorum Digest.
18	Develop active 'Friends Groups' for each of the Destination Parks we manage by 2015. Environmental Services, Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)	Continue to support newly established Friends Groups for Canal Fields, Chipperfield Common and Bunkers Park. Friends of Dundale launched 2010, Gadebridge Park to follow when development opportunities arise.
Policy 5: To make people feel safe		Achieved by
19	Support the Community Safety Partnership action plan to reduce crime and the perception of crime through improving green spaces to meet the needs and concerns of local residents. Resident Services, Environmental Services, Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC), Community Safety Partnership.	The Sustainable Communities Strategy will be published June 2011. The strategy will be regularly monitored by the Community Partnership. Issues concerning green spaces will be identified, discussed and measures progressed through the responsible action group and joint action group.
20	Develop revised grounds maintenance standards and associated monitoring, to ensure they are upheld, to include removing graffiti and fly tipping within agreed time limits. Environmental Services (DBC)	Support Clean, Safe and Green in developing a new grounds maintenance specification, to include targets for removal of graffiti and fly tipping.
21	Identify redundant buildings within green spaces and refer them to Commercial Assets and Property Development to consider their future use. Property & Assets (DBC).	Notify capital asset group of redundant buildings.

<p>22</p>	<p>New open spaces will follow the Secured by Design principles, which aim to design out crime, and be assessed by the police crime prevention unit. Environmental Services, Resident Services, Development Management (DBC)</p>	<p>Liaise with Public Protection section on a regular basis to identify sites targeted by anti-social behaviour. New developments to be assessed by police crime prevention unit as part of planning procedure.</p>
<p>Policy 6: To use development opportunities to improve the quality and provision open space</p>		<p>Achieved by</p>
<p>23</p>	<p>Support the development of a robust policy on developers' contributions to improve the quality and provision of the borough's green space. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC).</p>	<p>Design Principles for new public open space included in appendix 1. Review Open Space and Play PrAvision Standards as part of preparation of LDF. Dacorum Infrastructure Study Social Infrastructure Assessment to be adopted early 2011. Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.</p>

3 Actions for Tring

<p>Priority: Improve Quality</p>		<p>Achieved by</p>
<p>T1</p>	<p>Support British Waterways' ambition to provide improved visitor facilities at Tring Reservoirs. British Waterways.</p>	<p>British Waterways has planning permission for toilets at Tringford Reservoir and will be seeking funding for construction.</p>
<p>T2</p>	<p>Prepare a management plan for Miswell Lane Open Space to improve the quality of the site, as this park is strategically well placed to cater for the residents in the western side of Tring. Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>To be phased with other parks and open spaces identified through Section Two: Area Studies.</p>

T3	Improve the horticultural interest of Brookside Open Space / Streamside walk, in keeping with its high profile location. Environmental Services (DBC)	To be phased with other planting schemes identified through Section Two: Area Studies.
T4	Develop a plan for the Memorial Garden to improve its integration into the town and improve its quality as a public garden. Environmental Services (DBC)	To be phased with other parks and open spaces identified through Section Two: Area Studies and implemented as funding opportunities arise. Capital funding approved for replacement of pond lining and concrete edge, 2010.
Priority: Increase Facilities		Achieved by
T5	Identify a 'destination playground' which can serve the needs of children across the whole settlement, and make this the focus for significant expansion. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC), Tring Town Council, Tring Youth Town Council.	Prioritise refurbishment of existing play facilities through consultation with Tring Town Council and Tring Youth Town Council. Priorities for the town to be considered with DBC's other play areas as part of the DBC capital refurbishment programme.
T6	Improve the quality of the remaining play areas to mitigate for the greater distances people are being expected to travel to access the service, to include inclusive play provision. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC), Tring Town Council, Tring Youth Town Council.	Mortimer Hill identified as a PlayBuilder site, to be improved during 2010/11. PlayBuilder budget reduced by the Department for Education, November 2010. Further funding to be sought by community groups and through DBC capital programme.
T7	With Tring Youth Town Council identify improvements to youth provision within the town. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC), Tring Youth Town Council.	Fencing and surfacing repairs undertaken to Brook Street MUGA in 2008. Planning permission granted for lighting scheme in September 2009.

T8	Through the emerging Core Strategy process identify whether further play space can be secured. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)	Detail from Section Two: Area Studies to be used to support the development of the LDF, scheduled for completion autumn 2012. Specific requirements to be provided for individual development briefs.
T9	Improve football pitch provision through the LDF process. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)	Consultation on options to provide new sports space linked to housing development and the potential impact on the Green Belt took place in 2009 to inform the LDF. LDF currently scheduled to be completed autumn 2012.
T10	Raise the cycling priorities highlighted for Tring for consideration in the development of the LDF and seek contributions for improvements through off site development as opportunities arise. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)	Detail from Section Two: Area Studies to support the development of the LDF. Specific requirements to be provided for individual development briefs. LDF currently scheduled to be completed autumn 2012. Supported by Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.
Priority: Nature Conservation		Achieved by
T11	Review the Dundale management plan, as the only County Wildlife Site within the town, to include improved entrances and boundaries. This also supports the play priority of better access to woodland in an area of Tring which is largely devoid of public open space. Environmental Services, Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC), Friends of Dundale, Herts Biological Records Centre.	Management plan to be updated 2011/12 as part of phased programme for all woodlands. Friends of Dundale launched 2010.

Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside		Achieved by
T12	Seek opportunities to bring the meadow area at Miswell Lane into public ownership with the long term aim of improving the meadow. Property & Assets	Implement as opportunity arises – should the landowner seek an arrangement with DBC or if DBC is able to purchase the land. As opportunities arise, no funding identified.
T13	Designate Dundale as a Local Nature Reserve, raising public awareness of the site. A section of 'Streamside Walk' could be included within the designated area due to its high profile location and character. Environmental Services, Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC), Friends of Dundale.	Continue to support Woodland Warden Scheme. Friends of Dundale launched 2010. New management plan to be prepared 2011/12.
T14	Improve access to Tring Park to create a more welcoming impression. Environmental Services (DBC)	New permissive path linking footpath 21 with 26 (adjacent to the A41 linking the footbridge to the road bridge) to be developed 2010. This will link Tring Park with Stubbins Wood. Continue to work towards adding the permissive path along the old avenue (linking footpath 21 with 20) to the definitive list. (Woodlands Trust is against new bridleway links at present due to the damage caused by horses). Planned and resourced within 2010.

4 Actions for Berkhamsted and Northchurch

Priority: Improve Quality		Achieved by
B1	Continue to manage and develop Canal Fields to green flag standard, implementing the actions of the Canal Fields Management Plan to improve signage and the entrances. Environmental Services (DBC)	Re-submission of site for Green Flag Award planned for 2011. New signs to be installed in 2010. Implementation of management plan ongoing.

B2	<p>Enhance Three Close Lane cemetery as an informal recreation resource within the town in partnership with Berkhamsted Town Council and Berkhamsted Community Partnership.</p> <p>Berkhamsted Town Council, Berkhamsted Community Partnership.</p>	<p>To be referred to Berkhamsted Town Council and Berkhamsted Community Partnership to gain support and identify lead organisation.</p>
B3	<p>Improve access to and use of Cox Dell (Marlin Close) through the redevelopment of the Egerton Rothesay School site.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)</p>	<p>Detail from Section Two: Area Study to support the development of the LDF. Specific requirements to be provided for related development brief as the site comes forward for development.</p>
Priority: Increase Facilities		Achieved by
B4	<p>Improve the playgrounds at Lagley Meadow and Butts Meadow as a priority because these play areas serve the area of the town with the least provision, to include inclusive play opportunities.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC)</p>	<p>S106 funding secured for refurbishment of Lagley Meadow (2011-2013) and George Street. Refurbishment of Butts Meadow to be implemented as funding opportunities arise, as part of DBC capital funded works.</p>
B5	<p>Improve the quality and play value of the remaining play areas (excepting Canal Fields), to mitigate for the greater distances people are being expected to travel to access the service, to include inclusive play provision.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC)</p>	<p>Developer contributions towards improving existing facilities to be received through Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011. Refurbishment of George Street play area to follow receipt of s106 payment and Lagley Meadow in 2011-2013. Remaining play areas to be considered as part of DBC capital funded works.</p>

B6	Provide new play areas within the town through the development of the LDF. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)	Detail from Section Two: Area Studies to support the development of the LDF. Specific requirements to be provided for individual development briefs. Ongoing through the implementation of future housing schemes, to be funded through developers contributions, supported by the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.
B7	Improve youth provision at Lagley Meadow as this site is located in Berkhamsted West which shows a slight concentration of under 16 year olds and the current youth provision is poor. Resident Services (DBC).	Work with Berkhamsted Youth Town Council to develop facilities at Lagley Meadow. HCC Youth Connections to take over Berkhamsted Youth Centre at Lagley Meadow, to include refurbishing the Agora Space.
B8	Support Berkhamsted Youth Town Council to develop more youth provision within the town. Resident Services (DBC), Berkhamsted Youth Town Council, Swan Skaters.	Support Berkhamsted Youth Town Council's projects to develop a BMX track at Ashlyns School and extend the skate park at Canal Fields. To be funded by external bids by Berkhamsted Youth Town Council.
B9	Provide additional pitches through any development which occurs with in or adjacent to the town in line with this strategy's approach to managing development. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)	Detail from Section Two: Area Studies to support the development of the LDF. Specific requirements to be provided for individual development briefs. Supported by Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.
B10	Improve cycle access to the Canal at Canal Fields as part of the review of the sites bridges, planned within the Canal Fields Management Plan. Environmental Services, Property & Assets (DBC)	Current proposal is to refurbish the Waitrose bridge through s106 funding, retaining existing design. Reconstruction of bridges to improve access will require capital funding.

Priority: Nature Conservation		Achieved by
B11	<p>Develop a management plan for Tunnel Fields, identified as both a County Wildlife Site and as a priority habitat under the BAP, to ensure the surviving open habitat is retained as calcareous grassland.</p> <p>Environmental Services, Herts Biological Records Centre, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.</p>	<p>Management plan to be updated as part of phased programme for all woodlands. To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for funding application under English Woodlands Grant Scheme.</p>
B12	<p>Implement management plans for Dacorum's woodlands in Berkhamsted which are identified as County Wildlife Sites – Sandpit Green, Long Green and Brickhill Green.</p> <p>Environmental Services, Herts Biological Records Centre, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.</p>	<p>Update woodland management plans in phased programme. To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for English Woodlands Grant funding application. Continue to support the Woodland Warden Scheme. Provide regular update to Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust for evaluation of NI 197.</p>
B13	<p>Develop a pond management plan for Brickhill Green Wood, to complement the existing woodland management plan.</p> <p>Environmental Services, Herts Biological Records Centre, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.</p>	<p>Ongoing management continuing. Management plan to be updated as part of phased programme for all woodlands. Application to Rural land register made (requirement for English Woodlands Grant Scheme). To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for funding application.</p>
B14	<p>Continue to develop the ecological interest at Canal Fields, through the implementation of the Canal Fields management plan.</p> <p>Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>Ecological assessment undertaken by Herts Biological Records Centre 2009, recommendations to be included within the Canal Fields Management Plan.</p>

Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside		Achieved by
B15	<p>Improve access to Brickhill Green, (wood) and Castle End Wood which are both low key sites at present, which appear little used. This would also support the play priority of increasing access to woodland.</p> <p>Environmental Services, Herts Biological Records Centre, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.</p>	<p>Management plan to be updated as part of phased programme for all woodlands. Application to Rural land register made (requirement for English Woodlands Grant Scheme).</p> <p>To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for funding application under English Woodlands Grant Scheme.</p>
B16	<p>In liaison with Natural England consider the designation of Brickhill Green, Long Green and Sandpit Green woodlands as a Local Nature Reserve. This would provide about half the ANGSt standard target of 1 ha of LNR per 1000 head population.</p> <p>Environmental Services, Herts Biological Records Centre, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.</p>	<p>Continue to manage to County Wildlife Site standard and support the Woodland Warden Scheme. Consider LNR designation as resources allow.</p> <p>To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for funding application under English Woodlands Grant Scheme.</p>
B17	<p>Ensure that the main links identified are maintained to a good and accessible standard.</p> <p>Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>Footpaths are regularly inspected and form part of the annual maintenance schedule.</p>

5 Actions for Hemel Hempstead - General

Priority: Increase Facilities		Achieved by
HG1	<p>Improve the quality and capacity of the existing sports pitches.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services</p>	<p>S106 funding secured to improve facilities at Cupid Green Playing Field as part of NEHH development. Contributions to sports facilities will be sought through the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011. Improvements to Cupid Green Playing Fields to be implemented on receipt of S106 funding.</p>
HG2	<p>Develop additional football pitches at Bunkers Park, in line with the Hemel 2020 vision, as HCA's land becomes available through the redevelopment of their other landholdings.</p> <p>Strategic Planning & Regeneration (DBC)</p>	<p>To be implemented as opportunities arise through the development of Homes and Communities Agency land on Bedmond Road.</p> <p>No timescale set at present, subject to negotiation with HCA and external funding.</p>
HG3	<p>Look to provide additional pitches through the town stadium complex which is currently subject to feasibility work.</p> <p>Strategic Planning & Regeneration (DBC)</p>	<p>A phase two report on the Town Stadium was published in June 2010. This looks at the detailed feasibility issues relating to the delivery of a Community Stadium for the town. It supplements the phase one report (April 2009) which assessed the potential demand for such a facility.</p> <p>Preferred location to the east of Hemel Hempstead. Implementation subject to agreement by landowner and planning permission, no timescale or funding at present.</p>
HG4	<p>Work in partnership with community groups to find new sites within existing local authority land to be developed into new allotment sites. HHALGS, DEF, Property and Assets (DBC), Groundwork Hertfordshire</p>	<p>£20,000 PRG funding for reinstatement of Bennetts End allotments awarded by the Dacorum Partnership, works to be completed 2011. New sites to be acquired through the LDF if appropriate.</p>

HG5	Maximise the use of existing allotment sites by recovering any areas which have become overgrown with vegetation. Property and Assets (DBC)	All overgrown plots at DBC sites being recovered by tenants or the Probationary Service. Works complete 2010.
HG6	Secure additional land for allotments through the LDF process to address the demand for plots and deficiency in allotment space. Strategic Planning & Regeneration	Detail from Section Two: Area Studies to support the development of the LDF. Specific requirements to be provided for individual development briefs. Ongoing through the implementation of future housing schemes, to be funded through developers contributions.
Priority: Nature Conservation		Achieved by
HG7	Seek to implement the recommendations of the Dacorum Chalk River Restoration Strategy in Hemel Hempstead through the Hemel 2020 programme. Strategic Planning & Regeneration, the Box Moor Trust.	Recommendations for the River Bulbourne within the Urban Park area to be considered as part of the Two Waters Open Space Feasibility Study. Options for the River Gade to form part of the Town Centre regeneration proposals. Two Waters Open Space Feasibility Study to be completed October 2010 for consideration by Cabinet November 2010. Phase 1 enhancements to be subsequently prepared. Funding through GAF and s106 contributions. Management recommendations for the River Bulbourne through Box Moor Trust land being prepared by Chilterns Chalk Stream Officer September 2010.
Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside		Achieved by
HG8	Seek to establish a new country park within the north east section of the town if growth opportunities arise in the future. Strategic Planning & Regeneration	Would require housing growth beyond the Borough boundary, subject to planning growth levels and decisions on St Albans City and District land.

6 Actions for Hemel Hempstead North East

Priority: Improve Quality		Achieved by
HNE1	Develop a management plan for Margaret Lloyd Park to improve its many features. Environmental Services (DBC)	To be phased with other parks and open spaces identified through the Area Studies. Subject to resources
Priority: Increase Facilities		Achieved by
HNE2	Complete the refurbishment of Randalls Park, through tree planting and works to the original play area, as this is the only facility within the ward which has a relatively high number of children present. Strategic Planning & Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC)	PlayBuilder and s106 funding secured to improve play facilities within the park 2009/10. Works complete 2010/11.
HNE3	Improve the range and quality of play activities at Woodhall Farm Open Space. Strategic Planning & Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC)	DBC capital funding allocated to improving the range of facilities 2010. Further s106 funding secured from Redbourn Road development to improve play areas within the area study.
HNE4	Secure a new play area through the proposed Three Cherry Trees Lane/North East Hemel Hempstead development. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC).	Agreement secured through outline planning permission. Timescale subject to submission of full application and terms of s106.

HNE5	Improve youth provision through the study area with the support of local community groups and the community police team. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Residents Services (DBC).	Consultation undertaken in Woodhall Farm to gauge community priorities 2010. Projects to be implemented as funding opportunities arise. Refurbishment of Woodhall Farm Play Area 2010/11 funded through DBC capital scheme.
HNE6	Create a new cycle way network through Woodhall Farm as development opportunities arise. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC).	Secure support for proposal through LDF process, implement as funding opportunities arise. Information to support preparation of Core Strategy and Green Transport plan, no funding at present.
HNE7	Seek opportunities to develop a cycle link through High Street Green. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC).	Secure support for proposal through LDF process, implement as funding opportunities arise. To be included within Development Briefs for Maylands Business Park.
HNE8	Improve access to the Nickey Line as funding opportunities arise, using the recommendations of the Nickey Line Management Plan, Dacorum Cycling Strategy and Sustrans evaluation. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services (DBC), Friends of the Nickey Line.	S106 funding secured through NEHH development to improve Hunters Oak section, with a contribution towards wider improvements. Implementation of Hunters Oak improvements to follow receipt of s106 funding.

Priority: Nature Conservation		Achieved by
HNE9	<p>Ensure all woodlands, registered as County Wildlife Sites have an up to date management plan.</p> <p>Environmental Services, Herts Biological Records Centre, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.</p>	<p>Update woodland management plans in phased programme.</p> <p>To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for English Woodland Grants funding application.</p> <p>Continue to support the Woodland Warden Scheme. Provide regular update to Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust for evaluation of NI 197.</p>
HNE10	<p>Develop a management plan for Grovehill Playing Fields to improve its habitats.</p> <p>Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>To be phased with other parks and open spaces identified through the Area Studies.</p> <p>Subject to resources.</p>
HNE11	<p>Identify further measures to support the ecological network, in particular to link to the County Wildlife Site woodlands.</p> <p>Environmental Services, Herts Biological Records Centre, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.</p>	<p>Implement actions identified within Section Two: Area Studies, use the Urban Nature Conservation Study as a further reference.</p> <p>To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for funding application.</p>

Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside		Achieved by
HNE12	<p>Target three existing natural green spaces for access and interpretation improvements. Suggested locations are Woodhall Wood (due to its proximity to school and the adventure playground), High Wood (as it provides valuable open space within Woodhall ward and is in poor condition) and Howe Grove to improve awareness of the local nature reserve). This also supports the play priority of improved access to woodland.</p> <p>Environmental Services (DBC), Herts Biological Records Centre, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.</p>	<p>Management plans to be updated as part of phased programme for all woodlands.</p> <p>To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for English Woodland Grants funding application.</p>
HNE13	<p>Raise the profile of Howe Grove Local Nature Reserve to the local community through a new management plan.</p> <p>Environmental Services, Herts Biological Records Centre, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.</p>	<p>Management plan to be updated as part of phased programme for all woodlands.</p> <p>To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for English Woodland Grants funding application.</p>

HNE14	Consider designating further urban woodlands within the north east Hemel Hempstead settlement area as LNR's. The urban woodlands of High Wood, Maylands Wood, Widmore Wood and Woodhall Wood could be designated individually or collectively to provide an additional 11.9 ha of land managed as LNR's, equivalent of two-thirds of the target level. Environmental Services (DBC), Herts Biological Records Centre, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.	Ongoing management and support of Woodland Warden Scheme continuing. Management plans to be updated as part of phased programme for all woodlands. To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for English Woodland Grants funding application.
HNE15	Seek opportunities to enhance the community and wildlife benefit of the Nickey Line through external funding, with the aim of achieving LNR status. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services (DBC), Friends of the Nicky Line.	S106 funding secured to improve section adjacent to NEHH, including a contribution towards enhance the wider network to be implemented on receipt of funding. Support the Friends of the Nickey Line to encourage more residents from Hemel Hempstead to join. Revise the Nickey Line Management Plan to take into account actions and funding planned through the NEHH development.
HNE16	Identify, improve and promote access routes from through Maylands Business Park from the surrounding residential areas as part of the implementation of the East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC).	Consultation report on East Hemel Hempstead Area Action Plan prepared January 2010. 2010 Consultation on preferred approach postponed. Revised timetable to be prepared once a new lead officer is identified.

7 Actions for Hemel Hempstead - North West

Priority: Improve Quality		Achieved by
HNW1	<p>As part of the regeneration of Hemel Hempstead town centre undertake a master planning exercise for Gadebridge Park to secure significant long term improvements to its design, infrastructure and historic features with the aim of bringing the park to Green Flag standard, in line with Policy 3 Action 13 (seek recognition).</p> <p>Strategic Planning & Regeneration, Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>Funding opportunities to be sought as part of Hemel 2020 development to Civic Zone and Waterhouse Square.</p> <p>Gadebridge Park not included within scope of current Town Centre proposals. Funding for master planning to be sought through other regeneration strands.</p>
HNW2	<p>Pursue the refurbishment of the Water Gardens horticultural features as part of the H2020 Waterhouse Square development.</p> <p>Strategic Planning & Regeneration</p>	<p>Waterhouse Square no longer proceeding, enhancements to the Water Gardens to form part of alternative options for the regeneration of the wider town centre, through a feasibility study to be commissioned in December 2010. Rock n Roll fountain to be repaired 2011, through the Town Centre Improvement Scheme.</p>
Priority: Increase Facilities		Achieved by
HNW3	<p>Northridge Park play area is set within an attractive open space near to local facilities. Its central location could benefit a wider area and therefore this play area should be targeted for improvements, focusing on accessibility and more adventurous equipment.</p> <p>Strategic Planning & Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC)</p>	<p>Five year capital programme for playground refurbishment committed by DBC, starting in 2009/10.</p> <p>Developer contributions towards improving existing facilities to be secured through Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.</p>

HNW4	Identify a further play area within north west Hemel Hempstead in which to target improvements to mitigate the travelling distances. Strategic Planning & Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC)	Consultation to be undertaken with Ward Members and community stakeholders to identify priorities. Refurbishment programme and available sources of funding to be prepared 2010.
HNW5	Develop new play facilities within the town centre corridor as part of the regeneration of Hemel Hempstead. Strategic Planning & Regeneration (DBC).	2009 Marlowes Shopping Zone Improvement Strategy included proposals for improving play facilities within the town centre. These will be brought forward into the final improvement strategy in 2010, to be implemented in a phased programme as funding opportunities allow. Further opportunities may arise as part of the Hemel 2020 programme. Play facilities to be considered as part of the Marlowes Improvement Strategy, to be completed spring 2011.
HNW6	Improve youth provision within the area. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC).	Consultation to be undertaken with Ward Members and community stakeholders to identify priorities. Refurbishment programme and available sources of funding to be prepared 2010.
HNW7	For the longer term seek additional play facilities within the west of the town, should development opportunities arise through the re-development of significant sites or if the west of Hemel Hempstead scheme proceeds. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC).	Detail from Section Two: Area Study to support the development of the LDF. Specific requirements to be provided for individual development briefs. Developers contributions to be secured through Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.
HNW8	Support the proposals of the Dacorum Cycle Strategy within the North West Hemel Hempstead settlement area. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC).	Secure support for proposals through LDF process, implement as funding opportunities arise. As opportunities arise through development and external contributions, LDF currently scheduled to be completed autumn 2012.

HNW9	Seek opportunities to improve the connections between the Hemel Hempstead town centre and the railway station as part of the Urban Park development. Strategic Planning & Regeneration, The Box Moor Trust	Two Waters Open Space Feasibility Study to be completed October 2010 for consideration by Cabinet November 2010. Phase 1 enhancements to be subsequently prepared. Funding through GAF and s106 contributions.
Priority: Nature Conservation		Achieved by
HNW10	Introduce conservation grass cutting at targeted areas of Jocketts and Northridge Park to support the ecological network surrounding Shrubhill Common. Environmental Services (DBC)	Seek advice from Herts Biological Records Centre to develop management proposals. Liaise with Clean, Safe and Green to change associated grass cutting regime. To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support.
HNW11	Introduce management regimes for Gadebridge Park's river corridor to improve the wetland habitat and the western slope grasslands to provide a buffer to the County Wildlife Site of Warners End Wood. Environmental Services (DBC)	Management plan prepared by Environment Agency conservation section November 2010. Seek advice of Environment Agency and Clean, Safe and Green to change associated grass cutting regime along river banks.
HNW12	Ensure all woodlands registered as County Wildlife Sites have an up-to-date management plan. Environmental Services (DBC)	Update woodland management plans in phased programme. To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for funding application under English Woodlands Grant Scheme. Continue to support the Woodland Warden Scheme. Provide regular update to Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust for evaluation of NI 197.

Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside		Achieved by
HNW13	<p>Implement the Shrubhill Common Management Plan in partnership with the Herts Biological Records Centre and the Friends of Shrubhill Common, raising awareness of the Local Nature Reserve.</p> <p>Environmental Services, Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC), Herts Biological Records Centre, Friends of Shrubhill Common</p>	<p>Continue to meet quarterly with the Friends of Shrubhill Common to develop and implement management actions for the Common.</p>
HNW14	<p>Improve access and on site interpretation/information at Warners End Wood and Gravel Hill Spring (both designated as County Wildlife Sites)</p> <p>Environmental Services (DBC), Herts Biological Records Centre, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.</p>	<p>Management plans to be updated as part of phased programme for all woodlands.</p> <p>To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for funding application under English Woodlands Grant Scheme.</p>
HNW15	<p>Improve access to the open countryside and Bulbourne Valley through the Urban Park proposal.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC), The Box Moor Trust</p>	<p>Two Waters Open Space Feasibility Study to be completed October 2010 for consideration by Cabinet November 2010. Phase 1 enhancements to be subsequently prepared.</p> <p>Funding through GAF and s106 contributions.</p>

8 Actions for Hemel Hempstead South

Priority: Improve Quality		Achieved by
HS1	<p>Prepare a new management plan for Bunkers Park in partnership with Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, with the objective of achieving green flag standard with three years. This should be linked to the development of the Hemel 2020 Vision proposals. Environmental Services, Strategic Planning & Regeneration (DBC), Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust,</p>	<p>Existing management plan expired 2008. New Green Flag style plan to be developed with Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, NMPC and the Friends of Bunkers Park, 2011/12. Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust preparing ecological management recommendations.</p>
HS2	<p>As part of the Hemel 2020 Urban Park project, develop a refurbishment plan for Heath Park Gardens to improve its features, use and biodiversity. Strategic Planning & Regeneration (DBC), The Box Moor Trust</p>	<p>Two Waters Open Space Feasibility Study to be completed October 2010 for consideration by Cabinet November 2010. Elements of scheme focussing on Heath Park Gardens to be progressed in 2011, using s106 funding secured from the Image development, including highway improvements to Corner Hall.</p>
HS3	<p>Prepare an improvement plan for Coronation Fields, to re-design the area as funding opportunities arise Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>To be phased with other parks and open spaces identified through the Area Studies. Subject to resources</p>
HS4	<p>Seek re-development opportunities for poor quality land within the study area to improve the range and quality of facilities available. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>To be progressed as initiatives or development opportunities arise.</p>

Priority: Increase Facilities		Achieved by
HS5	<p>Target improvements at Durrants Hill because it has a low play value and has room for expansion. The focus should be on providing adventurous play and youth provision.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services, Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>Funding for outdoor fitness equipment secured through Big Lottery to be implemented following delivery of Two Waters Open Space Study October 2010, which includes a suggested location and style for the fitness equipment. Following agreement with Environmental Services, consultation with young people will take place. There is a funding requirement for the project to be completed by May 2011.</p>
HS6	<p>Target improvements at Coronation Fields with a focus on the provision of inclusive play and improved accessibility.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services, Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>To be considered with DBC's other play areas as part of the DBC capital refurbishment programme, starting 2009/10.</p> <p>Developer contributions to be secured through Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.</p>
HS7	<p>Secure funding to improve play provision throughout the settlement area as development opportunities arise.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)</p>	<p>Developer contributions towards improving existing facilities to be secured through Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.</p>
HS8	<p>Identify further improvements to youth provision, to mitigate against the travelling distances.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC)</p>	<p>Consultation to be undertaken with Ward Members and community stakeholders to identify priorities.</p> <p>To be considered with DBC's other play areas as part of the DBC capital refurbishment programme.</p>
HS9	<p>Review the long term future of the play area at York Way, which has limited play value and is a target for anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>Subject to further discussions, to be considered with DBC's other play areas as part of the DBC capital refurbishment programme.</p>

HS10	Support the development of an improved cycle route along the canal corridor from the town centre towards Kings Langley as part of the Urban Park and as development opportunities arise. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC), British Waterways	Two Waters Open Space Feasibility Study to be completed October 2010, including proposals to improve provision for cyclists. Further improvements to be supported by the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.
Priority: Nature Conservation		Achieved by
HS11	Continue to manage Bunkers Park to develop the nature conservation value of the site, with particular emphasis on gaining wildlife site status for the Bottom Field. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services (DBC), Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Friends of Bunkers Park, Nash Mills Parish Council	Species monitoring to be targeted at the Bottom Field, to evaluate potential as wildlife site. Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust preparing ecological management recommendations 2010. Green Flag style management plan to be prepared 2011/12.
HS12	Prepare a new management plan for Rant Meadow, as the woodland designated a County Wildlife Site within the study area. Environmental Services (DBC)	Update woodland management plans in phased programme. To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for funding application under English Woodlands Grant Scheme. Continue to support the Woodland Warden Scheme. Provide regular update to Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust for evaluation of NI 197.
HS13	Develop nature conservation interest at DBC managed land adjacent to St Albans Road at Corner Hall and Leverstock Green. Environmental Services (DBC)	Develop revised management schedule, liaise with Clean, Safe and Green to change associated grass cutting regime. To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support.

Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside		Achieved by
HS14	<p>Focus access and interpretation improvements at Rant Meadow, as the only County Wildlife Site within the housing estates. As Bennetts End Adventure Playground is located within the woodland, this also supports the objective of introducing adventurous play.</p> <p>Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>Management plans to be updated as part of phased programme for all woodlands. To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for funding application under English Woodlands Grant Scheme.</p>
HS15	<p>Evaluate the potential for Bunkers Park to be designated as a Local Nature Reserve and target the site's management and monitoring towards achieving this goal.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services (DBC), Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Friends of Bunkers Park, Nash Mills Parish Council</p>	<p>Development of the park and the Friends Group ongoing. Requirements to achieve local nature reserve designation to be investigated and incorporated within proposed new management plan.</p> <p>Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust preparing ecological management recommendations 2010. Green Flag style management plan to be prepared 2011/12.</p>
HS16	<p>Introduce small scale native shrub and bulb planting at St Albans Hill/Leys Road Open Space. Ideally this should be linked to local schools and community volunteering.</p> <p>Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>To be phased with other planting schemes identified through the Area Studies. Subject to resources</p>

HS17	<p>Through the Hemel 2020 Bunkers Park project improve the access point from the Leverstock Green corridor into Bunkers Park to provide a safe and welcoming entrance to the park.</p> <p>Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)</p>	<p>To be implemented as opportunities arise through the development of Homes and Communities Agency land on Bedmond Road.</p>
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9 Actions for Bovingdon, Chipperfield and Kings Langley

Priority: Improve Quality		Achieved by
BCK1	<p>Develop a plan to improve the facilities, management and habitats at Station Footpath.</p> <p>Environmental Services (DBC)</p>	<p>Funding secured from Jubilee Walk development for the establishment of new woodland compartments, new footpath link constructed.</p>
BCK2	<p>Support Kings Langley Parish Council's efforts to secure funding and implement the landscape improvement project. Kings Langley Parish Council, Environmental services (DBC).</p>	<p>Kings Langley Parish Council seeking funding through developers contributions and capital bids.</p>

Priority: Increase Facilities		Achieved by
BCK3	Work in partnership with Bovingdon Parish Council to improve the quality and accessibility of the play areas in Bovingdon. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC), Bovingdon Parish Council.	To be considered with DBC's other play areas as part of the DBC capital refurbishment programme, starting 2010. Developers contributions to be secured through Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.
BCK4	Work with Kings Langley Parish Council to improve the play facilities at Kings Langley. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC), Kings Langley Parish Council.	S106 funding secured from Jubilee Walk development to improve play facilities, to be implemented by 2013. Further developer contributions to be sought supported by the Dacorum Infrastructure Study Social Infrastructure Assessment and Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.
BCK5	Seek opportunities for funding to improve play provision through the study area. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)	Developer contributions to be secured through the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, to be adopted spring 2011.
BCK6	Utilise the Core Strategy process to secure new play facilities at Kings Langley and Bovingdon. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)	Bovingdon - detail from the Area Studies to support the development of the LDF, currently scheduled to be completed autumn 2012. Kings Langley - the inclusion of play space in any new housing sites to be discussed with Three Rivers District Council.
BCK7	Improve youth provision within the study area. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC), Kings Langley Parish Council	Consultation to be undertaken with Kings Langley Parish Council, Ward Members, community stakeholders and young people to identify priorities. Developers contributions to be secured through the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document to be adopted spring 2011.

BCK8	Utilise the LDF process to secure an allotment site for Bovingdon. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)	Detail from the Area Studies to support the development of the LDF. Specific requirements to be provided for individual development briefs. LDF currently scheduled to be completed autumn 2012.
Priority: Nature Conservation		Achieved by
BCK9	Working in partnership with Bovingdon Parish Council develop and implement a management plan to improve the pond and surrounding margins at Bovingdon Green. Bovingdon Parish Council, The Box Moor Trust	Project proposal prepared by Countryside Management Service and Bovingdon Parish Council. Initial funding application was unsuccessful. Further opportunities to be sought, Bovingdon Parish Council considering leasing land. Draft lease prepared 2010, The Box Moor Trust are now supporting the scheme, aiming to start 2011.
BCK10	Working in partnership with Dacorum Sports Trust, secure an ecologically sensitive management regime for the meadows at Little Hay Golf Complex. Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group, Dacorum Sports Trust	To be referred to Dacorum Sports Trust, advice to be sought from Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.
BCK11	With the Parochial Church Council explore opportunities for developing wildlife habitats within the churchyard of St Lawrence's. Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group, St Lawrence's Church, Bovingdon Parish Council	Seek support of the Parochial Church Council and Bovingdon Parish Council for the proposal. To be referred to the Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.

BCK12	Continue to work with Chipperfield Parish Council and the Friends of Chipperfield Common to maintain the Common at green flag standard, recognising its importance within the local landscape and as a Destination Park within the Borough. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services (DBC), Chipperfield Parish Council, Friends of Chipperfield Common	Re-submission of site for Green Flag Award planned for 2011. Implementation of management plan ongoing with the support of Chipperfield Parish Council and Friends of Chipperfield Common.
BCK13	Develop a new management plan for Kings Langley Common to enhance and protect the County Wildlife Site. Environmental Services (DBC)	Update woodland management plans in phased programme. Provide regular update to Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust for evaluation of NI 198. To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for funding application under English Woodlands Grant Scheme.
Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside		Achieved by
BCK14	Discuss the potential for designating Chipperfield Common as a Local Nature Reserve with Chipperfield Parish Council. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services (DBC), Chipperfield Parish Council, Friends of Chipperfield Common	To be raised through the regular liaison meetings and requirements incorporated into a future management plan if acceptable to Chipperfield Parish Council.

BCK15	Focus access and interpretation improvements at Kings Langley Common, as the significant wildlife resource within the village and a County Wildlife Site within the public domain. Environmental Services (DBC)	Management plan to be updated as part of phased programme for all woodlands. To be referred to Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group for advice and support for funding application under English Woodlands Grant Scheme.
BCK16	Support Kings Langley Parish Council's proposals to improve access to the countryside from the village.	Kings Langley Parish Council seeking funding through developers contributions and capital bids.

10 Actions for Ashridge and Watling

Priority: Improve Quality		Achieved by
AW1	Secure new public realm at Markyate through the Core Strategy process. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)	To be progressed through the redevelopment of Hicks Road general employment area.
Priority: Increase Facilities		Achieved by
AW2	Improve the quality of play provision at Cavendish Road, Markyate. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services (DBC), Markyate Parish Council	Developer contributions towards improving existing facilities to be sought from all major housing schemes within the town. Detail from the Area Studies to support the development of the LDF. Specific requirements to be provided for individual development briefs. To be implemented following receipt of s106 funding from Manor Farm development. Developers contributions to be secured through Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, to be adopted spring 2011.

AW3	Improve the access to Peggy's Field (Pickford Road), Markyate through upgrading the footpath links. Environmental Services (DBC), Markyate Parish Council	To be considered as part of the ROW Improvement Plan. Developers contributions to be secured through Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, to be adopted spring 2011.
AW4	Extend the range of youth facilities and adventurous play available in Markyate. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Resident Services (DBC), Markyate Parish Council	Consultation to be undertaken with Kings Langley Parish Council, Ward Members, community stakeholders and young people to identify priorities. Developer contributions to be secured through the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, to be adopted spring 2011.
AW5	Extend the range of play equipment available at Potten End to include toddler and inclusive play opportunities. Nettleden and Potten End Parish Council, Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC).	Developer contributions to be secured through the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document, to be adopted spring 2011.
AW6	Support the local desire for the provision of further allotment sites within Markyate opportunities arise. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC) Markyate Parish Council.	Further allotments for Markyate have not been included within the draft Markyate Spatial Strategy as existing provision meets national standards. However they would be considered acceptable development if land became available.
Priority: Nature Conservation		Achieved by
AW7	Support Markyate Parish Council in improving the hedgerows at Peggy's Field (Pickford Road), Markyate.	To be referred to Markyate Parish Council, advice to be sought from Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group.

AW8	Explore opportunities for developing biodiversity areas around the cemetery, Cavendish Road Playing Field, and the Manor Farm development. Strategic Planning and Regeneration, Environmental Services (DBC), Dacorum Environmental Forum Biodiversity Group	Liaise with Markyate Parish Council on overall use of space for different activities at Cavendish Road. Develop and implement biodiversity proposals as part of the Manor Farm development.
Priority: Easy Access to the Countryside		Achieved by
AW9	Improve connections through Markyate village to the A5 crossing points to aid access to the countryside to the north east. Strategic Planning and Regeneration (DBC)	Detail from Section Two: Area Studies to be used to support the need for improved connections through any future development of Hicks Road general employment area.



Green Space Strategy

Section Four: Consultation and Appendices



1 Introduction - Structure and Methodology

The following programme of consultation was undertaken from 2006 onwards to inform and shape the development of the Green Space Strategy.

1.1 Stakeholder workshops

Two workshops were held with Dacorum Borough Council members, members of the Dacorum Partnership, agencies, landowners, environmental stakeholders and Dacorum Borough Council officers in September 2006 and February 2008. The programme aimed to develop ownership and awareness of the Green Space Strategy and share knowledge, ideas and experience. A key aspect was to identify how the Green Space Strategy links with Dacorum Borough Council's corporate goals and the cross-cutting themes of the Dacorum Partnership. It also demonstrated how the Green Space Strategy can be used as a means to deliver the ambitions of the Dacorum Sustainable Community Strategy. The Green Space Strategy vision was an outcome of this process.

1.2 General Consultation

The wider community of Dacorum was consulted by survey during the spring and summer of 2007. Through the use of the Citizens Panel questionnaire, and by targeting the general public through self completion surveys available at Civic buildings and on the Dacorum Borough Council website, the views and concerns of a broad segment of the Dacorum community were captured. The priorities identified through this process became the foundations of the Green Space Strategy. In Section One: Policies and Objectives they form the basis of the policy framework guiding the overall approach to the management and development of green space. Within Section Two: Area Studies they are used to evaluate the quality and facilities of green spaces within each area to develop an action plan for improvements.

1.3 Town and Parish Council Workshops June 2007

At this workshop the concept of the Green Space Strategy was introduced, and representatives were asked to consider the green spaces within their parish, town or village and the needs of their community. These issues were used as part of the development of Section Two: Area Studies to ensure the direction and actions met local needs.

1.4 Settlement Area Consultation

In autumn/winter 2008 Dacorum Borough Council's Spatial Planning held a series of place shaping workshops for the Borough's towns and large villages, to which local residents, organisations and stakeholders were invited. The purpose of the workshops was to identify local 'place visions', to inform the development of the Core Strategy. The workshops were based on the themes of 'Your People', 'Your Place' and growth if it was relevant to that settlement. In addition to a specific question on open space, the discussion on community needs and facilities within each settlement, raised many issues relevant to the Green

Space Strategy.

1.5 Consultation on the draft document

The final stage of developing the Strategy was a period of consultation on the draft document, which took place from April until early June 2010, through the Dacorum Borough Council website. Stakeholders including the Dacorum Environmental Forum, Town and Parish Councils, The Box Moor Trust, British Waterways, the Environment Agency and Herts County Council were invited to comment. Members of the public also had the opportunity to respond, through signposting on the Dacorum Borough Council web site. The purpose of the consultation was to gain agreement and support to the overall direction of the document, to check the detail of the Strategy at a local level, and to provide an opportunity for further issues to be raised.

The comment received through the consultation are collated under 11, of this section.

2 Stakeholder Workshops

2.1 September 2006

2.1.1 How does Green Space contribute to the LSP Cross cutting Themes

Parks & Gardens, Natural Green Space, Green Corridor, Outdoor Sports Facilities and Allotments all connect to the aspirations. The only aspiration of the Council and LSP not to have a connection was Delivering Housing Needs.

Promoting Healthy & Caring Lifestyles – Working together to enable all residents to lead full and healthy lives.

- Sporting Facilities formal / informal
- Quality of facilities and maintenance eg lighting, surfacing, flytipping
- Social function of parks
- Offering choice and flexibility of space
- Promoting existing facilities and encouraging/ educating users
- Art/ heritage information link with cultural and educational tool
- Play spaces for C& YP not fenced off – art form in itself
- Shift to “family spaces” in static play areas
- Amenity greens- “no ball games”
- Older people – perception /fear of crime
- Multiple area with single functions e.g. add laid back areas with seating
- Map existing users and consider how to engage those not using.
- Why is there no update in some areas?
- Design of parks – A to B design need to think about engagement circular walks
- Shift in perception of certain areas
- Promotion of corridors “Green Map“
- Intelligent landscaping
- Impact on biodiversity and conservation

Rejuvenating Dacorum – Delivering a range of projects that address the unique needs of Dacorum, its town centres, neighbours and industrial areas

Parks and Gardens

- Pride in areas
- Cleaner Environment
- Above re-link to vision
- Visual audits of parks – focus on one park multi agency
- Access and routes to improve safety
- Facilities and Equipment – Public conveniences (Gadebridge Park not the best)
- Green areas in Maylands and all other business areas
- Community involvement groups and residents
- Capable guardian – ownership at local level
- Nighttime built up areas and fear or safety

Amenity Greens

- Safety fencing, (to stop parking) define areas, separate parking from green
- Community ownership
- Useable space / rural space
- Responding to children & young people needs
 - “goal Area” where children can play
 - Child safety concern
 - Noise at night
 - Engagement with residences

Natural Green Space

- Creating awareness that these areas can be used
- Transport available to get to green spaces
- They become safer the more people use them e.g. Ashridge
- Confusion over ownership of natural green Sspace
- Access include footbridge severely limited (A41)
- Promote rights of way

2.1.2 Dacorum’s Green Space in 5 Years Time

- Biodiversity is a priority
- Dacorum standard defined quality and quantity (nature investigation study conducted)
- Community Involvement – in neighbourhood management plans
- Rivers flowing
- Improve ecological footprint
- Access to safe & quality spaces (infrastructure)
- Make best use of the infrastructure
- Make explicit links between objectives above
- Promote safety of open space
- Strategy to protect green space- renew development
- Acknowledge changing dynamic of demographics

Promote good practice
Political support for statutory protection of green space
Access to green space by a wide range of people
Long term planning of landscape & management of it
The viability of a Dacorum green space trust explored
Link to the play strategy agenda

Pride in area

Less “private” areas more open (playing fields)
New management structure
Well lit and safe walk ways and cycle-ways to link all green bits together
Cross agency inter-linked working
Much less managed green space
More provision for general youth
More community ownership
Private enterprise e.g. roundabout sponsorship
Provision for workers as well as residents

Community safety within green spaces

Fear of crime is rising although crime has gone down
Find out what the above issues are
Increase feeling of safety
Maybe cameras in parks like Gadebridge Park
Involve youth in planning and awareness of image
More integrated service for young people
Using consultation methods to engage young people e.g. filming people as in north London
Don't consult with young people in Civic Centre
Complete mix across all sectors and using open spaces together.

Civic Zone and Marlowes Corridor

River to be part of area (part of new environment), use as link
Capacity of river (as a form of water supply)
Hanging baskets & bedding more vibrant
All year round planting – be more creative in shrubs
Plants to encourage wildlife
Ensure infrastructure for new hosing sustainable
Adapting to climate change – how our environment look in 100 years time
Get business involved – sponsorship e.g. hanging basket
Corporate Social responsible – sponsorship

Environment Projects

Schools to have project/ awareness e.g. shortage of water / river
Regeneration of the canal
Courts to work more closely with local authority – community service (canal known area for criminal damage)

Engage community involvement footbridge / murals
Getting kids out into the countryside – using environment to teach life skills
Litter problems – more adverts that people will be fined – business to take responsibility for litter
Personal responsibility and ownership e.g. best ward,/ allotments competitions
School litter picks
Kids “pester power “ kids to influence good litter habits with parents
Item schools initiatives and link to it and green travel plan and business

Allotments

There are long waiting lists so more locations and bigger include a social space for allotment people
Potential to switch garages back to allotments
Encourage holders to form societies e.g. Berkhamsted have a wildlife society
Encourage schools to take up allotments
Ethnic minorities – help to engage the community and social
A tool for mental health issues
Links to healthy lifestyle – organic food and active life style
Competitions “biggest marrow “ also engaging local communities
Encouraging youths to help
Security lack of facilities and poor soil
Local authority can offer advice and practical help

Green Space

Will become more important with new housing development will see greater need light density housing e.g. flats, less gardens
Localised – lots of small pots as well as large ones.
Amenity green need to think about all ages
Engaging residents may be difficult they see management as a council responsibility
TARA'S could be a good starting point, we would need to ensure any residents associations represents all groups.
Family events – may attract wider group of people to take an interest.
Fun day events – bring people together on amenity green
Small areas may become bigger garden larger parks are needed for wider activities e.g. ball games
Open up schools e.g. in summer holidays use their green space
Schools may be the only way to address open space issues in Berkhamsted
Need for investment in some of our bigger parks e.g Gadebridge park toilets etc – not necessarily council funded Civic Zone
Industrial areas could be enhanced by use of green space e.g. people could use in their lunch hrs
Civic Zone – high density, hard to accommodate green space – but will benefit from green corridor

Rivers

Natural environment don't need to have people walking along etc need to know are there – need to protect environment and water shortages in Hemel Hempstead
Need to explain value of grass lands, have value to local areas e.g. Cassiobury Park longer grass attracts wildlife
Use of best flow of water for the community - not through underground pipe
Change of management of Gadebridge park e.g. could leave some areas uncut to create interest features, more diversity – left side of park could be used
Boxmoor trust – managed well, respect flow of water include info on – information boards on wildlife etc could include brass info boards like on the Grand Union Canal
Community Plan has no specific reference to biodiversity, wildlife etc conservation maybe should be started
Protection of sites, e.g. Little Hay Golf Complex – protecting walkway natural wildlife priority for future

Conflict – Green space verses parking

Need to decide that within neighbourhoods we need to preserve and work with the community to decide use. May be used for other purpose

Parks and Gardens in London are fenced off and are responsibility of the local residents, who use it – They pay for up keep

Could the above be built into the Civic Zone?

Need to look at role of community – would residents be willing to pay for upkeep?

Young people have tendency to create their own play space – should they be involved in design, saying what type of space they want

Children play areas – lots of rules and regulations this restricts what can be done – need to look at alternatives if demand is out there.

Change in types of equipment for play – e.g. assault courses which adults can use as well as children – good for families “play is something done throughout life” example Milton Keynes and Forestry commission – have different sized play equipment

Need to look at more sensitive designs of children play areas, not fencing but something that still offers protection.

2.1.3 How can my organisation contribute to the aspirations of the Community Plan and the Council Vision

Roles clearly mapped out

Match every child matters agenda

Projects involved in promotion of youth arts and culture

Planning is involved in everything co-ordination needed

Support and involvement in development of management plans

- Enhancing infrastructure

- Funding and security contributions

- Supporting the health agenda

- Reduce nuisance behaviour

Community partnerships to encourage community involvement

Ground works – protecting green space community involvement – volunteering

Highways

- Green travel plans safety and environment access and include cycling paths
- More advisory planning strategy
- Sustainable travel (nicky line)
- Community involvement – upgrading access
- Parish paths partnerships
- Education = Countryside code
- Health initiatives

Police

- Clean, tidy, safe environment = Clean days
- Reclaim streets
- Visual audit consultation in street space
- Volunteers special constables to create safe environment high visibility
- Police locality working
- LSP board & steering group level
- Simple solutions hedge height
- Encouraging community involvement
- Not stereotyping / listening to young people

Environmental Health

- Noise pollution & air pollution
- Creating awareness e.g. bonfires – time and place
- Multiple occupation compiling to legislation
- Promotion of energy efficiency
- Empty property legislation
- Anti-Social Behaviour team promoting Civic Pride
- Designated non drinking zones
- Sustainability – Council Management Plans
- Dacorum environment forum
- Smoke free Dacorum

Herts County Council

- Committed to strategic partnership
- Theme groups
 - C& YP = Children's Trust Partnership
 - Children Schools & Families
- Consultation / community involvement
- Youth Charter
- Waste awareness
- Local community projects
- Life long learning/ library / arts & leisure
- Incapacity benefits / back to work (lone parents)
- Local Area Agreements interfaced

How will the GSS help

Prioritise linked in via strategy
Linked to play strategy
Commitment to delivery of strategy
Will help develop a focus what is being done
Might impact working with other groups
Would contain reference to biodiversity to create greater impact
Scope of strategy garden in out
Protecting environment
Balancing future needs with existing pressures
Needs of the natural environment and those living and working in the borough must be balanced
Existing pressures
Housing and associated amenities
Aspire to protect and enhance of natural environment unique habitats
Access to open space for community
Education and understanding view nature as an asset
Service delivery for DBC green spaces – Streetscene and landscapes
Management plans – linking up overarching plans
Definitive policy on river importance especially in new developments
Planning informing areas of particular deficiency
Integrated approach with play strategy
Links to biodiversity action plan
Consideration of cemeteries – help with action plans (site management
Ground work – more strategic approach to areas of need/ priority
Point of reference for external funding
Grounds maintenance – strategic view of where to target resources
Links to heritage sports leisure culture music
Opportunity for cohesion in communities

Contribution of my service to GSS

Educating to respect environment and green space
Communication and consultation
HCC contribution will depend on how much DBC put in
Encourage community involvement

Highways

- New ways to involve community
- Improve partnerships
- Reduce flytipping and litter

Police

- Working with local authorities / licensing
- Town centres planing licensing and balance
- Make dacorum safe and secure

Environmental Health

Sustainability and awareness and delivery

HCC

Consult with community

Work in partnership with community

Community involvement – Town & Parish Council

 Youth Councils

 Residents Groups

Knowledge of existing work and processes

Children's Trust Partnership can contribute to C& YP elements

Needs & issues/ conflicts within Councils as well as voluntary within councils as well as voluntary and community sector

Local Development Framework - Nature conservation

 - Open Space Study

Dacorum Arts Forum – possible buy in

Use of ideas and good practice from other boroughs

2.2 February 2008

2.2.1 How can we work in partnership to improve the community use of Dacorum's greenspaces.

Partnerships

CARP

River Bulbourne Partnership

Dacorum environmental forum (quarterly discussion)

Many landowners involved → how to create synergy

Vision – confusion about what green spaces are, what it includes. Many accessible green spaces in Dacorum

New green spaces for new houses

→ need framework for wider countryside so don't have islands of green space

Accessibility → don't need to take a car

BAP

Practical/ST

Green corridors

Protecting green space

Scale – incl. Pocket parks, linear parks, e.g. GUC

→ information/promotion

Goal for improving community use of green spaces

Dacorum Partnership (LSP)

Dacorum Childrens Trust Partnership

“Friends of” groups linked to sites

Parish Councils P&TCLG and individually

H&MWT

Voluntary Groups

Local working forums

DEF

PCT

West Herts Environment, Education Network

CMS

The Box Moor Trust

What's missing?

Schools Existing means e.g. libraries, notice boards

Young People Youth councils?

Older People Age concern
Other agencies
Signage

BME – connecting communities Sports base

Unemployed

Disabled people “Engage” toolkit

Travellers Community audits of Green space

- Communication specifically with local residents e.g. unhappy with outcomes re Plough roundabout and Gade Park
- No common aim/fit
- No link between strategies
- Not enough awareness of all the strategies
- Discussion regarding what is a partner and what does partnership working mean

Solutions:

- Provide for local residents to create ownership
- Have a clear communication structure including how policy interacts with local need
- Have a clear outline of the various roles of the various bodies/partnerships
- Bring local residents together

More resources!

Improving Community Use

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenic value • Antidote to urban life + the pace of life • Access to open space – tranquillity • Sense of wilderness – escape • Accessible • Attractive 	<p>Sense of well-being</p> <p>Recreation in its true sense (3 dots)</p>	<p>PROVISION (1 dot)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportional to use • Conserve the best, improve the less good, add quality & suitable quality according to need
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy living • Exercise • Leisure activity 	<p>Purpose e.g. health activity (0 dots)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community ownership involvement • GOAL; to increase the usage, quantity, knowledge & satisfaction of existing green space & to improve existing & link up & add to this green space • Local involvement in management of green spaces 	<p>Community involvement (4 dots)</p>	<p>FINANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get finance to support grass

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved knowledge of wildlife & the natural environment, knowledge, respect, protection, sense of ownership • Improving peoples knowledge of green spaces & their appreciation of them • Web pages for information about different locations rather than signage. Encourage families to research before visiting • To keep areas like Bunkers Park etc., well signed & open for the public areas for walking & parking 	<p>Information/knowledge (2 dots)</p>	<p>MISC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pride in all green space existing & new • Master planned + integral to new growth • Having an area for best practice e.g model allotments linked to encouraging community use • More imaginative play areas including water features
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration of uses where possible – separation where necessary • Family use without impacting other people's enjoyment 	<p>Considerate of other uses (0 dots)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All sectors involved, all assets maximised, conflicts resolved, quality > quantity, sustainable > attractive, satisfying • Ensure environmental improvement does not create unnatural landscapes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links with schools & youth • Education spaces – formal & informal • Maintaining biodiversity in tandem with education, local nature reserve like Shrub Hill common 	<p>Educational value (0 dots)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect nature environment • Enhance bio diversity • ?? use linked to wildlife role 	<p>Bio diversity wildlife (1 dot)</p>	
<p>Sustainable use/ management (1dot)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financially sustainable • Use that does not wear the site out • Community/LA/etc co-managed with right level of support • Help with maintenance tasks 	

Exclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to play • Clearly defined joined use i.e. pedestrians, cycles, etc (e.g. Amsterdam) • Equipment that adults & those with disabilities can access “inclusive” for all • Easy access gardens for disabled • Accessible for all groups • Facilities for all, have to be regularly maintained • Use of community/art sculpture • Imaginative, diverse, risky, seasoned
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant places & spaces corridors • Cycle corridors • Linked spaces – corridors • Open space that is integrated with urban development amenity greens rather than nature resource
Variety of use (2 dots)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Respect’, quiet areas – seating for accessibility, ownership, consideration for all age groups • Meets the ‘need’ of the community • Responsive to changing needs • Zoned • Open spaces to run around & play ball games. Family picnic areas on blankets = no toilets • Physical activity facilities: access for walkers, joggers, cyclists, organised team sports • Diverse provision to meet differing needs – not all things at all sites • The right use in the right space • Community orchards in parks • Innovative choice of activities provided
Nature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parts left as meadow walks as well as wildlife habitat • Access to nature • Ensure harmony between public & will life etc • Bio diverse – layout & maintenance regimes • Equipment that blends into the natural environment • Compatible with surroundings • Green spaces that adapt to climate change and promote sustainability

<p>Local Ownership (6½ dots)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local care taking • Putting something back • Public envois such as tree wardens – ownership • Space • A sense of ownership for by everyone • Encourage the community/residents to own and care for their green spaces • Better community leadership to invest in open spaces • In depth consultation with local residents: all age groups • Heightened awareness and shared understanding throughout the local community of functional purposes of green spaces
<p>Perception of Safety (2 dots)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring back park attendants • Parks ranger promote safe environment for users • A save enjoyable environment • Safe, secure – many functions • Feel safe/secure • Local warden – 8 different allies • Community involvement/commitment • All sectors of the community using them ‘sustainable communities’ • Get involved in management of site – decisions • Litter free safety help point or number • Community events • Polite
<p>Promotion of use</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational use of site – schools • Maximise youth action programme. Initiatives or other resource possibilities • Signage – correct identification via symbols of each of the facilities within each site • Printed list of all sites with each of the facilities shown by symbols at each site • Education of young people – the future • Promotion of literature • Identification and encouragement of facilities, walking, viewing • Educating public that facilities are free, and benefits • Common branding of high quality green space which identifies what there is and its purpose

2.2.2 How can we work in partnership to improve the quality of Dacorum's greenspaces

Perception as safe	Safe
Accessible (physical & intellectual) (3 dots)	Access for all (physical & intellectual) Welcoming – a place people like to visit
Balance with natural environment (4 dots)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural • Visual impact • Balance of facilities • Natural green growth some trees • Meeting needs of local community + natural landscape • A wide distant view from part if not all space (i.e. edge of woods) • Current state – range of balance • Gadebridge park example of balance • Live alongside wildlife • Balance across Dacorum rather than one prescription for all sites • Zonation of use and explanation of need to do so • Appropriate management for each site
Variety of activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somewhere that can attract ordinary people & offer them something that would make them regular visitors • Open space
Clean & Tidy (3 dots)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Well cut grass & lack of litter (clean & tidy) • Clean & well managed • Litter free & good water quality • Cleaner rivers, drains cleared on regular basis, wheelchair access
Consistency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent • Mechanism to collect comments, complaints
Horticulture & landscaping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horticulture as an amenity must predominate provision
Safe & Clean	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the tidiness of access routes • Encourage public not to drop litte • Address declining areas • Attention to detail maintenance • It should look cleaner & greener & feel safe

Partnership Working (1 dot)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative partnerships e.g. with the probation service • Partnerships easy to say difficult to achieve • Encourage “people” to become “partners” (the importance of developing relationships) • Develop friends & groups, tree wardens etc.
Community Engagement (1 dot)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage the willing section of the community • Encourage voluntary litter pickers • Enforce on the unwilling section of the community • Involve local communities in management plans • Well advertised open air event encouraging understanding all ages e.g. whole park even on Water • Engage schools, youth organisations like scouts etc • Encourage sense of ‘ownership’ “its our green space lets work to conserve & protect it” • Ask basic questions; what do we mean by quality? What are our standards? How do we do that? • Convert complaints to involvements • Survey what people like/dislike/want/require > act on it according to priorities & money • Local involvement in local countryside/green space
Respect (1 dot)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give consideration to planting schemes, trees, perennial shrubs • Respect for open space • Engender respect for green space/wildlife/wider countryside • Develop the “value” to the community of the green space provision • Improve habitats and improve understanding of their importance
Schools/Youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organised trips out to a specific site near a school with fun & facts from a good youth leader
Awards & measurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek green flag awards for as many spaces as possible • Quality must be maximum benefit which is sustainable and not artificial not twee • Use other successful examples & learn lessons
Resources (2 dots + 2 shared with below)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More investment in green space where pressure is greatest • More resources from private developers via section 106 (planning)

<p>Infrastructure (3 dots + 2 shared with above)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relieve pressure on existing green space by providing more • Water is basis for life water must be respected as such • Improve the towpath and access to towpath for easy walking and cycling • Create linkages/green corridors to link important green space for access and wildlife – biodiversity • Improve/create integrated transport structure, access without reliance on the car • Improve access including footpaths, benches, lighting etc. • Water infrastructure is in need of major refurbishment • Improve our infrastructure, household waste site, litter bins
<p>Local / pride civic ownership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local ownership • Kept clean – community litterpicks by open space champions • Open aspect ?joined up views on whole area not patchwork • Local ownership
<p>Appropriate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pleasant place to be • Where facilities are provided they should be very well maintained or should not be provided e.g. toilets • Land management • Appropriately maintained • Inviting • Plenty of litter bins & pooper scoop bins regularly emptied • Better attitude to litter “ownership of improved area = less likely to drop litter” • Maintenance of boundaries where appropriate • Well managed, maintained, litter free & warden • Attractive well maintained flower beds • Change the ‘not my responsibility’ attitude • Green uncluttered grass, well cut, well defined edges • Removal of ugly fencing which prevents joined up approach • Appropriately landscaped

<p>Diversity of functions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varied • Different • Quality – good management of spaces for biodiversity with information provided • Space to watch & play e.g. sport • Quality means diversity to cater for as many interests as possible • Range of facilities, playgrounds, cycling, play area, picnic areas & dog friendly areas • Balanced use nature people urban • Diverse appeal • Health (walks) • Social • Friendly • Multifunctional • Play opportunities • Diverse activities • Unique • Management • Encouragement of wildlife • Natural • Integrated into urban/rural setting • Indicated whether SSSI & whether protected flora/fauna present • Eco friendly • Wild areas incorporated as a standard feature of parks which are less accessible but interpreted & visible • Quality biodiversity, encouraged alongside other uses • Allow some areas to be wild/scruffy not all too manicured • Fresh & green • Valuable to wildlife & biodiversity
<p>Communication / Educations appropriate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear on what is offered • Clear signage, each site named with symbolised amenities • Published list of all Dacorum’s green spaces named & with symbolised amenities • Appropriate use • Educational • Links to history & heritage • Knowledge of wildlife • Environment (education)

Safe (perception) [others foundations to achieve]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walkable (i.e. through it) • Lighting where appropriate (Gadebridge Park) • Safe • Safe & Secure • Safe, well lit, open water features? & public art
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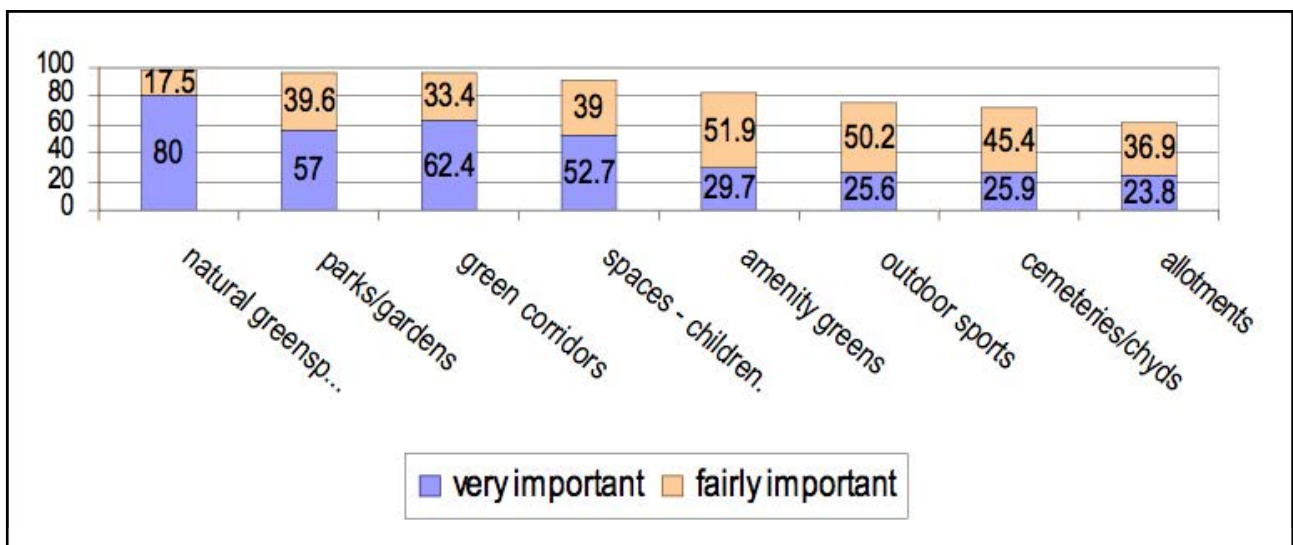
3 General Consultation Results

3.1 Citizens Panel April 2007 (427 responses)

3.1.1 Importance of Green Space

Each of the ten categories of 'green space' listed in the questionnaire was deemed 'very' or 'fairly important' by a majority (60%+) of respondents. 'Natural green spaces' were deemed the most important category of green space by the sample overall, referred to as 'very important' by 80% of all respondents, 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%) – and these three categories were also rated as 'very or fairly important' by in excess of 90% of respondents. 'Natural green space' 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%).

Importance of green spaces
(Q2 : % response – all respondents)



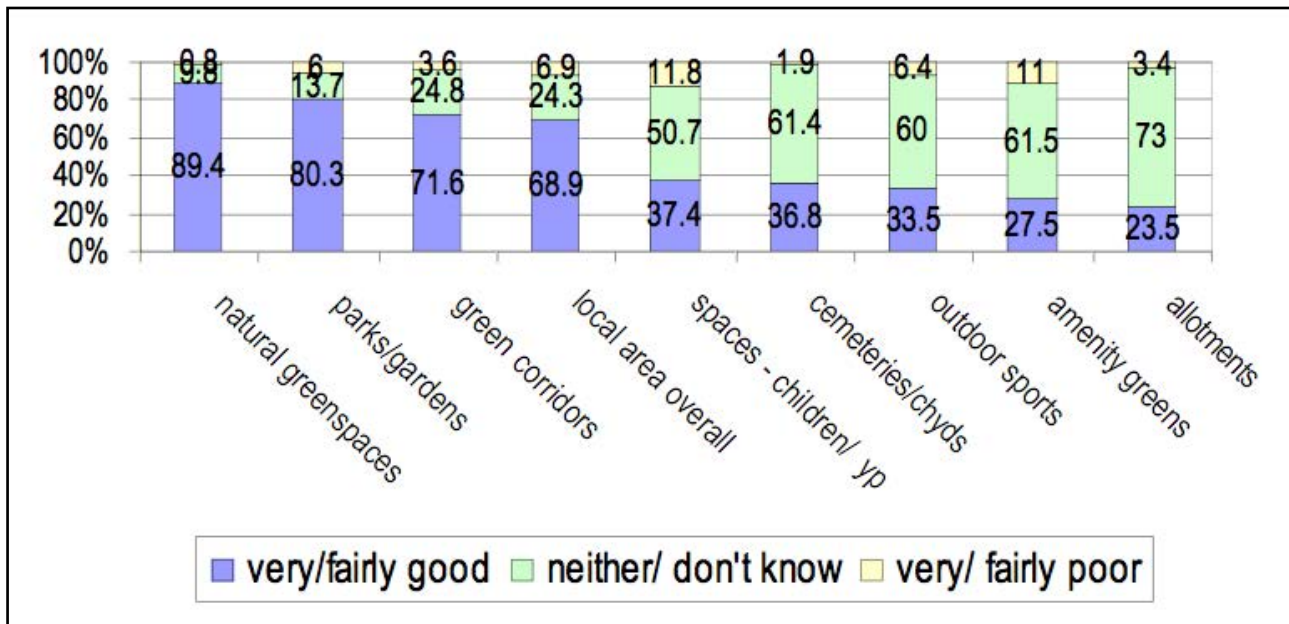
3.1.2 Usage of Green Space

Three categories of green spaces 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%.

3.1.3 Quality of Green Space

'Natural green spaces' was the category of green space which was rated the highest for quality by the sample 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 'green 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%).

Quality of Open Space in Dacorum
(Q4 : % response – all respondents)



3.1.4 Quality of Green Space

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 green 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%). In all areas of the Borough, green 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.

3.1.5 The natural environment, heritage, and habitats

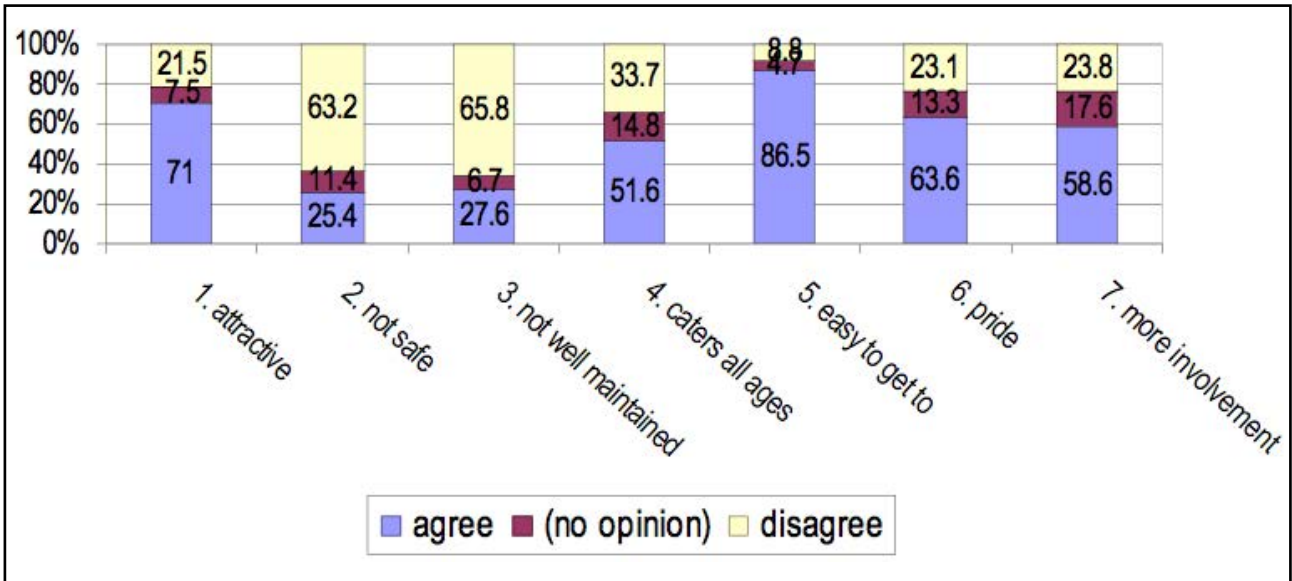
The overwhelming majority of respondents were of the view that 'the natural environment, heritage and habitats' in Dacorum were important. 99.1% were of the opinion that 'easy access to countryside in and around the towns and villages of Dacorum is important, 96.7% were of the opinion that 'the protection of all types of green spaces from future development' is important; 95.3% were of the opinion that 'the inclusion of wildlife areas and natural green spaces within their town/ village' is important; and 95.2% were of the opinion that 'protection and enhancement of Dacorum's historical features within the landscape' is important.

3.1.6 Local parks

Respondents overall appear to have a generally positive perception of their local park: 'easy to get to' (86.5%), 'attractive and welcoming space' (71%), 'well maintained' (65.8%), 'feel proud of them' (63.6%), 'feel safe when visiting on their own' (63.2%), and 'caters for all ages' (51.6%). However, 58.6% are of the opinion that 'local people should be more involved in the management of local parks and other spaces'. Although the overall view of local parks is positive, substantial minorities had negative perceptions: 'does not cater for all age groups' (33.7%), 'not very well maintained' (27.6%), 'not safe when visiting alone' (25.4%), and 'not attractive and welcoming' (21.5%). However, only 8.8% were of the view that their 'local park is not easy to get to'.

Over half (53.9%) of all respondents offered a response when asked an open question 'what would encourage you to visit your local park more frequently', with the largest proportion of these (23.2% of the total sample) referring to 'additional facilities or events'. Other aspects referred to were 'greater cleanliness' (9.5% of total sample), 'maintenance/ management issues' (9.4%), 'safety' (7.2%), 'access' (2.8%), 'better weather' (2.4%), and 'dog fouling' (2.2%). 2% referred to 'lack of time/ opportunity'. Just over two-thirds (68.5%) of all respondents expressed satisfaction 'with the way the Council have managed, maintained and developed parks and open spaces in Dacorum', whilst 21.7% were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied', and only 7.4% expressed dissatisfaction (2.4% 'don't know'). Whilst 'satisfaction' ranged between 61.5% (Rural area) and 74.8% ('Tring'), because of the small sample numbers these differences between areas were not statistically significant. Dissatisfaction did not exceed 10% in any area.

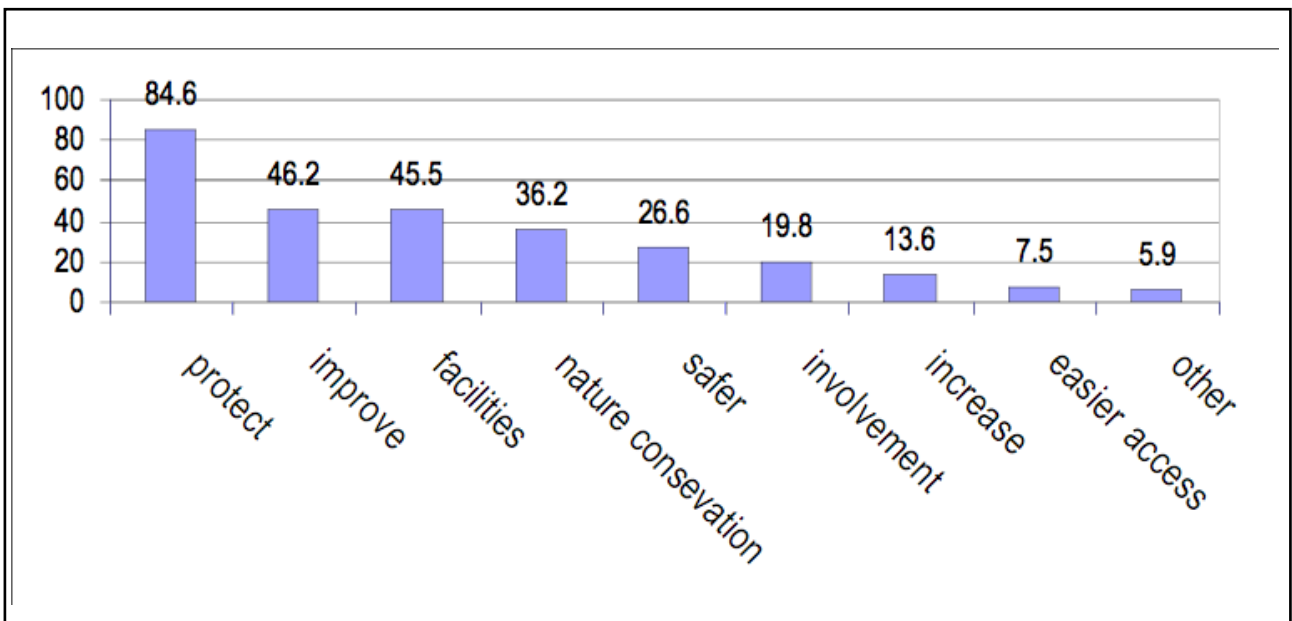
Perception of local parks – all respondents
(Q7 : % response – all respondents)



3.1.7 Main priorities for ‘parks & 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%).

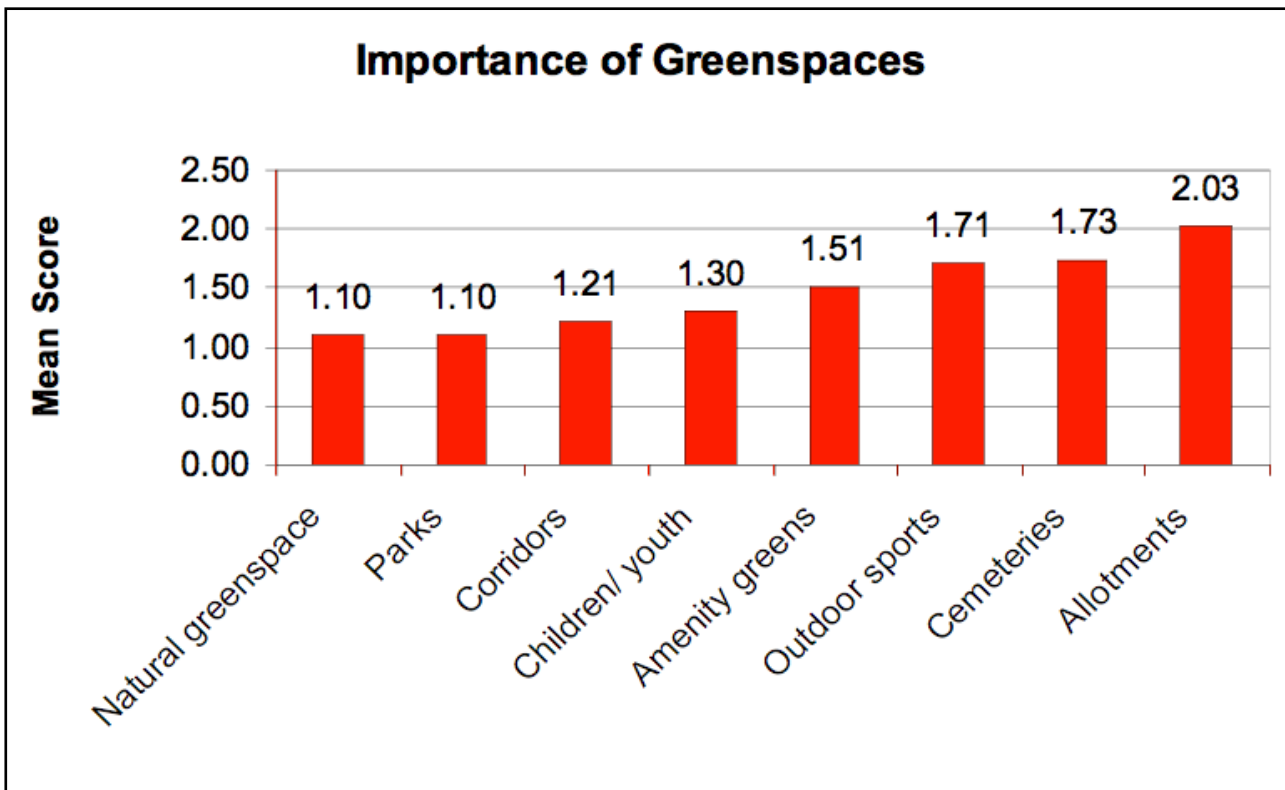
Main Priorities for Parks & Open Spaces in Dacorum
(Q11 - % response – all respondents)



3.2 Self Completion Survey (184 responses)

3.2.1 Importance of different categories of open space

Respondents were asked how important different categories of open space were to them on a ranking scale of 'very important'; 'fairly important'; 'not very important' and 'not at all important'. These have been analysed as mean scores, with '1' representing the highest level of importance, ('very important'); and '4' to the lowest level of importance, ('not at all important'). Therefore the lower the mean score the higher the level of importance attributed by respondents.

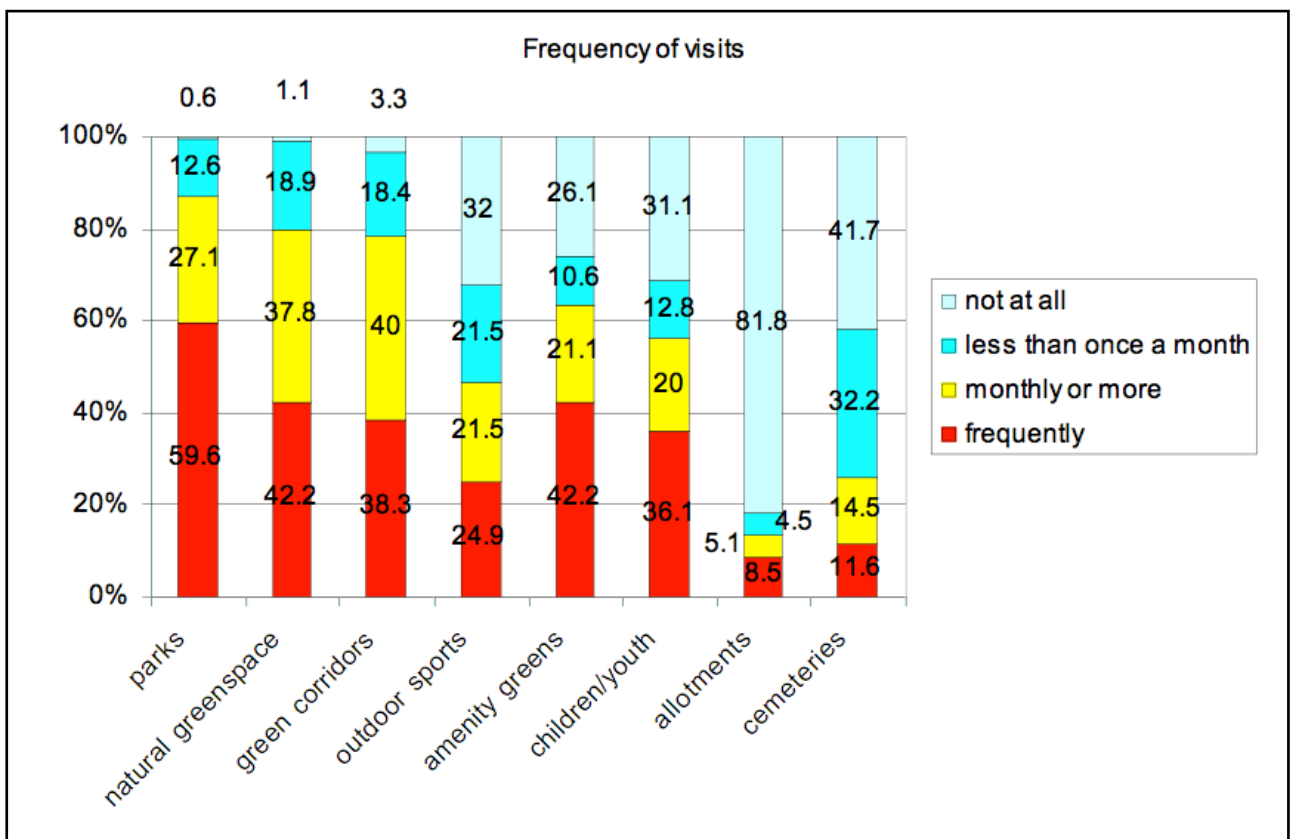


The open spaces most important to respondents were 'natural 'green' spaces', (mean score of 1.10); and 'parks and public gardens', (also 1.10). The third most important 'green' space is that of "green' corridors', (1.21). It should be noted that no respondent indicated that any of these three types of open space were 'not at all important', (i.e. none were coded as a '4' on the questionnaire). Least important to respondents were 'allotments' with a mean score of only 2.03.

Category of space		Count	Col%
Parks and public gardens	Very important	160	91.4%
	Fairly important	12	6.9%
	Not very important	3	1.7%
Natural greenspace	Very important	166	90.7%
	Fairly important	16	8.7%
	Not very important	1	0.5%
Green corridors	Very important	144	80%
	Fairly important	34	18.9%
	Not very important	2	1.1%
Outdoor sports facilities	Very important	86	47.8%
	Fairly important	65	36.1%
	Not very important	25	13.9%
	Not at all important	4	2.2%
Amenity greens	Very important	111	60.7%
	Fairly important	53	29%
	Not very important	17	9.3%
	Not at all important	2	1.1%
Spaces for children & young people	Fairly important	34	18.7%
	Not very important	7	3.8%
	Not at all important	2	1.1%

Allotments	Very important	65	35.5%
	Fairly important	59	32.2%
	Not very important	47	25.7%
	Not at all important	12	6.6%
Cemeteries and churchyards	Very important	85	46.4%
	Fairly important	71	38.8%
	Not very important	19	10.4%
	Not at all important	8	4.4%

3.2.2 Frequency of use of open spaces



Most visited were parks and public gardens with 27.7% of respondents having visited these every or most days and 31.9% visiting once or twice a week. Just over four in ten respondents visit natural green spaces such as Boxmoor, Ashridge, wildlife areas such as Bunkers Park and Shrubhill Common, at least once a week. (Every or most days – 18.9%, once or twice a week – 23.3). Similar just over four in ten respondents visit amenity greens at least once a week, (every/most days – 28.9%, once or twice a week 13.3%). Least used

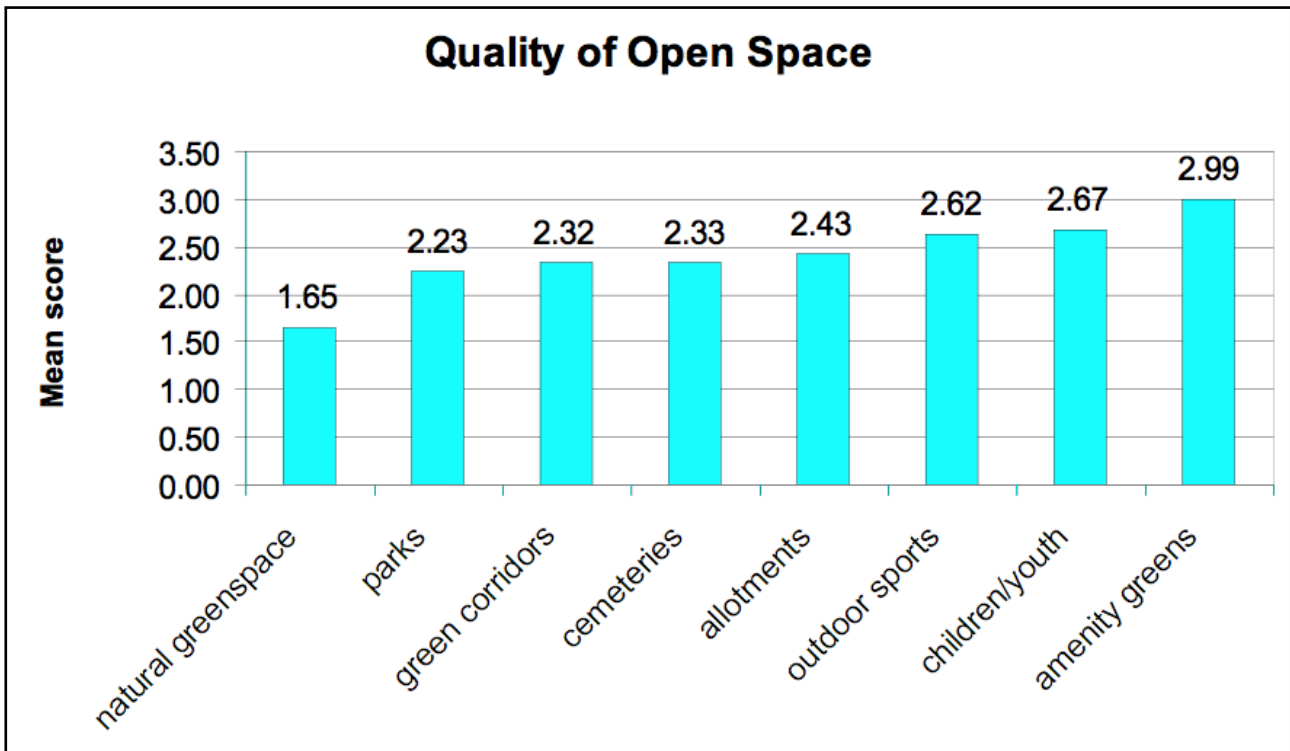
open spaces are allotments with 81.8% of respondents saying that they do not visit these at all. This is followed by cemeteries and churchyards with 41.7% of respondents saying that they never visit these.

3.2.3 Rating of quality of categories of open space

Respondents were asked to rate the quality of open space in Dacorum using a rating scale of 'very good', 'fairly good', 'neither good nor poor', 'fairly poor' and 'very poor'. They could also indicate that they did not know about the quality of specific types of open space. As previously the responses have been analysed as mean scores and these are shown in the table below in ascending order, (the lower the mean score the higher the perception of quality), with the 'don't know' responses removed.

Quality of Open Spaces

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Natural green space	176	1	5	1.65
Parks and public gardens	166	1	5	2.23
Green corridors	173	1	5	2.32
Cemeteries and churchyards	121	1	5	2.33
Allotments	63	1	5	2.43
Outdoor sports facilities	143	1	5	2.62
Spaces for children & young people	150	1	5	2.67
Amenity Greens	159	1	5	2.99



As can be seen from the above the highest rated open space is that of natural ‘green’-spaces, (mean score of 1.65). Over half of all respondents, (52%), rated this as ‘very good’ and a further 36.2% as ‘fairly good’. The next most highly rated open space is that of parks and public gardens with a mean score of 2.23 and nearly three quarters of all respondents, (74.3%), rating this is either ‘very’, (24.6%) or ‘fairly good’, (49.7%). Least well rated is the open space at amenity greens with a mean score of only 2.99 and less than one third of all respondents, (32.6%), rating these are good, (‘very’ – 7.7%, ‘fairly good’ – 24.9%). 28.1% of respondents considered the quality of amenity ‘green’s to be ‘poor’, (17.1% ‘fairly’ and 11% ‘very poor’).

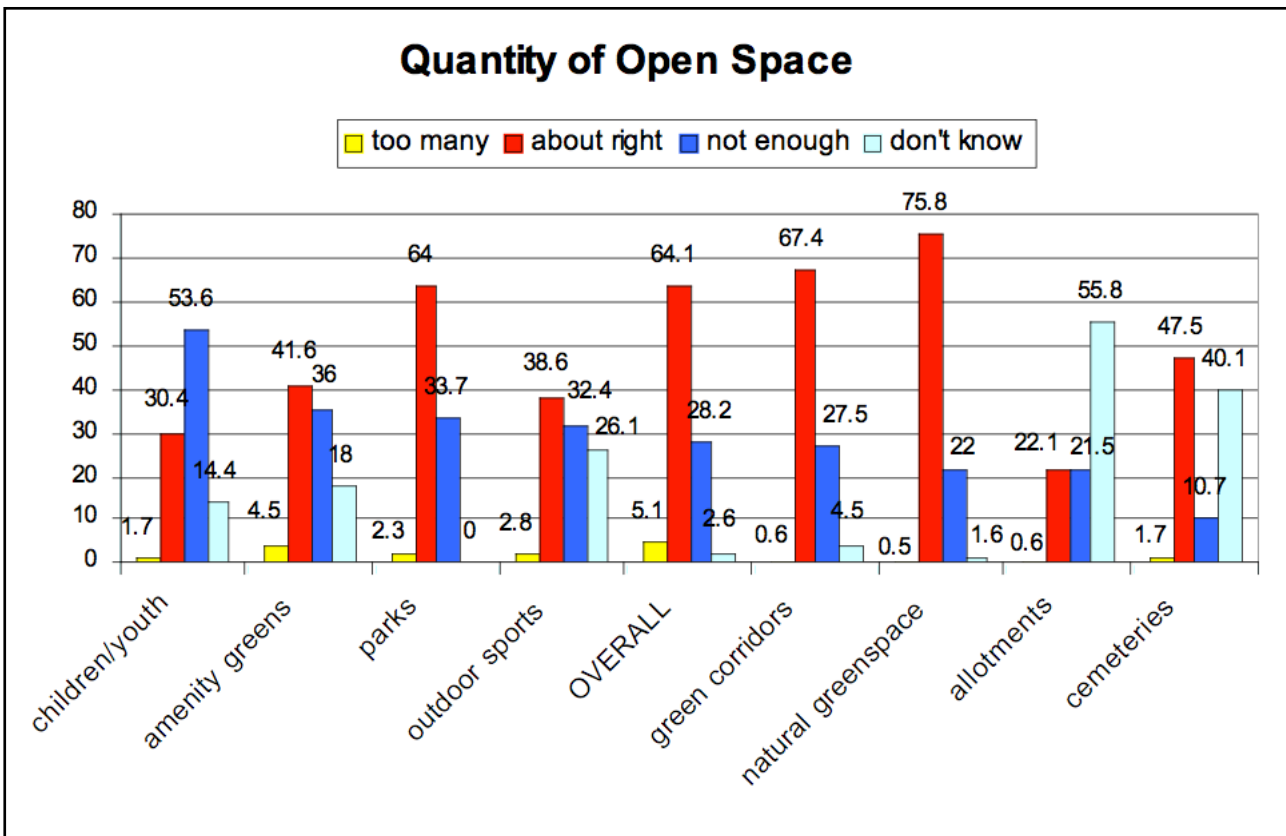
		Count	Col%
Parks and public gardens	Very good	42	25.3
	Fairly good	83	50
	Neither good nor poor	15	9
	Fairly poor	12	7.2
	Very poor	14	8.4

Natural greenspace	Very good	93	52.8
	Fairly good	64	36.4
	Neither good nor poor	10	5.7
	Fairly poor	5	2.8
	Very poor	4	2.3
Green corridors	Very good	31	17.9
	Fairly good	93	53.8
	Neither good nor poor	25	14.5
	Fairly poor	10	5.8
	Very poor	14	8.1
Outdoor sports facilities	Very good	16	11.2
	Fairly good	59	41.3
	Neither good nor poor	44	30.8
	Fairly poor	11	7.7
	Very poor	13	9.1
Amenity greens	Very good	14	8.8
	Fairly good	45	28.3
	Neither good nor poor	49	30.8
	Fairly poor	31	19.5
	Very poor	20	12.6

Spaces for Children & Young People	Very good	23	15.3
	Fairly good	53	35.3
	Neither good nor poor	38	25.3
	Fairly poor	22	14.7
	Very poor	14	9.3
Allotments	Very good	16	25.4
	Fairly good	20	31.7
	Neither good nor poor	17	27
	Fairly poor	4	6.3
	Very poor	6	9.5
Cemeteries and churchyards	Very good	25	20.7
	Fairly good	49	40.5
	Neither good nor poor	35	28.9
	Fairly poor	6	5
	Very poor	6	5
Green space in your local area overall	Very good	10	26.3
	Fairly good	19	50
	Neither good nor poor	4	10.5
	Fairly poor	2	5.3
	Very poor	3	7.9

3.2.4 Views on the quantity of open space

Respondents were asked their views on the quality of open space in respect of each of the categories used within the questionnaire. In respect of there being 'too many' of the various open spaces only small minorities of respondents considered there to be too much open space with this rising to only 4.5% in respect of amenity greens, although 5.1% of respondents considered that overall there were 'too many' open spaces.

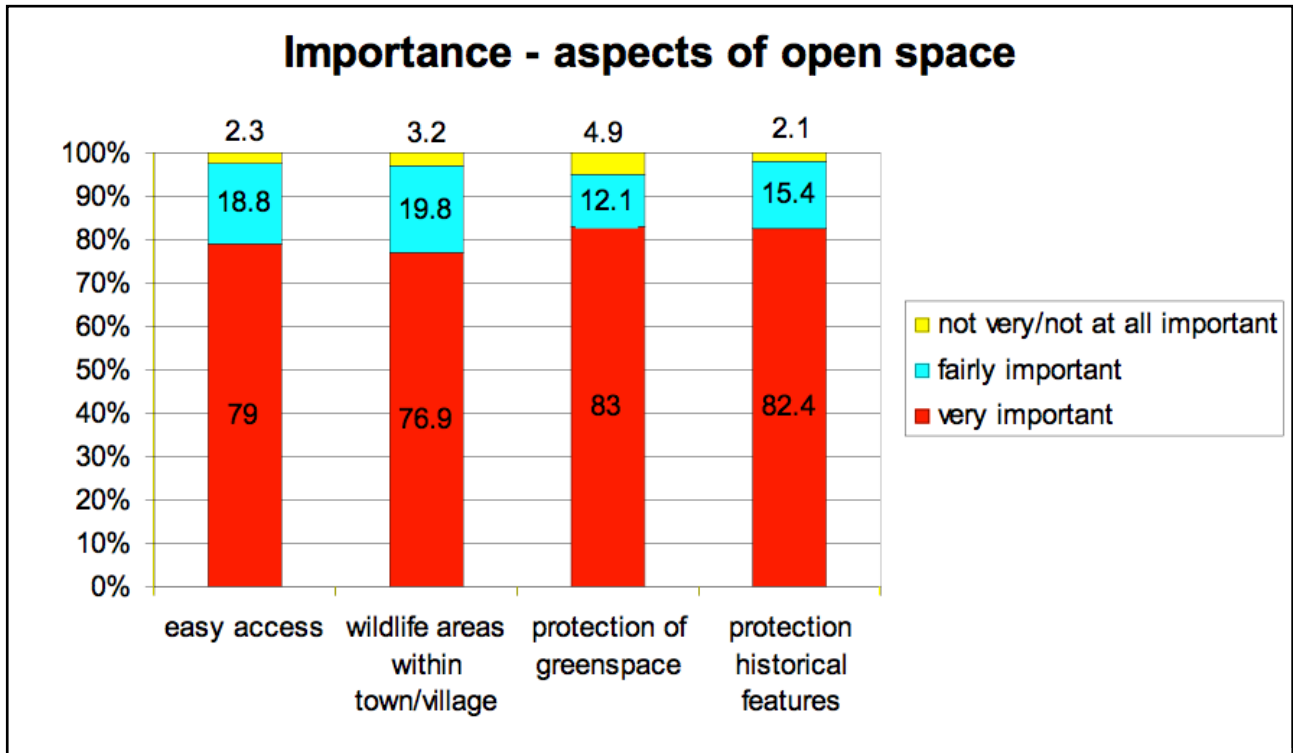


Over three quarters of all respondents, (75.8%), considered that the provision of natural 'green'-spaces was 'about right' and over two thirds, (67.4%), that the provision of 'green' corridors was 'about right'. 64.1% of respondents thought that the provision of 'green'-space overall was 'about right'. Turning then to areas where respondents felt there was an under-provision of open spaces, over half of all respondents, (53.6%), felt that there are not enough spaces for children and young people, (play areas, adventure playgrounds, kick about areas, school playing fields). Around a third of all respondents thought that there are not enough amenity greens, (36%); parks and public gardens, (33%); and outdoor sport facilities (public/private sports pitches), (32.4%). 28.2% of the overall sample considered that there are not enough 'green' spaces overall in their local area.

3.2.5 Importance of aspects of open space

When asked how important aspects of open spaces were to them the large majority of respondents considered all listed to be very important. 79% of respondents considered

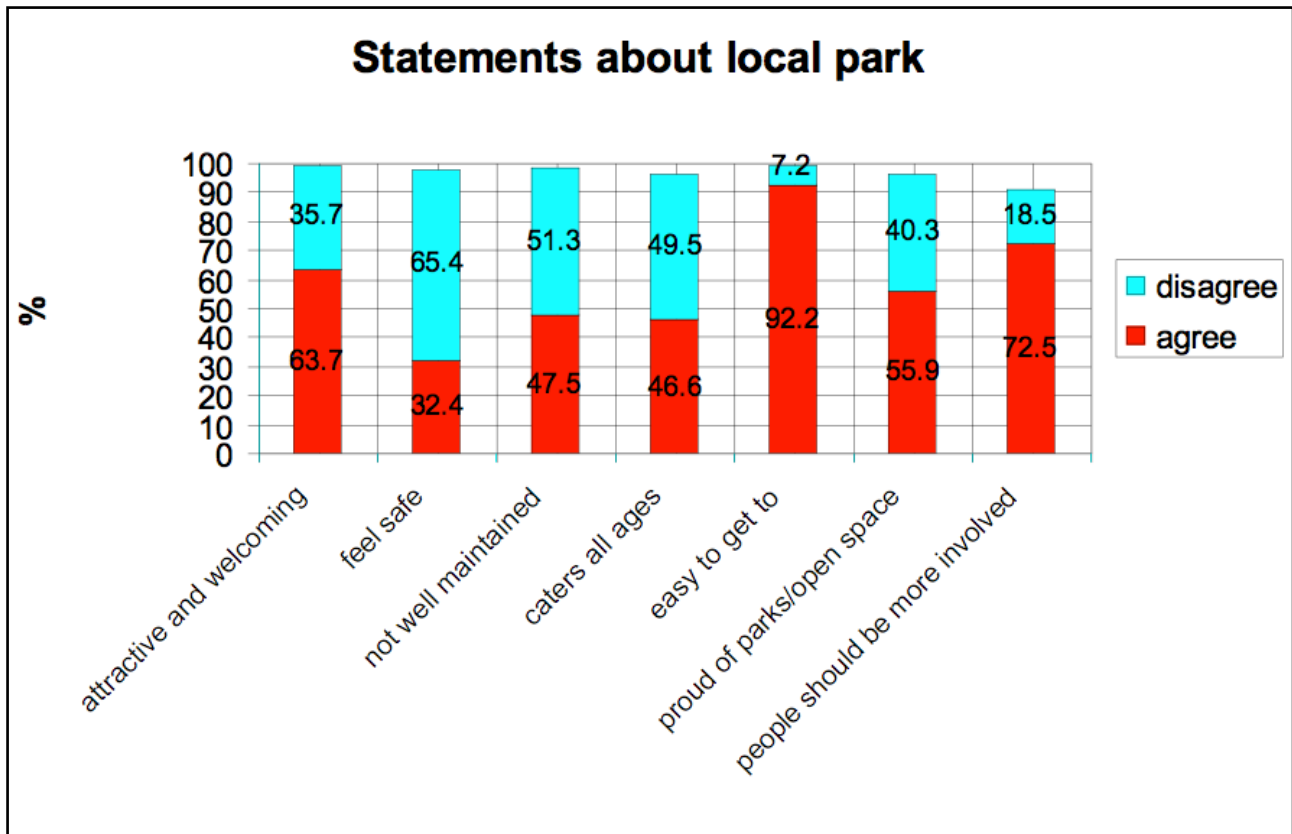
easy access to the countryside in and around the towns and villages of Dacorum to be 'very important', with a further 18.8% considering this to be 'fairly important'. 76.9% of respondents considered the inclusion of wildlife areas and natural 'green'-spaces within their town and village to be 'very important', (+19.8% fairly important). Over 80% considered the protection of all types of 'green'-spaces from further development to be 'very important', (83% + 12.1% 'fairly important'); and similarly 82.4% considered the protection and enhancement of Dacorum's historical features within the landscape to be 'very important', (+ 15.4% 'fairly important').



Only small minorities considered these aspects to be unimportant: the most mentioned as being unimportant were the protection of all types of 'green' spaces from future development, with 4.9% considering this to be unimportant.

3.2.6 Agree/ disagree statements about local parks

Respondents were next asked the extent of their agreement, (on a 4 point scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree), with seven statements about their local park. The majority of respondents agreed with the statement 'my local park is an attractive and welcoming place', (19% strongly agree, 44.7% tend to agree), although over a third disagreed with this, (35.7% - 25.1% tend to disagree and 10.6% strongly disagree). Most respondents (65.4%) disagreed with the statement 'I do not feel safe when visiting my local park on my own', (43.6% tend to disagree and 21.8% strongly disagree); although 5.6% strongly agreed with this and 26.8% tended to agree.



Opinion was fairly evenly split in respect of whether respondents agreed or disagreed that their local park was well maintained. 47.5% agreed that it is not well maintained, (22.3% strongly agree and 25.1% tend to agree), whereas 51.3% disagreed with this, (12.8% strongly disagree and 38.5% tend to disagree).

Similarly there was a split in opinion in respect of whether their local park caters for all age groups with 46.6% agreeing that it does, (12.4% strongly agree and 34.3% tend to agree); whereas 49.5% disagreed, (36% tend to disagree, 13.5% strongly disagree).

The large majority of respondents, (92.2%), agreed that their local park is easy to get to, (54.7% strongly agree, 37.4% tend to agree); with only 7.2% of respondents disagreeing, (6.1% tend to disagree, 1.1% strongly disagree).

Just over half of all respondents, (55.9%), agreed that they feel proud of the parks and open spaces in their community, (19% strongly agree, 36.9% tend to agree); with 40.3% disagreeing with this, (23.5% tend to disagree and 16.8% disagree strongly).

Nearly three quarters of all respondents, (72.5%), agreed that local people should be more involved in the management of local parks and other open spaces, (27% strongly agree and 45.5% tend to agree). However, although the majority of respondents agreed that local people should be involved in this management, only a few made suggestions relating to how this should be achieved. Details of the responses are shown in the open questions appendix.

3.2.7 Encouraging more frequent visits to local parks

When asked what if anything would encourage them to visit their local park more frequently 29.9% of respondents did not give an opinion, although a number of these respondents suggested that their visits were so frequent that they would be unlikely to visit more often than they do now. Just over a quarter of all respondents, (25.5%), made comments relating to the maintenance and cleanliness of their local park with 11.4% commenting on security or safety issues as being a potential barrier to use. 15.8% mentioned a requirement for additional facilities, 3.8% for refreshment facilities and 2.7% to the possibility of having specific events in the parks.

What if anything would encourage you to visit your local park

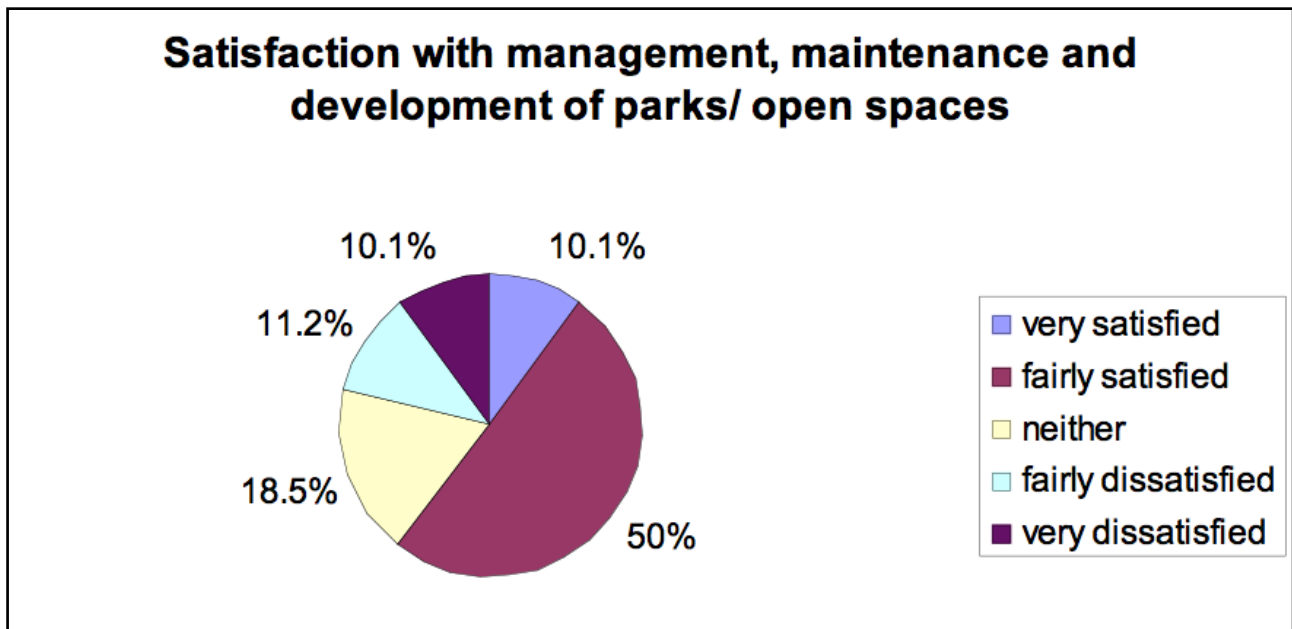
	Frequency	Percent
Maintenance/cleanliness	47	25.5
Security/safety	21	11.4
Additional facilities	29	15.8
Refreshments	7	3.8
Events	5	2.7
Other	20	10.9
None mentioned	55	29.9
Total	184	100

3.2.8 Satisfaction with the management, maintenance and development of parks and open spaces in Dacorum

3.2.9 Main priorities for parks and open spaces in Dacorum

Respondents were asked to select from a list of eight potential priorities, which three priorities they felt should be the main ones for parks and open spaces in Dacorum. They were also given the opportunity to nominate a priority not listed in the questionnaire.

Main priorities for parks and open spaces in Dacorum		
	Cases	Col Response %
Protect open space from development	126	68.5
Increase amount of open space	12	6.5
Improve quality of open space	105	57.1
Increase facilities	77	41.8



Make people feel safer when visiting	50	27.2
Make it easier to visit	12	6.5
Increase involvement of residents	28	15.2
Nature conservation	48	26.1
Don't know	9	4.9
More than 3 given	14	7.6

The most mentioned priority was that of protecting open space from development with over two thirds of all respondents nominating this as one of their three priorities, (68.5%). Also mentioned by more than half of all respondents as one of their three priorities was that of improving the quality of open space, (e.g. appearance/maintenance), (57.1%), with increasing facilities, (e.g. benches, public conveniences), being mentioned by more than two in five respondents, (41.8%). Least mentioned of the priorities were increasing the amount of open space, (6.5%), and making it easier for people to visit, (6.5%).

3.3 Web Survey (142 responses)

Q1 How important are the following open spaces to you? (% response)				
	Very Important	Fairly Important	Not very important	Not at all important
Parks and public gardens	85.7	6.1	2.0	0.0
Natural greenspaces (Box Moor, Ashridge, wildlife areas such as Bunkers Park, Shrubhill Common)	87.8	10.9	0.7	0.0
Green corridors (e.g. rivers & canals, Nickey Line, linked areas of green space that act as a route for people and/or wildlife)	74.8	22.4	1.4	0.0

Outdoor sport facilities (public/ private sports pitches)	49.0	37.4	10.2	2.0
Amenity greens (small green spaces within housing estates/ neighbourhoods)	61.9	27.2	8.8	1.4
Spaces for Children and Young People (play areas, adventure playgrounds, kick about areas, school playing fields)	76.2	19.0	2.7	1.4
Allotments	37.4	33.3	22.4	6.8
Cemeteries and churchyards	51.7	35.4	9.5	3.4

Q2 Thinking about the last 12 months, about how frequently, if at all, have you used or visited the following open spaces in Dacorum? (% response)

	Every day / most days	Once / twice a wk	2 or 3 times a mth	Once a mth	4 - 11 times a yr	1 - 3 times a yr	Not at all
Parks and public gardens	19.0	29.3	17.0	11.6	8.2	2.0	0.7
Natural greenspaces	14.3	2.4	3.8	7.7	0.9	0.8	0.4
Green corridors	15.6	21.1	3.8	17.0	11.6	6.1	2.0
Outdoor sport facilities	4.1	21.1	10.2	12.2	11.6	11.6	27.9
Amenity greens	27.9	12.2	13.6	10.9	7.5	2.7	23.8

Spaces for Children and Young People	19.0	19.7	13.6	7.5	4.8	6.8	27.2
Allotments	5.4	2.0	3.4	2.7	1.4	2.7	78.9
Cemeteries and churchyards	5.4	6.1	3.4	10.2	10.2	21.8	40.8

Q3 How do you rate the quality of the following categories of open space in Dacorum? (% response)

	Very good	Fairly Good	Neither good nor poor	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know
Parks and public gardens	18.4%	42.9%	10.2%	6.8%	9.5%	1.4%
Natural greenspaces	47.6%	34.7%	6.1%	3.4%	2.7%	0.7%
Green corridors	15.6%	47.6%	16.3%	6.8%	8.2%	2.7%
Outdoor sport facilities (public/private sports pitches)	8.8%	33.3%	25.2%	6.8%	8.8%	15.0%
Amenity greens	7.5%	21.8%	27.9%	19.7%	12.9%	9.5%
Spaces for Children and Young People	10.2%	27.9%	22.4%	14.3%	9.5%	14.3%
Allotments	9.5%	11.6%	8.2%	2.0%	4.1%	63.3%
Cemeteries and churchyards	11.6%	29.3%	19.0%	2.7%	3.4%	33.3%

Q4 What is your view on the quantity of the following categories of open space in Dacorum?

	Too many	About right	Not enough	Don't know / no opinion
Parks and public gardens	2.0%	57.1%	32.7%	0.0%

Natural greenspaces	0.0%	71.4%	25.2%	2.0%
Green corridors	0.0%	61.2%	30.6%	4.1%
Outdoor sport facilities (public/ private sports pitches)	2.7%	40.8%	32.0%	21.1%
Amenity greens (small green spaces within housing estates/ neighbourhoods)	4.8%	42.2%	37.4%	13.6%
Spaces for Children and Young People	2.0%	27.9%	56.5%	12.2%
Allotments	0.7%	23.8%	22.4%	51.7%
Cemeteries and churchyards	0.7%	46.9%	10.9%	38.1%

Q5 How important are the following to you? (Please tick one box on each line)

	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important
Easy access to countryside in and around the towns and villages of Dacorum	74.1%	20.4%	2.0%	0.7%
The inclusion of wildlife areas and natural green spaces within your town/ village	72.1%	22.4%	2.7%	0.7%
The protection of all types of green spaces from future development	78.2%	13.6%	4.8%	1.4%
Protection and enhancement of Dacorum's historical features within the landscape	16.3%	2.0%	0.7%	

Q6 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your local park?					
	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
My local park is an attractive and welcoming space	17.7%	41.5%	26.5%	12.9%	0.0%
I do not feel safe when visiting my local park on my own	6.1%	26.5%	41.5%	22.4%	2.0%
My local park is not very well maintained	21.8%	24.5%	38.1%	12.9%	1.4%
My local park caters for all age groups	10.2%	31.3%	38.1%	15.0%	3.4%
It is easy for me to get to my local park	52.4%	38.1%	6.1%	1.4%	0.7%
I feel proud of the parks and open spaces in my community	17.0%	34.0%	23.8%	19.0%	4.8%
Local people should be more involved in the management of local parks and other open spaces	25.9%	48.3%	12.2%	2.7%	8.8%

Q10 Overall, how satisfied are you with the way the Council have managed, maintained and developed parks and open spaces in Dacorum?	
Very satisfied	8.2%
Fairly satisfied	49.7%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	19.7%
Fairly dissatisfied	10.2%
Very dissatisfied	10.2%
Don't know	0.0%

Q11 What do you think should be the main priorities for 'parks and open spaces' in Dacorum?

	Protect open space from development	72.8%
	Increase the amount of open space	7.5%
	Improve the quality of open space (e.g. appearance/ maintenance)	70.1%
	Increase facilities (e.g. benches, public conveniences)	48.3%
	Make people feel safer when visiting open spaces	38.1%
	Make it easier for people to visit open spaces	11.6%
	Increase involvement of local residents in the management of open spaces	22.4%
	Nature conservation	29.3%
	Don't know	0.0%
	Some other priority (please tick <input type="checkbox"/> and write below)	6.8%
	12.9%	

4 Town and Parish Council Consultation June 2007

4.1 What do you think is included in Green spaces?

Traffic islands/roundabouts

Allotments

Cemeteries/church yards

Recreation grounds

Sports grounds

Countryside

Parks

Playgrounds

Green corridors

Amenity greens

Common areas

Woodlands

Verges

Conservation projects

River/canal corridors

Green corridors
Railway embankments and disused railways
Footpaths/bridleways

4.2 What specifically could be done to improve green spaces in your area. What are your locality needs?

4.2.1 Vandalism

Prevent vandalism on canal bridge/footpaths Berkhamsted
Stop vandalism Bovingdon

4.2.2 Litter

Litter bins on recreation ground (emptied regularly) Wigginton
Stop flytipping Wigginton
Clear up litter
More litter bins on footpaths and pavements along canal open areas Berkhamsted
Better standard of litter collection Northchurch
More regular collection of rubbish from bins Tring TC
Remove flytipping Flamstead

4.2.3 Maintenance

Regular maintenance especially during summer season Bovingdon
Regular grass cutting and maintenance of roundabouts
Regular grass cutting Tring Rural
Regular maintenance linked to speed of growth Markyate
Devolution of verge cutting to Parish Council Flaunden
Restoration of verges following traffic damage Flaunden
Reinstate eroded goal mouth areas Wigginton

4.2.4 Conservation

Control deer population Aldbury
Turn Springfield Quarry (now disused) into a conservation area with public access Flaunden
More land for recreation maintenance of conservation projects. Tree planting, improved footpaths Flamstead
Coppice & replant woodland Flamstead
Clean up the stream in Steamside Walk, Brook Street Tring TC
Refurbishment of pond in Memorial Gardens Tring TC

4.2.4 Parking

Prevent cars parking illegally Bovingdon
Provide suitable parking places so verges & green spaces not spoilt. Markyate

4.2.5 Facilities – Sports & Young People

Ensure adequate provision for young people – safe and so in sight of home?
Markyate PC

Communal meeting place for young people Tring Rural
Bunkers Park – provision for children & play equipment
Providing open fields for football in Nash Mills area
Access to play area – disabled Tring Rural
Create more play areas. Berkhamsted has an area for small children and sport areas e.g. football pitches Berkhamsted
Improve facilities on open areas such as East Meadow Berkhamsted
Remove Sports Pavilion Wigginton
Refurbish sports club facilities Flamstead
Pound Meadow – Pavilion needs major refurbishment or rebuilding or demolition Tring TC

4.2.6 Education & Promotion

Educate / encourage landowners to look after land Bovingdon PC
More publicity for large spaces which are open to the public e.g. Tring Park, Ashridge Tring TC

4.2.7 Green Space Provision

“Green paths” required between villages to access services Tring Rural
Open green spaces – Barnacres Road

5 Consultation Comments on Tring

Extracts from Tring Place Workshop Report, October 2008

5.1 Is there a need for any more open space (parks, gardens, amenity green space, green corridors, cycle paths, outdoor sports facilities and play areas, allotments, cemeteries and churchyards) within the town / village? If so, how and where should it be provided?

- Tring Rural has enough open space to meet local need
- Because of the high proportion of young children we may need more facilities for children/teenagers in the future
- Low quality of open space
- One size doesn't fit everything
- Need for good basic facilities
- Miswell Lane recreational ground is very accessible and well used but has a privately owned part in the middle (**Most important**)
- Site T/h15 is currently an important open space
- New Mill is not well served for play areas (**Most important**)
- Cycle paths put forward by interest groups (**Most important**)

5.2. How can you / your town help us respond to the issues of climate change?

- Use Coppice Woodland (Local) to produce some energy locally
- Encourage use of local footpaths, cycle paths – difficult at moment to find safe cycle paths, may be more use of more permissive paths

- Street tree planting

NB: Three of 13 suggestions from the focus group which related to green spaces, none of these were considered to be 'most important' by the group.

5.3 What key features do you think should be enhanced or retained within your village / town?

- Green spaces should be retained and increased
- Reservoirs very important but poor accessibility by bike

5.4 What other changes would you make elsewhere in your town / village to make it a more attractive place to live?

- Renovation of playgrounds
- Keep flowers in beds and tubs around towns
- Improve access to Tring Park and signage
- Lighting – skateboard park and Brook Street but not intrusive to local residents
(Most important)

5.5 Visioning Priorities

Priority 1

- Improve the quality of local greenspace x2
- Retain the countryside around the town – this also means its functionality as well i.e. farming.
- Maintain the present pattern of mixed land use e.g. mix of residential, retail, farming, sport, industrial commercial with adjustments to achieve better sustainability.

Priority 2

- Improve quality of facilities for children and young people x2
- Preserve Green Belt around Tring

Priority 3

- Improve accessibility to countryside x2
- Improve facilities and opportunities for outdoor sport – rugby and football etc

Priority 4

- Avoid large developments – maintain Green Belt

Priority 5

- Improve biodiversity of green corridors

6 Consultation Comments on Berkhamsted

Extracts from Berkhamsted Place Workshop Report, October 2008

6.1 What problems do you think your town has with crime or anti-social behaviour?

- We have alcohol free zones but areas (Butts Meadow, Canal Fields) are used by young people who drink.
- Butts meadow is dark in the evening.

6.2 Are the needs of children and young people being met? If not, how can we better accommodate their needs?

- Skate Park – popular – needs enlarging, few problems with it. **(Most important)**
- Need free facilities – i.e. kick football around, BMX facility?
- Cycling – very good trails, but safety concerns – need better off road links. In town = safety concerns. **(Most important)**

6.3 Is there a shortage of any key facilities and/or services in the town? If so, what are these and where?

- Encourage more cycling – Cycle lanes? Need to be maintained. Links to Ashridge are dangerous. Bike lock up space. **(Most important)**

6.4 Is there a need for any more open space within the town? If so, how and where should it be provided?

- Short of green space, linear town
- Visual green space – fronts and backs of houses **(Most important)**
- Keep sports facilities central
- Preserve existing green space, not develop private green space – need more public land **(Most important)**
- Maintain green corridor along canal
- Stag Lane – new developments (150 units) have no green play areas, must be integral **(Most important)**
- Should gardens be designated as brown sites? – NO
- Retain “envelope views” around the town
- Stress local priorities rather than national targets.
- Preserve sense of space surrounding dwellings **(Most important)**
- Low level dwellings to preserve view!
- Need space for outdoor sports. **(Most important)**
- Shortage/young people – balance development with provision of these facilities
- Allotment demand – none south side of town, don't overlook future need, not much current provision
- Towards Hemel section of town not much current provision
- Access to canal side is still important
- BFI sites – open spaces (George Street, New Lodge)
- Cemeteries provision sufficient except perhaps a green cemetery. Before others fill extend existing ones. **(Most important)**

- Town – so that access is provided.
- Not green belt – green green belt **(Most important)**
- Any development should make provisions for open spaces within them (Most important)

6.5 What key features do you think should be enhanced or retained within your town?

- Canal **(Most important)**
- Trees in public places
- Canal Fields
- Extend canalside improvements to Northchurch e.g canal bridge signs and interpretation boards.
- Open spaces

6.6 What other changes would you make elsewhere in your town to make it a more attractive place to live?

- Canal is very important to town character. **(Most important)**
- Seating/picnic areas in parks.

6.7 Visioning Priorities

Priority 1

- The town must provide for youth/teenagers, not just home owners
- When the town grows we must provide public sports facilities and space as well as schools/doctors etc.
- Significant open space to be delivered through new housing development to offset deficit.
- Rather than taking possible areas shown for housing, use for lack of open spaces.
- Create open spaces from green belt

Priority 2

- Stop in-filling on already scarce green space. The By-pass is becoming the town boundary.
- Facilities for young people (youth club, football, motor cycling training, BMX)
- Planning permission must demand open spaces as part of the development
- Development of open spaces within the town for leisure and recreation
- Plan for a greener town – cycle lanes, use of canal, park area, water park for children
- Improve links to open space and the countryside

Priority 3

- Public footpaths within and between settlements & surrounding countryside are not one, maintained but improve and extend.
- Improve and increase activities for young people

Priority 4

- Don't develop wildlife sites for housing

7 Consultation Comments on Hemel Hempstead

Extracts from Hemel Hempstead Place Workshop Report, December 2008

7.1 Are there sufficient indoor and outdoor sports facilities and or open space? If not, where and how can we help address these issues?

- More greenspace is required, especially in Hemel Hempstead town centre, Maylands Business Park and Apsley.
- Need to improve Nickey Line to link to other green spaces old and new.
- Netball facilities for adults – maybe use of school facilities out of hours
- All weather pitches
- Private schools need to share facilities
- Make all facilities accessible such as footpaths and cycle tracks
- Potential loss of playing fields
- Expansion of schools may result in loss of onsite pitch provision, which is not ideal – need to ensure school facilities benefit the whole community i.e. swimming pools, sports halls and playing fields
- Concern about density increase creating a lack of social cohesion
- Is green space promoted on site?
- Need quality youth facilities
- Green space needs to be planned into expansion
- Allotments are needed

7.2 We have prepared some draft Policies for the town centre (your facilitator will show you a summary of these). In light of these Policies, how else can the town centre be improved?

- Enhance river and green corridor running through Town and out either end
- Exemplar green town status to be achieved

7.3 What are the key features to be preserved or enhanced in our neighbourhoods?

- Good play facilities (regular maintenance) – quality of play space, quality of equipment – not maintained
- Maintain open space – well used and self policing
- Smaller scale parks – we should not concentrate on providing larger areas such as adventure play facilities. Play spaces need to be: easy for all to walk to, well maintained (maintenance is an issue that needs addressing). Consider locking spaces at night to reduce problems.
- Children's play areas and open space for informal use are important
- Make neighbourhood centres more attractive i.e. more greenery and less 'harsh' in appearance
- Make more attractive – greenery esp. tree planting – need to look at "greening" the environment in the context of climate change (shading, i.e. importance of species, choice of tree etc.)

7.4 What are the key features of open space to be preserved or enhanced

- New woodlands/trees should replace lost woodlands/trees
- Keep all of the open space
- Buffer zone to surround expansion containing woodland/green space and protected by a charitable trust
- Bunkers Park to be protected
- Featherbed Lane site not to be developed
- Protect (Home Wood and land adjoining) and expand the green corridor following Two Water/Boxmoor/Apsley
- Maintain permeability through the town and along green corridors, inter-linking existing and new parks
- Enhance existing green space and ensure new development has new high quality green space to support new residents
- Stress importance of Gade Valley and Bulbourne Valley
- Maintain green street scene with verges and trees etc.
- Preserve nature corridors
- Preserve and invest waterways/towpaths, Grand Union Canal and rivers and wetlands
- Value amenity green space within housing areas and community
- Appropriate use of green space
- Make Jarman Park more attractive
- Green space should include planting
- Bio-diversity

7.5 How could open space be improved and made more attractive?

- ensure accessibility i.e. public transport
- avoid suburban clutter on boundaries to countryside and views
- manage green space (dog waste) (litter) to ensure multi-functionality
- move with the times – review suitability, community preference and need give variety and diversify
- Preserve access to high quality countryside (avoid suburban clutter)

7.6 Is additional open space needed? If yes where?

- New green space needs to be retained in proportion to new building
- Dog walking and footpaths
- Churchyards
- Allotments
- Outdoor sports space
- Need to make pathways “safe”
- Place to “escape”
- Diverse open space
- Additional open space proportional to development
- Make the most of the footpaths
- Allotments - do we have sufficient?

7.7 Visioning Priorities

Priority 1

- Protect green corridors and ensure structural build for wildlife in place as part of development.

Priority 2

- Protect Local Nature Reserve, wildlife corridors
- Protect, preserve and improve current green space.
- Provision for young people aged 12-18.
- Green corridors and pathways between residential centres
- Include sufficient open space within new development and use as opportunity to redress quantity deficiencies in wider neighbourhood.
- Open spaces/play areas – keep them available and well maintained.
- Maintain and enhance all green infrastructure – including spaces and corridors at different levels of resolution.
- Open Space – retain and improve/extend, should be public open space (parks, allotments, playing fields). Not stadiums.

Priority 3

- Keeping grasslands.
- Protect green wedges and continuity into open countryside.
- Protect and enhance all green spaces.
- Seek significant contributions to improve existing green spaces as part of development.
- Include green buffer zones between existing and future large developments.
- Preserve areas of natural beauty i.e. Bunkers Park

Priority 4

- Preserve green open spaces.
- 'Green lungs', easily accessible should be a priority, but include leisure use – not just open field and not just football.
- Keep Bunkers Park
- Enhance open land and green belt areas. Let's get Hemel Hempstead back to being a place to be proud of.
- A greener environment

Priority 5

- Locally make a real push for better cycling and walking opportunities and better access to them in the cause of health, sustainable transport and leisure & recreation.
- Improved landscaping – not just leftovers.
- Resist incremental loss of green space through small-scale developments around the periphery of existing provision.

8 Consultation Comments on Bovingdon

Extracts from Bovingdon Place Workshop Report, October 2008

8.1 Where are the best sites for development?

- Some merit in village extension if open space is incorporated. **(Most important)**
- Site to the rear of the Moody Estate is preferred. However, must seek to include Open Space and recreation as part of the development.
- Important to maintain open space in the village.
- Provide new connected open/leisure space with new development.

(Most important)

- Large sites preferred rather than more infilling in the village because of the importance of Open Space in the village. More Open Space should be provided with any extension. Some Green Belt release may be appropriate.
- Some use for sports facilities – cycle routes.

8.2 Are the needs of children and young people met? If not, how can we better accommodate their needs?

- No facilities for 17+ i.e. football club.
- Some facilities are under used.
- Playground for under 3s

8.3 Is there a shortage of any key facilities and/or services in the village? If so, what are these and where?

- Need allotments. **(Most important)**
- Floodlights for football club.
- Astroturf pitch. **(Most important)**

Two out of five suggestions

Comments from rest of group:

- Would like some allotments.
The only suggestion

8.4 What other changes would you make elsewhere in your village to make it a more attractive place to live?

- More parks and gardens. **(Most important)**
- Refurbish ponds.
- Improve footpaths.

Three out of ten suggestions.

- Increase the number of park benches.
One out of two suggestions

8.5 Is there a need for any more open space (parks, gardens, amenity green space, green corridors, cycle paths, outdoor sports facilities and play areas, allotments, cemeteries and churchyards) within the village?

If so, how and where should it be provided?

- School need swimming pool and astroturf.

- Not much within village.
- Cemetery is sufficient to serve the needs for quite some time to come.
- There is no provision at the northern end of the village as the school restricts access to the surrounding area.
- Skate park and basketball court would be useful as there is little for teenagers.
- Need more informal space. **(Most important)**
- Would like an allotment.
- Better connectivity. **(Most important)**
- There are no sizable facilities in the village for children/teenagers.
- There is sufficient provision of formal space in the village.
- The Green is currently over used so informal space is required. However do not want the Green to change.
- The open space at the Brickworks needs better signage.
- Need better connectivity from Boxmoor Trust to village.
- Safety of Open Space is important.

8.6 How can you or your village help us respond to the issues of climate change?

- Maintaining green areas.
- New tree planting. **(Most important)**
- Greening of the High Street. **(Most important)**
Three out of nine suggestions
- Stop infilling development, maintain space but need to trade this off with sprawl.
- Tree planting in development.
Two out of five suggestions

8.7 What key features do you think should be enhanced or retained within your village?

- All green spaces (hedges and verges) should be retained.
One out of ten suggestions

8.8 Visioning Priorities

- More informal Open Space (priority level 2)
- Green Space – recognise role of surrounding countryside. Protection of best areas (priority level 2)
- Youth facilities (priority level 3)
- Connections to surrounding wildlife sites/natural Green Spaces (priority level 3)
- Maintaining open spaces. No more infilling (priority level 3)
- Allotments (priority level 3)
- Improve existing green spaces (priority level 4)
- Increase green areas (priority level 4)
- Provision of green spaces within new development and to enhance the moody estate (priority level 4)
- Children/youth facilities (priority level 4)
- More informal green space (priority level 5)
- Protect green and open space within the settlement (priority level 5)

9 Consultation Comments on Kings Langley

Extracts from Kings Langley Place Workshop Report, October 2008

9.1 Do you think pedestrian linkages to and from the village, open space and local facilities need to be improved

- Towpath in Kings Langley is in poor condition – it is a pedestrian only route, but is difficult for the elderly to use
- Lack of signage, visitors would not know how to get to parks and open spaces
- Woodland at the Common is not very accessible but is important to keep as it local beauty – a short trail through the wood would increase its accessibility
- Need more amenity areas

9.2 What key features do you think should be enhanced or retained within your village/town

- Allotments
- Wildlife trail on areas on the Common

9.3 Are the needs of children and young people met? If not, how can we better accommodate their needs?

- Lack of sports facilities – lack of public tennis courts
- Towpath – not good for access (pushchairs etc)

9.4 How can your village help us respond to the issues of climate change

- Canal path improvement will encourage cycling but it is no good just improving small stretches

9.5 What changes would you make in your village to make it a more attractive place to live

- Regular maintenance eg grass cutting church yard, war memorial and railings and most open spaces within Kings Langley

9.6 Visioning Priorities

- Maintain open spaces (priority 1)
- Extend the Nap car park to grass area at rear of community centre (priority 1)
- Environmental improvements – brighten up verges enterin village with planting and trees (priority 1)
- Make the most of the towpath for cycling and walking (priority 2)
- Canal access and towpath improvement (priority 2)
- Improve facilities for teenagers to prevent vandalism (priority 2)
- Enhance towpath (priority 4)
- More help removing litter and cutting back overgrown vegetation (priority 5)
- Improve facilities for kids (priority 5)

10 Consultation Comments on Markyate

Extracts from Markyate Place Workshop Report, October 2008

8.2 Are the needs of children and young people met? If not, how can we better accommodate their needs?

- Skate park
- Leisure facilities sports/theatre (one of eight suggestions)

8.4 Is there a need for any more open space within the town/village?

- Allotments – waiting list: keep what we have and provide more
- Increase cemetery space
- New recreation ground
- current inadequacy
- more needed, especially if area grows
- Public gardens – flower beds – needed
- Public tennis courts needed and bowling green

8.5 How can you/your town or village help us respond to the issues of climate change?

- Cheverells Green – manage as “common” for wildlife
- Conserve hedgerows

8.6 What other changes would you make elsewhere in your town/village to make it a more attractive place to live?

- Better maintenance of green spaces/verges/hedgerows

8.7 Visioning Priorities

- Cycle paths (priority level 4)

11 Responses to Green Space Strategy - Consultation Draft March 2010

Boxmoor Trust	
<p>There is no timetable, no identified responsible officers, few partners and no indication of the financial and other resource implications. There is little clarity as to how these improvements are to be really achieved or importantly how they are to be monitored and reviewed. The strategy process should also provide an opportunity to review existing funding and management regimes. Current internal and external funding should be assessed. Levels and distribution of existing revenue and capital expenditure should be identified across the strategy area.</p>	<p>Section Three Action Plan identifies that the document will be monitored through the Hemel 2020 framework. The strategy will be refreshed on a five year cycle and the action plan updated. Following formal adoption of the final strategy an annual work programme will be prepared from the action plan as part of the implementation process. The Green Space Strategy will also inform the emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will provide evidence to secure developers contributions to support the implementation of the Green Space Strategy.</p>
<p>Include an inventory of the Box Moor Trust's land holdings and a paragraph on the history, mission and extent and character of the Trust's estate within the Green Space Strategy.</p>	<p>To be added within the final document.</p>
<p>Policy 1 – requires qualification as there may be occasions where appropriate development in terms of design, scale and location can enhance the use and attractiveness of some spaces. It may provide opportunities to provide capital or revenue support for their enhancement.</p>	<p>Policy 1 supports the redevelopment of areas of open space which are of poor quality, design and integration, provided the alternative use meets community needs.</p>
<p>Policy 2 – a strong reference to the importance of Green Infrastructure should be included, stating the ambition for enhanced wildlife and human corridors as a setting and framework for the town and its possible growth.</p>	<p>Agreed, to be included within Appendix 1 Design Principles.</p>
<p>Policy 3 – include reference to the Fieldfare Trust and BT Countryside for All manual and Millennium Miles open space criteria.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>

<p>Policy 5 – we recommend a balanced approach to the strict application of ‘Secured by Design’ principles in relation to access as there is a risk that restricting inappropriate vehicular access can compromise access by the less mobile, wheelchair users, cyclists (where appropriate) and push chairs.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Develop an allotment strategy</p>	<p>To be considered by Property and Asset Management.</p>
<p>Identify areas which are managed by the Trust within the action plan and state that actions will be undertaken jointly.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>
<p>Clarify cricket clubs and Camelot Rugby Club within the document, include Hemel Hempstead Town Cricket Club’s ambition to upgrade the second pitch for the benefit of local players.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>
<p>Add Bovingdon Brickworks onto relevant map.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>
<p>The document does not detail how these actions are to be delivered, by whom, at what cost and by when. The Trust would be very happy to join with others to develop some of this detail but it requires a political will to give the district’s open spaces the priority they deserve in the light of all those benefits identified on page 16. CABE space green infrastructure health check is attached which is a short exercise for local authorities to test the level of their focus on and commitment to this important topic.</p>	<p>Section Three Action Plan identifies that the document will be monitored through the Hemel 2020 framework. The strategy will be refreshed on a five year cycle and the action plan updated. Following formal adoption of the final strategy an annual work programme will be prepared from the action plan as part of the implementation process. The Green Space Strategy will also inform the emerging Infrastructure Delivery Plan which will provide evidence to secure developers contributions to support the implementation of the Green Space Strategy. The Box Moor Trust’s offer to assist in the detail of the delivery programme for the Strategy is welcomed.</p>

The Box Moor Trust	
The canals, towpaths and reservoirs are a multi-functional asset with existing value and considerable potential for a further enhanced role. This is well set out in the BW/TCPA Planning Advice note, July 2009. BW support Tring reservoirs being denoted a destination park within the Green Space Strategy.	Noted. British Waterways information on the length of the GUC within the Borough and the number of visitors to Tring reservoirs to be included within the document.
Add the Wendover arm of the GUC to the Tring text.	Agreed
BW welcome the inclusion of Tring reservoirs within the Strategy and its positive evaluation within the quality audits. We think that the large number of visitors to Tring Reservoirs are such that new facilities may be needed such as toilets and possibly a visitor centre, depending on funding.	Support for a visitor centre to be included within the Green Space Strategy.
Add traffic calming measures or develop alternative routes for cyclists and pedestrians instead of Little Tring Road and Tringford Road.	Traffic calming measures are beyond the scope of the strategy. Aspirations of British Waterways to be recorded within the Green Space Strategy.
Berkhamsted - Support actions relating to Canal Fields and improved cycle links through Berkhamsted.	Noted

<p>Hemel Hempstead South – BW priorities are to improve the environment and facilities for the canal and its towpath, as such we support the inclusion of Boxmoor as a destination park and the urban park project.</p> <p>Support the provision of outdoor fitness/ exercise activity and new equipment in Apsley and welcome an extension of this in other suitable locations.</p> <p>Welcome the feasibility study’s brief to consider whether there is potential for a ‘modest size marina’ within this park. A lively and attractive marina/basin would bring interest and colour to this urban park. There is a need to consider noise attenuation, and a softening of, the impact of the A414/Two Waters Road by landscaping.</p>	Noted
<p>Cycling – support the improvement of the canal towpath from Winkwell to Nash Mills and links to Apsley station and Belswains Lane, strongly support improvements to cycle route from town centre to Kings Langley.</p>	Noted
<p>Also note the importance of safe cycle paths in consultations and workshops.</p> <p>Tring – difficult to find safe cycle paths, plus accessibility around reservoirs is poor.</p> <p>Canalside improvements to Northchurch mentioned. Hemel Hempstead workshops underlined the importance of green corridors and the need to preserve and invest in waterways and wetlands in Two Waters, Boxmoor and Apsley and upgrading towpath in Kings Langley.</p>	Noted

CgMs Consulting	
Recognise the general opportunities provided by development options to provide more open space, particularly in relation to Bovingdon.	Policy 6 To use development opportunities to improve the quality and provision of open space, sets the principle that new development will be expected to deliver additional and improved green spaces for the residents of the Borough. Further detail for individual towns and villages will be provided through the Core Strategy.
Include an action that new housing development should be used to secure new open space for the village.	As above.
Development Option 1 Duckhall Farm Bovingdon, could provide accessible nature conservation and open space in association with new housing development.	The Green Space Strategy sets out the issues within neighbourhoods and a guide to how development opportunities should be addressed. It does not evaluate potential development options.
Any sites put forward for County Wildlife Site designation should be supported by survey data of sufficient detail over a period of time, and that sites are assessed on their wildlife important in a county context against carefully constructed selection guidelines.	Not within remit of the Green Space Strategy.
Markyate Parish Council	
Clarify Markyate Cell and include Caddington Common.	Agreed
Clarify designation of Peggy's Field and Recreation Ground in Cavendish Road.	Agreed
No distinction appears to be made regarding the providers of the space or facilities.	To be added to the quality audits.

<p>The sports pavilion is leased to the Football and Cricket Club. Its exterior in part reflects the need to keep the building secure. There have been a number of break-ins at this relatively isolated site.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Fenced area next to play area currently used by the Playgroup. When they move out these facilities could be upgraded to a surfaced, fenced area for sports.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Secure new open space at Markyate through the Core Strategy process. We would propose that DBC purchase the youth football field, adjacent to the Cavendish Road Recreation Ground (adding to the parish council lease). This would consolidate the sports field, making shared facilities more practical and promote progression to the senior teams.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Improve the quality of play provision at Cavendish Road, Markyate. Supported by the Parish Council, need for more adventurous equipment particularly for older young people, confirmed through Youth Survey.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>
<p>Improve access to Peggy's Field. This will require the support of the landowner. The slope is very steep and opens directly onto Pickford Road. Emergency and vehicular access must be maintained without prejudicing the safety of pedestrians. That said there is a desire for better access for pushchairs (but not motorbikes!). If ownership is not with the Parish Council there could be future problems with liabilities.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Extend the range of youth facilities and adventurous play available in Markyate. The Parish Council support this, as does our Youth Survey.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>

<p>Through the Core Strategy provide Support proposal to provide formal and informal play through Core Strategy process – propose that any new open space be adjacent to one of the existing spaces so that new facilities can complement and extend existing ones.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Support the provision of further allotment sites in Markyate as part of the Core Strategy process. Markyate Parish Council would support this.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Improve hedgerows at Peggy’s Field – unclear what is to be done.</p>	<p>Improvements could include hedge laying and leaving a buffer strip of uncut grass adjacent to the hedge.</p>
<p>Explore opportunities for developing biodiversity areas around the cemetery, Cavendish Road Playing Field and the Manor Farm development – unclear what is to be done.</p>	<p>Examples could include leaving areas of longer grass, laying hedges, tree planting or leaving a buffer adjacent to hedges. The Manor Farm development may provide an area to be managed for wildlife.</p>
<p>Easy access to the countryside – Markyate has accessible natural spaces across the county boundary in Whipsnade Common, Dunstable Downs, Blow Downs and Stockwood Park.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Improve connections across the A5 – planning policy is not to permit building on the north east. The subway and footbridge were built when the bypass was constructed to give access to the north east. There seems little more that can reasonably be done to improve connections.</p>	<p>To be amended to focus on providing better connections through the village to the subway and footway.</p>
<p>Promote accessible routes and provision within green spaces through the DBC website and individual site signage and leaflets. MPC has 8 local walks available to download, plus notice boards and new signage in hand through PPP and the Chilterns Conservation Board support.</p>	<p>Awareness of local walks and facilities provided by Parish Council’s could be promoted through the Dacorum Borough Council website as part of the development of a marketing strategy.</p>

<p>AW4 has Kings Langley rather than Markyate.</p>	<p>To be amended.</p>
<p>What is developing biodiversity?</p>	<p>The Urban Nature Conservation Study and Dacorum Nature Conservation Strategy identify Dacorum's biodiversity resources and provide a framework for the management of sites and protection through Dacorum Borough Council's policies.</p>
<p>What more than a footbridge is a safe way to cross the A5, and it is there already.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>Vincent and Grobing Planning Associates</p>	
<p>Unclear of the status of school grounds and playing fields in terms of the draft strategy.</p>	<p>School playing fields are considered as part of the overall provision of green space within a community. Recommendations concerning school facilities from the Dacorum Sport & Recreation Study Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment Report and Strategy and Action Plan are included within the Green Space Strategy.</p>
<p>If school grounds and playing fields are considered to be included in the definition of formal and informal recreation space, and so be designated as open land and given protection, the County Council would object as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There is a need to maximise flexibility of use of operational schools sites and their capacity to expand to deliver additional school places by accommodating additional buildings - School playing fields enjoy statutory protection from development under legislation - School grounds are private property rather than public open space - There are a number of former primary schools which have closed and are potentially available for alternative uses and or redevelopment. 	<p>Education playing fields are a major contributor to the character and functioning of an area. Most but not all schools in the urban areas are defined as Structural Open Land in the Local Plan (and shown on the Proposals Map). See Policy 9. This has been confirmed through two local planning inquiries.</p> <p>As such the Green Space Strategy recommends that open space at schools be treated as Open Land in the context of Policies 9 and 116 in the Local Plan. Open Land designation permits development for education purposes, subject to criteria in Policy 116, and encourages the retention of the open space for reasons of character as well as their sporting and education functions. It is recognised that school playing fields are private, sometimes with dual use. There is detailed justification for designation of sites as Structural Open Land.</p>

<p>Tring – we note that the existing school playing fields in Tring are identified as open space on the Tring Open Space Provision by type plan whereas existing school playing fields are not identified as public open space on the equivalent areas of DBC. The County Council would not object if the plan just records the fact that they are school playing fields, but would object if this would mean that they would be afforded protection.</p>	<p>The additional plan in the Tring section showing Open Space Provision by type will be removed to make it consistent with the other towns and villages. The Green Space Strategy will recommend that open space at schools be treated as Open Land in the context of Policies 9 and 116 in the Local Plan.</p>
<p>General Responses – many from the Dacorum Environmental Forum</p>	
<p>Litter is a problem in some wooded areas in Hemel Hempstead. Tough penalties for dropping litter and fly tipping need to be enforced.</p>	<p>Covered through Section One Policies and Objectives Action 18 Develop revised grounds maintenance standards and associated monitoring, to include removing graffiti and fly-tipping within agreed time limits. This to include liaison with Dacorum’s Enforcement section.</p>
<p>Would like to see a large increase in tree planting in open areas eg Warners End Valley.</p>	<p>Comment to be forwarded to the Trees and Woodlands Section.</p>
<p>Would warn against any perceived ‘open space excess’ in Dacorum. The great majority of Dacorum’s existing open spaces are currently well utilised and appreciated.</p>	<p>Dacorum has an undersupply of leisure space, a deficit of 45.469 hectares, when compared to Policy 73 of the Local Plan (2.8 hectares per 1000 people derived from the NPFA standard). This information from the Open Space Study will be added to the Green Space Strategy.</p>
<p>DEF prioritisation would differ from that used in the study 1 Protection from development 2 Nature conservation 3 Easy access to the countryside 4 Increase resident involvement 5 making people feel safe 6 improving quality 7 increase facilities</p>	<p>The order of the priorities within the Green Space Strategy reflects the views of the wider Dacorum community.</p>
<p>DEF concerned that new and/or improved play provision may disrupt wildlife, lead to unauthorised activities and light pollution.</p>	<p>Lighting is not normally provided at play facilities. If it is proposed, then the impact on wildlife will be evaluated through the planning process.</p>

<p>DEF concerned that Policy 1 Redevelopment of areas of open space which are of poor quality, design and integration is a route to facilitate leisure building development, parking, access roads and light pollution simply on the grounds that an open area is currently perceived as failing. Reasons for the failure of the area as an amenity for wildlife and or quiet enjoyment should instead be identified and addressed.</p>	<p>Policy 1 aims to protect green space from development. The redevelopment of poor quality areas will be considered to help address the deficit in leisure space highlighted in the Open Space Study. The impact of any proposed development on wildlife, amenity space or quiet enjoyment will be considered on a site by site basis and through the planning process.</p>
<p>Shared use of footpath, Shrubhill Common to Fields End Lane. This route is already used by walkers, joggers and dog walkers and illegally by cyclists and motorcyclists to the detriment of other users and Shrubhill LNR. We do not see the promotion of this route as contributing to sustainability in the sense of replacing car journeys by cycling.</p>	<p>Illegal use of the path by motorcyclists is a separate issue to permitting cycling along the Green Lane. Each completed link within the cycling strategy creates a more cohesive cycle network, which will encourage cycle use.</p>
<p>Gadebridge Park – reinstate the paddling pool but with a far more imaginative design</p>	<p>To be considered as part of HHNW action 1 undertake a master planning exercise for Gadebridge Park to secure significant long term improvements to its design, infrastructure and historic features.</p>
<p>The Water Gardens – main bad points are water quality (improvements at the weir at Gadebridge Park and faster and fuller flow will help); the poor grass edges caused by Canada Geese (a yearly cull needed); no benches under the pleached limes making them useless as a shady area to rest; fewer geese might lead to a more varied bird life.</p>	<p>Comments to be considered as part of the regeneration of the town centre through the Hemel 2020 programme.</p>
<p>Plough Gardens used to be a lovely entrance to the town. This is an area where formal bedding is best like the tulips and geranium beds used to be. Now there are just funereal beds. Re-instate the roses in a different place.</p>	<p>Enhancement of Plough Gardens to be addressed through the Urban Park project.</p>

<p>Tring Park is not restricted to longer walkers – it is available for short strolls and picnics though I agree that generally access is not good. There is access to part of the park from Hastoe Lane (near the junction with Hastoe Hill) and of course from Wigginton.</p>	<p>Reference will be made to Woodland Trust's plans to encourage more people to use the park through the development of a car park at Park Street.</p>
<p>Disappointed that area of Bunkers Park beyond Bunkers Lane not shown as accessible green space. Dispute with HCA over the approach to Bunkers Park must be resolved. Country Park sign at junction with Bedmond Road missing. HCA private land signs along access road indicate that use is an act of trespass. Provision of football pitches can only be seen as a necessary evil at Bunkers Park, in no way is it an enhancement.</p>	<p>Map to be amended. Proposed inclusion of football pitches on HCA's land adjacent to Bunkers Park to be determined through the Hemel 2020 initiatives.</p>
<p>More bio-diversity should be introduced into the parks etc by mowing some of the grass at longer intervals, also some wildflower gardens should be developed in order to bring in flying insects.</p>	<p>Agreed. Some areas are identified through the area action plans. Other biodiversity actions will be introduced as part of individual site management plans.</p>
<p>There are legal problems concerning the ownership of the Three Close Lane cemetery but this should not prevent the town assuming full financial responsibility for its upkeep.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
<p>No mention of tennis</p>	<p>Publically accessible tennis courts are included within the Outdoor Sports section of each settlement area. Overall provision and sports development issues relating to tennis are within the Outdoor Sports Facilities Assessment Report and Strategy & Action Plan.</p>
<p>Bovingdon would benefit from a safe footpath (or bridleway) link from the Brickworks sites to Ley Hill Common.</p>	<p>Agreed</p>

Bovingdon Parish Council	
<p>The Outdoors Committee met on 14 June and discussed the Green Space Strategy. They support the proposed intentions set out in the document for the village and would wish to be consulted on and involved in any forum, which is set up to take these suggestions forward.</p>	<p>Noted</p>
Environment Agency	
<p>The plan has incorporated a lot of previous consultation and strategy plans; for us the main one is the DEF nature conservation strategy. In this respect I am not sure how fundamentally we can influence this plan. However, I feel that they have considered the Ver, Bulbourne, Gade River Restoration Strategy well and is documented throughout the plan. Other relevant significant documents include the water framework directive and the Integrated Biodiversity Delivery Areas.</p>	<p>The Green Space Strategy supports the East of England Biodiversity Delivery Plan, this will be referenced within the document.</p>

<p>Policy 2 p.24 Nature Conservation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under Action 2, is there a commitment through the BAP to create x amount of new BAP habitat? It would be worthwhile including this as a reference target. • There are no action which address looking into connecting corridors i.e. Rivers / hedgerows which fall out of the other actions. We would recommend having an action looking at these 'green grid' type issues i.e. restoration and access. • Due to the recent inclusion of the Chilterns within the pilot integrated biodiversity delivery areas (IBDAs), we feel it should be referred to within the document and within Policy 2, there maybe some need to link to IBDAS for future works and funding, perhaps with specifically mention HLS schemes and adaptation to climate change. • As another driver, the water framework directive should be included as a reference to overall objectives for restoring the ecological status of water bodies within this area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Green Space Strategy has taken forward the BAP and Urban Nature Conservation Study's recommendations of enhancing, protecting and improving access to sites. There are targets for increasing the area of Local Nature Reserves (supporting the ANGSt standards) and managing wildlife sites (linked to NI 197). • The strategy focuses on green spaces within the public realm where actions can be delivered. • The Green Space Strategy supports the East of England Biodiversity Delivery Plan, this will be referenced within the document. • Noted.
<p>Berkhamsted and Northchurch</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Action 15: There is another river restoration plan action that could be included here depending on how far the boundary of Berkhamsted goes: B1 Bulbeggars Lane River floodplain restoration - floodplain scrapes. • The water framework objectives for the Bulbourne should also be linked here. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location to be checked as to whether within the scope of the Strategy. • The Water Framework Directive is a comprehensive and complex document. To aid delivery at a local level it would be helpful if the Environment Agency could include relevant objectives from the Directive in the Ver, Bulbourne, Gade River Restoration Strategy.
<p>Hemel Hempstead General</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under action 6 - also include objectives under WFD • Boxmoor - Bring Water Meadows into management • Also, under Gadebridge Park, put Restore original river channel to low point before "secure buffer zone and maintain periodic veg clearance" just to indicate relative level of importance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Water Framework Directive is a comprehensive and complex document. To aid delivery at a local level it would be helpful if the Environment Agency could include relevant objectives from the Directive in the Ver, Bulbourne, Gade River Restoration Strategy. • Agreed, to be considered as part of the Urban Park proposals. • Agreed

<p>Hemel Hempstead North West Under 6.4 Nature Conservation, Include a specific action for river restoration in the Water Gardens Also include objectives under WFD</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The future of the River Gade through the Water Gardens will require more detailed discussion by Dacorum Borough Council and the Environment Agency. In addition the Water Gardens have recently been listed by English Heritage on the Register of Parks and Special Gardens (Grade II). • The Water Framework Directive is a comprehensive and complex document. To aid delivery at a local level it would be helpful if the Environment Agency could include relevant objectives from the Directive in the Ver, Bulbourne, Gade River Restoration Strategy.
<p>South Hemel Include WFD objectives re water courses in this area.</p>	<p>The Water Framework Directive is a comprehensive and complex document. To aid delivery at a local level it would be helpful if the Environment Agency could include relevant objectives from the Directive in the Ver, Bulbourne, Gade River Restoration Strategy.</p>
<p>Bovingdon and Kings Langley Include WFD objectives for water bodies</p>	<p>The Water Framework Directive is a comprehensive and complex document. To aid delivery at a local level it would be helpful if the Environment Agency could include relevant objectives from the Directive in the Ver, Bulbourne, Gade River Restoration Strategy.</p>
<p>Markyate and Flamstead Include WFD objectives for water bodies</p>	<p>The Water Framework Directive is a comprehensive and complex document. To aid delivery at a local level it would be helpful if the Environment Agency could include relevant objectives from the Directive in the Ver, Bulbourne, Gade River Restoration Strategy.</p>

Appendix 1 Design Principles

Green space should be created in areas with natural surveillance. All new green space should have at least one active frontage. These frontages should provide an easy way to see into the space, to allow supervision and aid integration into the neighbourhood.

Landscaping and design should seek to integrate green space into nearby residential areas, with the objective of increasing usage and enhancing local residential and commercial properties. One of the easiest ways to achieve this is to continue the park's tree planting scheme into the nearby streets without a significant break or change of style.

The original Hemel Hempstead New Town incorporated broad green verges with informal tree planting into its streets, and new developments should retain this design concept, including opportunities for car-free transport.

Facilities, especially play areas, should be positioned to ensure good passive surveillance and to allow potential users to consider the facilities and those already present prior to arriving. Ideally these facilities should be located next to an active frontage or on a main through route or junction on the path network.

Where economically viable, catering opportunities should be considered for integration into the design. These should be sited in fairly close proximity to complementary green space features, such as play areas or areas for relaxation. The scale of catering should be designed to support and complement regular green space usage, and not be a destination in its own right. High quality catering helps to broaden the user profile and increases the presence of responsible adults.

Park furniture should be of a high standard and co-ordinated to create a consistent sense of place.

Green corridors should be introduced where they link popular destinations and provide a viable alternative transport route. These should be designed to allow reasonably flexible usage. Providing long distance strategic routes is an important but secondary consideration.

A diverse range of habitats should be enhanced and protected to preserve ecological processes and enable people to have contact with nature. All scale of wildlife habitats should be protected, from small ecological stepping stones to a continuous wildlife corridors, with particular regard to the enhancement corridors and zones identified in the Urban Nature Conservation Study (Herts Biological Records Centre, 2006).

Country parks and any new green spaces which border onto existing countryside should be designed to blend into the nearby landscape, where possible complementing its characteristic features. The planting schemes should be predominantly native species which reflect the local distribution as determined by geology and climate.

Country parks should contain footpaths accessible for those with limited mobility, which should allow exploration of the majority of the site. Parking should be included where these are intended to serve a wide area and reduce congestion at existing popular destinations.

Connections to open countryside and other recognised sites of wildlife value should be protected and enhanced with appropriate management where possible. Links to the wider countryside should be provided as a priority when considering the layout and design of green spaces on the urban fringe. Improvements to the adjacent public rights of way network should be considered as part of any scheme of additional public open space.

Development will seek to fulfil Dacorum's ambitions for green infrastructure through the delivery of the Green Infrastructure Strategy, providing enhanced wildlife and human corridors as a setting and framework for the town and its possible growth.

Appendix 2 Designations and Cultural Heritage

Sites of Special Scientific Interest – 8 covering 635 ha

Roughdown Common, Little Heath Pit, Oddy Hill and Tring Park, Tring Woodlands, Tring Reservoirs, Aldbury Nowers, Ashridge Common and Wood, Alpine Meadow

Local Nature Reserves – 3 Howe Grove Wood (8 ha), Shrubhill Common (11 ha) and Long Deans Local Nature Reserve

26 Scheduled Ancient Monuments

Two Barrows (Chipperfield Common), Little London Moated Site, Site of Royal Palace, Site of Dominican Priory, Romano Celtic Temple Wood Lane End, High Street Green Roman Barrow, Boxmoor House Roman Villa, Gadebridge Roman Villa, Marlin Chapel Farm Moated Site, Berkhamsted Motte and Bailey Castle, Site of roman Building, North of Berkhamsted Castle, Sections of Grims Ditch, Berkhamsted Common Romano-British Villa Dyke and Temple, Bowl Settlement and Earthworks on the Berkhamsted Common, Stool Baulk, Two Barrows at Bridgewater Monument, Bowls Barrow in Turlshanger Wood, Bowls Barrow in Aldbury Nowers Wood, Settlement North of St Mary's Church, Arkwick Deserted Medieval Village, Deserted Village of Tiscott, Charter Tower, Hemel Hempstead.

Registered Parks and Gardens

Markyate Cell (37 ha), Ashridge (577 ha) Tring Park (139 ha), Water Gardens.

Appendix 3 Evaluation Methodology

Priority 1 – Protect from development

The existing open spaces are protected from development by the Green Space Strategy Section One: Policies and Objectives, planning designations, emerging Core Strategy and Open Space Study. This is strengthened by the detailed examination through Section Two: Area Studies, which also provide an opportunity to identify and prioritise potential enhancements from planning gain.

Priority 2 – Improve quality

All significant and accessible green spaces have been evaluated using a broad ranging quality assessment based on the Green Flag Award scheme, the national standard for parks and open spaces in England and Wales. The sites were visually assessed using a maximum of sixteen criteria relevant to the function, size and context of the site. The average score was then used to group the sites into the following categories: Poor, Fair, Good, Very Good and Excellent, and identified actions collated.

Priority 3 – Increase facilities

Children and Young People

This evaluation first considers provision for children and young people. Facilities within the settlement were compared against the Local Plan standard, which reflects the NPFA six acre standard (revised to seven acres) which requires 2.8 Ha per 1000 head of population, and a maximum distance on foot of 400m to sports or play space. The plan also requires the NPFA minimum equipment standards for children's' play space be met by new developments. (Appendix 6, Written Statement, Dacorum Borough Local Plan 1991-2011). Outdoor Sports

The recommendations of the Outdoor Sport and Recreation Assessment, Strategy & Action Plan, 2006, are included for each settlement area.

Cycling

The impact of the improvements identified in the Dacorum Cycling Strategy on the green space network are considered for each settlement area.

Allotments

Allotment provision is evaluated using the findings of the Open Space Study, and the 0.25 ha per 1000 population level of provision recommended by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners.

Priority 4 - Nature conservation

All areas of designated nature conservation value within the settlement area have been identified to determine the extent of the resource, with actions to improve where appropriate. This section primarily focuses on the rarity and management of wildlife, access to it is considered through priority 7 - easy access to the countryside.

Priority 5 – Making people feel safe

The quality assessment under priority 2 included criteria on personal security in the park, enabling improvements to be identified. Section One: Policies and Objectives includes targets on people's perception of safety. Site specific management plans will also address this issue.

Priority 6 – Increase residents' involvement

The targets and actions for increasing residents' involvement are identified in the Green Space Strategy Policy 4 - to manage our green spaces with community involvement to ensure they are fit for purpose. Site specific management plans will also be used to generate local community involvement.

Priority 7 - Easy access to the countryside

Accessible Natural Green Space

The larger settlements of Hemel Hempstead, Berkhamsted and Tring were evaluated against Natural England's accessible natural green space standards (ANGSt). This assessment identifies the availability of natural green space at differing scales and distances for recreational benefit as follows:

- That there should be at least 1Ha of Local Nature Reserve per 1000 head of population
- That no person should live more than 300 m from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2 ha in size
- That there should be at least one accessible 20 ha site within 2km from home
- That there should be one accessible 100 ha site within 5 km
- That there should be one accessible 500 ha site within 10 km

For this analysis, natural green space includes both the original Natural England definition of areas naturally colonised by plants and managed features such as woodland plantations.

Landscape Quality and Recreation

The local landscape quality was assessed to provide an indication of the beauty of the local landscape and by implication the potential it offers for informal recreation and enjoyment.

Links to the Countryside

This section identifies the direct pedestrian links into the countryside, and to accessible sites within it.

Appendix 4 Field Assessment Form

Scoring line

0 1	2 3 4	5 6	7	8	9	10
Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Exceptional

Each criterion below should be marked out of 10 (see scoring line above) or marked N/A. Comments should be made to justify the marks given, outlining the strengths and weaknesses of the site, and where N/A is used an explanation must be given as to why a particular criterion does not apply.

Name of Site:		
Date:		
Assessment Criteria	Score	Comments, Strengths and Weaknesses (Justification for score given or the use of N/A)
Welcoming		
Good and safe access		
Signage		
Equal access for all		
Safe equipment and facilities		
Personal Security in the Park		

Dog Fouling		
Appropriate provision of facilities		
Quality of facilities		
Litter and waste management		
Grounds maintenance and horticulture		
Buildings and Infrastructure maintenance		
Arboriculture and Woodland Management		
Conservation of natural features, wild fauna, flora		
Conservation of Landscape Features		
Conservation of buildings and structures		
Any Other Comments, Action Points, Repairs, Long Term Improvements		

Appendix 5 Citizens Panel Questionnaire

Green Space Strategy

In Dacorum we aspire to protect and enhance the natural environment, heritage and habitats and to create attractive, sustainable, accessible and well managed green spaces which, with community involvement, are fit for purpose.

Q.2 How important are the following categories of open space to you? (Please tick ✓ one box on each line)				
	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important
1. Parks and public gardens	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
2. Natural greenspaces (Box Moor, Ashridge, wildlife areas such as Bunkers Park, Shrubhill Common)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
3. Green corridors (e.g. rivers & canals, Nickey Line, linked areas of green space that act as a route for people and/or wildlife)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
4. Outdoor sport facilities (public/ private sports pitches)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
5. Amenity greens (small green spaces within housing estates/ neighbourhoods)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
6. Spaces for Children and Young People (play areas, adventure playgrounds, kick about areas, school playing fields)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
7. Allotments	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
8. Cemeteries and churchyards	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

Q.3 Thinking about the last 12 months, about how frequently, if at all, have you used or visited the following open spaces in Dacorum? (Please tick ✓ one box on each line)							
	Not at all	Every day/ most days	Once or twice a week	2 or 3 times a month	Once a month	4 - 11 times	1 - 3 times
1. Parks and public gardens	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
2. Natural greenspaces (Box Moor, Ashridge, wildlife areas such as Bunkers Park, Shrubhill Common)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
3. Green corridors (e.g. rivers & canals, Nickey Line, linked areas of green space that act as a route for people and/or wildlife)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
4. Outdoor sport facilities (public/private sports pitches)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
5. Amenity greens (small green spaces within housing estates/neighbourhoods)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
6. Spaces for Children and Young People (play areas, adventure playgrounds, kick about areas, school playing fields)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
7. Allotments	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
8. Cemeteries and churchyards	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

Q.4 How do you rate the quality of the following categories of open space in Dacorum? (Please tick ✓ one box on each line)						
	Very good	Fairly good	Neither good nor poor	Fairly poor	Very poor	Don't know
1. Parks and public gardens	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
2. Natural greenspaces (Box Moor, Ashridge, wildlife areas such as Bunkers Park, Shrubhill Common)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
3. Green corridors (e.g. rivers & canals, Nickey Line, linked areas of green space that act as a route for people and/or wildlife)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
4. Outdoor sport facilities (public/ private sports pitches)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
5. Amenity greens (small green spaces within housing estates/ neighbourhoods)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
6. Spaces for Children and Young People (play areas, adventure playgrounds, kick about areas, school playing fields)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
7. Allotments	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
8. Cemeteries and churchyards	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
9. Green Space in your local area - overall	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

Q.5 What is your view on the quantity of the following categories of open space in Dacorum? (Please tick ✓ one box on each line)				
	Too many	About right	Not enough	Don't know
1. Parks and public gardens	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
2. Natural greenspaces (Box Moor, Ashridge, wildlife areas such as Bunkers Park, Shrubhill Common)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
3. Green corridors (e.g. rivers & canals, Nickey Line, linked areas of green space that act as a route for people and/or wildlife)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
4. Outdoor sport facilities (public/ private sports pitches)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
5. Amenity greens (small green spaces within housing estates/ neighbourhoods)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
6. Spaces for Children and Young People (play areas, adventure playgrounds, kick about areas, school playing fields)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
7. Allotments	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
8. Cemeteries and churchyards	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
9. Green Space in your local area - overall	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

The natural environment, heritage and habitats

Q.6 How important are the following to you? (Please tick ✓ one box on each line)				
	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important
1. Easy access to countryside in and around the towns and villages of Dacorum	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
2. The inclusion of wildlife areas and natural green spaces within your town/ village	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
3. The protection of all types of green spaces from future development	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
4. Protection and enhancement of Dacorum's historical features within the landscape (memorial garden in Tring, walled garden in Gadebridge Park)	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

Attractive, sustainable, accessible and well managed green spaces

Q.7 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about your local park? (Please tick ✓ one box on each line)					
	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion
1. My local park is an attractive and welcoming space	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
2. I do not feel safe when visiting my local park on my own	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
3. My local park is not very well maintained	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
4. My local park caters for all age groups	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
5. It is easy for me to get to my local park	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5

6. I feel proud of the parks and open spaces in my community	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
7. Local people should be more involved in the management of local parks and other open spaces	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
<p>8. If you think local people should be more involved in the management of local parks and open spaces, what kind of involvement would you like to see? (Please write details below)</p>					

Q.8 What is your local park?
(Please write in the park's name, if you know it, or a description of where it is if not)

Q.9 What, if anything, would encourage you to visit your local park more frequently?
(Please write below)

Q.10 Overall, how satisfied are you with the way the Council have managed, maintained and developed parks and open spaces in Dacorum? (Please tick ✓ one box)					
Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

Q.11 What do you think should be the main priorities for 'parks and open spaces' in Dacorum? (Please tick ✓ UP TO THREE boxes)	
Protect open space from development	<input type="checkbox"/> 1
Increase the amount of open space	<input type="checkbox"/> 2
Improve the quality of open space (e.g. appearance/ maintenance)	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Increase facilities (e.g. benches, public conveniences)	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Make people feel safer when visiting open spaces	<input type="checkbox"/> 5
Make it easier for people to visit open spaces	<input type="checkbox"/> 6
Increase involvement of local residents in the management of open spaces	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Nature conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> 8
Some other priority (please tick ✓ and write below)	<input type="checkbox"/> 9
Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/> 10

Q.12 Please use this space to tell us any other comments you have about 'green space' in Dacorum.
(Please write below)

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