

Stratford on Avon District Council
**PPG17 Audit and Playing Pitch
Strategy**

PPG17 Open Space, Sport and
Recreation Assessment

213981

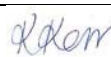

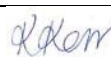




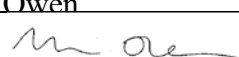

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Contents

	Page
Executive Summary	i
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the Assessment	1
1.2 Objectives of the Assessment	2
1.3 Vision for Open Space in Stratford on Avon	2
1.4 District Profile	4
2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance	8
2.1 Forecasting Future Needs	9
3 Scope and Approach	21
3.1 Open Space Typologies	21
3.2 Site Identification	23
3.3 Site Audits	26
3.4 Consultation	27
3.5 Audit Analysis and Methodology	35
4 Overarching Analysis: Greenspace	43
5 Parks and Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces	46
5.1 Introduction	46
5.2 Accessibility Assessment	46
5.3 Quantity Assessment	52
5.4 Quality Assessment	66
5.5 Summary of Spatial Distribution of Unmet Needs	85
5.6 Forecasting Future Need	86
5.7 Standards and Recommendations	89
6 Natural and Semi Natural Accessible Greenspace	94
6.1 Introduction	94
6.2 Accessibility Assessment	94
6.3 Quantity Assessment	105
6.4 Quality Assessment	113
6.5 Summary of Spatial Distribution of Unmet Needs	124
6.6 Forecasting Future Need	126
6.7 Standards and Recommendations	129
7 Provision for Children and Young People	134
7.1 Introduction	134

7.2	Accessibility Assessment	134
7.3	Quantity Assessment	144
7.4	Quality Assessment	155
7.5	Summary of Spatial Distribution of Unmet Needs	171
7.6	Standards and Recommendations	174
8	Outdoor Sport	179
8.1	Introduction	179
8.2	Accessibility Assessment	179
8.3	Quantity Assessment	197
8.4	Quality Assessment	205
8.5	Standards and Recommendations	211
9	Indoor Sport	217
9.1	Introduction	217
9.2	Accessibility Assessment	217
9.3	Identifying Quantitative Deficiencies and Surpluses	223
9.4	Forecasting Future Need	223
9.5	Standards and Recommendations	223
10	Allotments and Community Gardens	226
10.1	Introduction	226
10.2	Accessibility Assessment	226
10.3	Quantitative Assessment	231
10.4	Qualitative Assessment	237
10.5	Summary of Spatial Distribution of Unmet Needs	237
10.6	Forecasting Future Need	238
10.7	Standards and Recommendations	239
11	Community Facilities	241
11.1	Introduction	241
11.2	Accessibility Assessment	241
11.3	Quantitative Assessment	245
11.4	Qualitative Assessment	251
11.5	Summary of Spatial Distribution of Unmet Needs	252
11.6	Forecasting Future Need	253
11.7	Standards and Recommendations	255
12	Other Open Space	256
12.1	Introduction	256
12.2	Churchyards and Cemeteries	256
12.3	Green Corridors	257
12.4	Civic Spaces	259
12.5	Standards and Recommendations	260

Appendix A

Site Assessment Pro Forma

Appendix B

Consultation Material

Appendix C

Accessibility Standards Methodology

Appendix D

Quantity Standards Methodology

Appendix E

Quality Standards Methodology

Appendix F

Inventory of Sites

Appendix G

Quality Assessment Results

Appendix H

Indoor Sports Provision Maps

Executive Summary

Planning for open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities is now firmly part of the statutory planning process, and national guidance is clear that it should be an integral part of planning how a local authority area such as Stratford will grow and develop. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17) advises local authorities to draw up their own standards for open space, sports and recreation provision for inclusion within their Local Development Frameworks, and highlights that these standards need to be based on a locally based assessment of needs. Such assessments allow local authorities to identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of facilities in their areas. They form the starting point for establishing an effective strategy for open space, sport and recreation at the local level and for effective planning through the development of appropriate planning policies. Accompanying the PPG17 Audit is a Playing Pitch Strategy, which considers the supply and demand for a range of outdoor sports facilities in more depth.

The following open space, sport and recreation audit was undertaken as part of the preparation of the evidence base for Stratford District Council's Local Development Framework. The objectives of the study area to:

- Develop a vision for open space across the District, based on consultation feedback;
- Undertake a robust audit of open space, outdoor sport and recreational facilities across the District, classified in terms of their primary function and typology;
- Provide an understanding of residents' perceptions and needs in relation to open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities;
- Identify relative surpluses and deficiencies of open space in terms of the quantity, distribution and accessibility of existing facilities;
- Consider future open space requirements on the basis of likely population growth and trends in activity and participation;
- Undertake an assessment of the quality of open spaces and recreational facilities, to identify priorities for improvement;
- Develop design guidelines, policy recommendations and local standards that are drawn from local needs and aspirations and will provide a framework for future development; and
- Establish a robust evidence base to inform decisions on future development, planning applications and funding allocations.

The Audit has considered a range of typologies, including Parks and Gardens; Amenity Greenspaces; Natural Accessible Greenspace; facilities for children and young people; outdoor and indoor sport; allotments and community gardens; community facilities; and civic spaces. Throughout the Audit, the emphasis has been on open spaces and facilities that are freely accessible to the public, although consideration has been given to conditionally accessible amenities, access to which is controlled by conditions of entry such as entrance fees, opening hours or club membership.

The Assessment has been informed by a number of workstreams and information sources, including:

- A review of existing policy, legislation and best practice guidance;
- Extensive consultation with Stratford District Council officers, Parish Councils, Councillors, local communities, statutory bodies and key stakeholders;
- Baseline statistics;
- Key trends and drivers; and
- Site audits.

District wide quantitative standards for assessing the adequacy of existing provision and estimating likely future requirements have been proposed for the majority of open space typologies. Given the relatively rural nature of the District, where appropriate separate standards have also been established for the larger towns and villages within the District (those 600 population or more). In most instances the standards reflect existing levels of provision, which consultation with local communities and stakeholders revealed to be sufficient. The adoption of standards that reflect existing levels of provision will allow attention and resources to focus on areas of under supply whilst providing realistic targets for increasing provision to meet the needs of new communities and further population growth.

Quantitative Provision Standards	
Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces	
Accessibility Standard	10 minutes walking time / 480m effective catchment
Quantity Standard	1.15ha per 1,000 population
Quality Standard	All parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces to achieve a 'Fair' rating on the basis of the quality assessment criteria
Natural Accessible Greenspace	
Accessibility Standard	15 minutes walking time / 720m effective catchment Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements only: 300m effective catchment
Quantity Standard	District wide: 4.92ha per 1,000 population Category 1 Settlements: 5.24ha per 1,000 population Category 2&3 Settlements: 0.75ha per 1,000 population
Quality Standard	All natural greenspaces to achieve a 'Fair' rating on the basis of quality assessment criteria
Children and Young People's Facilities	
Accessibility Standard	Children: 5 minutes walking time / 240m effective catchment Young people: 15 minute walking time/ 720m effective catchment
Quantity Standard	0.25ha per 1,000 population (equipped play areas only)
Quality Standard	All children and young people's facilities to achieve a 'Fair' rating on the basis of quality assessment criteria

Outdoor Sport	
Accessibility Standard	Grass pitches: 15 minutes travel time / 720m walking/ 7.2km driving effective catchment Tennis & bowls: 20 minutes travel time / 980m walking / 9.8km driving effective catchment Athletics: 45 minutes travel time/ 21.6km driving effective catchment
Quantity Standard	Additional pitch/ facility requirements identified to meet existing and future requirements on the basis of Sport England's Playing Pitch Model
Quality Standard	Stratford District Council, together with local clubs and Parish Councils, should seek to improve the quality of the poorest outdoor sports facilities in the District, taking into account the location of existing deficits in provision where improvements to pitch carrying capacity would be most beneficial.
Indoor Sport	
Assessment of indoor sports requirements is based on Sport England's National Facilities Analysis Forecasts	
Allotments	
Accessibility Standard	District wide: 10 minutes travel time / 4.8km driving (district wide) / 480m walking (urban only) effective catchment
Quantity Standard	0.4ha per 1,000 population
Community facilities	
Accessibility Standard	District wide: 10 minutes travel time / 4.8km driving (district wide) / 480m walking (urban only) effective catchment
Quantity Standard	1.1 village hall per 1,000 population

The adequacy of existing open space, sport and recreational facilities has been considered on a District wide and Sub Area level basis. Across the District as a whole, the greatest requirements are for additional facilities for children and young people. There are also identified requirements for additional outdoor sports facilities to meet current demand, further details of which are provided in the Playing Pitch Strategy. There is also scope to increase allotment provision across the District, although this must be demand led.

Consideration of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities at the District level masks considerable variation in the supply and distribution of facilities at the Sub Area and individual settlement scale. Assessment of the supply of facilities in the Stratford upon Avon Sub Area has revealed that there is a deficit of supply across all typologies. Provision in Studley and Henley is similarly comparatively limited, with the exception of Natural Accessible Greenspace. With the exception of Wellesbourne and Kineton and Alcester and Bidford, all Sub Areas demonstrate a need to improve the provision of Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces, whilst the need to improve provision for children and young people is a pressing issue across all the Sub Areas.

Sub Area assessment of current supply against standards						
Typology	Alcester & Bidford	Shipston	Southam	Stratford upon Avon	Studley & Henley	Wellesbourne & Kineton
Parks, Gardens & Amenity Greenspaces	1.37ha / 1,000	1.14ha/ 1,000	0.81ha/ 1,000	1.06ha/ 1,000	0.87ha/ 1,000	1.73ha/ 1,000
Natural Accessible Greenspace	6.05ha/ 1,000	0.77ha/ 1,000	2.19ha/ 1,000	4.81ha/ 1,000	11.90ha/ 1,000	3.11ha/ 1,000
Children & Young People's facilities	0.07ha/ 1,000	0.10 ha/ 1,000	0.09 ha/ 1,000	0.03 ha/ 1,000	0.05 ha/ 1,000	0.13 ha/ 1,000
Outdoor Sport	Undersupply of junior rugby & cricket	Under supply of mini/ junior football, junior rugby, cricket & hockey pitches	Undersupply of mini football	Undersupply of junior & mini football and junior rugby pitches	Undersupply of rugby & junior football pitches	Undersupply of mini/ junior football & tennis courts
Allotments	0.32 ha/ 1,000	0.42 ha/ 1,000	0.51 ha/ 1,000	0.21 ha/ 1,000	0.33 ha/ 1,000	0.46 ha/ 1,000
Community Facilities	1.4/ 1,000	1.4/ 1,000	1.1/ 1,000	0.6/ 1,000	1.0/ 1,000	1.4/ 1,000

District wide assessment of current supply against standards	
District Wide	
Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces	Sufficient
Natural Accessible Greenspace	Sufficient
Children & Young People's facilities	Deficit
Outdoor Sport	District wide deficit of mini football and junior rugby pitches
Indoor Sport	Minor deficit of indoor halls & swimming pools
Allotments	Deficit
Community Facilities	Sufficient

In terms of improving existing levels of provision and ensuring adequate supply to meet future demand, there is evidence of potential within the District's existing resources to address current deficits. Open spaces with limited access – such as Registered Parks and Gardens, and natural accessible greenspaces access to which is currently restricted could for example be opened up more widely to the general public to improve access to local recreational opportunities. The potential to improve community access to school facilities is also significant. Where new development is proposed, policies should encourage provision that complements and enhances the existing pattern of supply and is sensitive to its wider context. Policies governing the provision of open space in new developments should be flexible enough to allow more creative and diverse forms of open space provision - such as community orchards, local nature reserves or allotments - that respond to local needs and make a positive contribution towards the quality and diversity of the local environment. Given the size of new developments in the District, there is potentially a need in certain circumstances to move away from small scale on site provision where this limits the amenity and recreational value of that provision, to consideration of pooled contributions or resources towards larger or shared community facilities; although care must be taken to ensure that the benefits of these facilities are felt by those communities living within or nearby new development. In those communities where no new development is proposed, mechanisms will still be required to deliver new recreational amenities where there is an identified need. In these instances, community initiatives will be an important delivery mechanism; Parish Councils, local land owners and residents will need to work together to identify and secure suitable sites and resources.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background to the Assessment

In a rural district such as Stratford on Avon residents and communities have relatively easy access to open countryside. However, people also need high quality greenspaces that are attractive to users, well maintained and located within easy access of where they live. A network of well designed, well maintained open spaces, outdoor sports and recreational facilities is vital to the success of the District as a place where people want to live, work and visit.

Planning for open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities is now firmly part of the statutory planning process and national guidance is clear that it should be an integral part of planning how the District as a whole will develop. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17) advises local authorities to draw up their own standards for open space, sports and recreation provision for inclusion within their Local Development Frameworks, and highlights that these standards need to be based on a locally based assessment of needs. Such assessments allow local authorities to identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of facilities in their areas. They form the starting point for establishing an effective strategy for open space, sport and recreation at the local level and for effective planning through the development of appropriate planning policies.

This assessment has been undertaken in the context of the preparation of Stratford on Avon District's Local Development Framework and the need to provide a robust evidence base for policies relating to open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities. Alongside the Audit, Arup are also producing a Playing Pitch Strategy, which will look more specifically at the provision of sports facilities in the district.

This assessment contributes to the evidence base of the Local Development Framework (LDF) by providing:

- A robust audit of open space, outdoor sport and recreational facilities within the District, classified in terms of their primary function and typology;
- An understanding of residents' perceptions and needs in relation to open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities;
- An understanding of any features or actions that might improve residents' enjoyment of open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities and encourage increased usage;
- Analysis of the spatial distribution of open spaces and facilities across the District;
- Assessment of the accessibility of open spaces and facilities in the District by a range of modes;
- Analysis of areas of deficiency in terms of quantity, distribution and accessibility; and
- Assessment of the quality of open spaces and recreational facilities in order to identify priorities for improvement.

1.2 Objectives of the Assessment

This Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment seeks to provide the necessary information to support policies to protect and secure the existing open space network and its intrinsic values, while improving the quality and potential uses of open spaces to cater for any potential future demand arising from growth and the changing needs of the community.

An integrated and strategic approach to open space, outdoor sports and recreational facility planning is essential to safeguard the quality of life of the District's residents. This study provides an assessment of existing and future needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities, through a comprehensive audit of open space across the District and consultation with the District's local communities and open space users, leading ultimately to the development of standards for the provision and quality of open spaces across the District.

On the basis of the above, the objectives of the assessment are to provide:

- A robust and sound evidence base to inform the emerging Core Strategy and forthcoming Open Space and Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document;
- Local standards that are drawn from local needs and aspirations;
- An up to date assessment of local deficiency and surplus;
- A case for protecting existing provision for open space, leisure and recreation;
- A guide to the prioritisation of facilities, funding decisions and in particular developer contributions; and
- Robust evidence to inform decisions on future development, planning applications and funding allocations.

The recommendations of this study should be taken forward and developed by the Council into policies for open space, sport and recreational facilities.

1.3 Vision for Open Space in Stratford on Avon

A vision for Open Space in Stratford on Avon has been developed, incorporating existing visions from relevant plans and strategies (such as the Sustainable Communities Strategy), key trends and best practice in open space provision, and local consultation feedback. The vision will be used as a benchmark for reviewing and analysing existing provision, and to inform the setting of new standards, recommendations and policies.

Vision for Open Space in Stratford on Avon

To encourage the development of a well connected and integrated network of open spaces, sporting and recreational facilities that make the best possible contribution towards a broad range of policy objectives, including:

- Biodiversity and wildlife
- Culture and heritage
- The local economy, including tourism
- Community, health and wellbeing
- Climate change adaptation and mitigation

To maximise the value and usefulness of existing facilities by exploring their potential to become multifunctional local amenities that provide an improved range of activities for all members of the community, particularly in rural areas where there is greater dependence on a sole facility.

To improve awareness of and participation in sporting and leisure activities amongst all members of the community, in particular by addressing issues of accessibility such as cost, social exclusion and design.

To improve the use and enjoyment of the District's natural assets, rich rural character and countryside by ensuring that they are accessible to local communities.

To enhance the diversity and quality of facilities available to young people; ensuring that they have improved access to existing facilities, such as football pitches, tennis courts and skate board ramps.

To explore new and imaginative ways of providing 'value added' open spaces that are exciting and attractive to local communities; that encourage them to actively engage with the natural environment for the purpose of health and wellbeing, education and social inclusion.

To uphold high standards of cleanliness and maintenance of open spaces that support the District's appeal to visitors and tourists, whilst maximising the value and enjoyment of facilities by local residents.

To future proof the supply of open space facilities in the district by protecting existing amenities, compensating for their loss in an appropriate manner and making adequate provision for future generations.

To explore innovative and new ways of delivering open spaces, sport and recreational facilities by identifying alternative funding streams and encouraging grass roots initiatives amongst members of the local community.

1.4 District Profile

1.4.1 Character Profile

Stratford on Avon is one of the largest districts in England. It covers a total of 979 square kilometres and is home to a population of 118,866 (Warwickshire Observatory, 2010) – the third largest population in Warwickshire. The District has a distinctly rural character and this is reflected in the fact that 80% of its residents live outside the main town of Stratford on Avon; nearly 45% of residents live in parishes with a population of less than 3,000. The District's low population density (122 per square kilometre) presents challenges for the delivery of and access to services by local residents.

Various towns outside the District have a strong influence over how some parts of the District function - in particular Royal Leamington Spa, Banbury, Redditch and Solihull, all of which have large shopping centres, a range of leisure facilities and a variety of employment opportunities. Within the District itself, Stratford on Avon also attracts visitors from the surrounding areas and further afield; around 5.5 million visitors visit the district annually.

The predominantly rural nature of the District means that many households and activities are heavily reliant on private transport. The difficulty of operating viable bus services in a dispersed rural area means that getting to shops, services and jobs is largely dependent on having a car. This situation means that the rural market towns and similar centres in the District play an important role as a focus for local shops and services.

1.4.2 Socio-Economic Profile¹

Demography

- The District has seen a large percentage increase in population over the past 5 years - an increase of 5,800 people (5.1%); the second largest percentage increase in the County.
- However, the population increase masks some variations across the District; Stratford on Avon for example has seen a 17.5% increase whilst Studley's population has decreased by 2.5% over the past six years
- Stratford District has a relatively old population when compared with the West Midlands and England; 50.5% of its population are aged 45 or over compared with 41.5% in England and 42.1% in the West Midlands.
- Stratford on Avon has the highest proportion of those of retirement age; 24.2% compared to the Warwickshire average of 20.8%. The District is heavily under-represented in the 15-19 to the 35-39 age groups and over-represented in all the age groups above 50 years. The area's working age population

¹ Data Sources:

Warwickshire Observatory, September 2009, Stratford on Avon District Profile.
ONS, 2010, 2009 Mid Year Population Estimates
ONS, 2010, 2008-based Sub-national Population Projections Population Projections
ONS 2001 Census
The Information Centre for Health and Social Care
The National Child Measurement Programme 2007/8.

(57.1%) is also below the national average (61.9%) and the West Midlands average (61.6 %).

- 20% (24,028) of the District's population is aged 2-19 years. The distribution of children and young people is relatively even across the District, with no Sub Areas demonstrating a particularly high concentration of younger age groups.
- According to the 2007 ethnicity estimates, over 96% of the District's population is classed as White British, White Irish or Other White. Stratford on Avon has the lowest proportion of those who are of Asian or Asian British ethnic origin in Warwickshire; 1.5% compared to the regional average of 8.4.

Population Projections

- According to population growth based estimates, Stratford on Avon District is projected to experience substantial growth over the next 20 years. Its population is forecast to increase by 22.6% between 2008 and 2033. Some 5,600 people will be added to the population by 2013, a further 11,500 by 2023, and another 9,700 by 2033.
- The highest rates of population growth are in the age groups 65 years and over. The rate of growth these older ages increases with age, with the eldest age group, those aged 85 and over, projected to increase by over 230% between 2008 and 2033, as set out in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Population Growth 2008-2033

Age Group	Percentage change 2008 to 2033		
	Stratford on Avon	Warwickshire	England
0-4	4.8%	7.7%	8.7%
5-14	13.1%	14.1%	15.8%
15-29	8.1%	5.3%	6.3%
30-49	1.5%	5.4%	8.0%
50-64	4.9%	5.7%	8.9%
65-74	59.4%	54.1%	51.3%
75-84	86.3%	70.1%	53.1%
85+	232.3%	194.2%	148.6%
All ages	22.6%	19.1%	18.0%

Housing

- A large proportion of houses in the district are detached (38.3%) compared to the county (28.8%). The district has a relatively low proportion of flats (7.3% compared to 9.1% in Warwickshire).
- Housing growth targets for the District up to 2023 are currently being developed.

Economic

- While average household income is above average, at £36,200 against the national average of £32,400 (2006), this is somewhat distorted by a small proportion of extremely wealthy households. It is significant that 27% of households have an average income of less than £20,000 per annum.
- Stratford District and some of its neighbouring areas are amongst the most economically productive in the West Midlands. However, the District has experienced low economic growth in recent years, even before the current recession, with increases in jobs and earnings failing to keep pace with national trends.
- Unemployment rates fell consistently throughout the mid and late 1990s. Although this reduction has levelled off since 2001, the current rate of 2.2% (December 2009) is however well below the national and regional situation (4.1% and 5.3% respectively).
- Culture and tourism play a significant role in the District. Millions of tourists visit Stratford every year from all around the world, and over 17% of jobs in the District rely on their presence.

Deprivation

- Stratford on Avon District as a whole is one of the least deprived authorities; it is ranked as the 305th least deprived local authority district out of 354. The highest ranking Super Output Area (SOA) is in Alcester, ranked 11,638 (out of 32,482 nationally) and 57th within Warwickshire (out of 333).
- However, Stratford on Avon does feature as deprived in other areas of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). In particular, the District has 33 SOAs in the top 30% most deprived nationally in terms of barriers to housing and services, and 40 SOAs in the top 30% most deprived in terms of geographical barriers.
- Stratford on Avon District has traditionally had the lowest Job-Seekers Allowance (JSA) claimant rate in the County and one of the lowest rates across the West Midlands Region's Local Authorities.

Health and Wellbeing

- The health of the people of Stratford on Avon is generally better than the England average. Life expectancy for both males and females is above the Warwickshire and England average. Using Years of Life Lost (YLL) as an indicator of premature mortality, Stratford on Avon has the lowest number of years lost compared to the rest of Warwickshire.
- A higher than average proportion (69%) of people engage in at least 30 minutes or more of physical activity three or more times per week compared to the Warwickshire average of 62%. Adult obesity levels are estimated to be the second lowest in the County, although they are comparable with the national average of 23.6%.
- In Stratford on Avon, just over 6% more children are obese in year 6 compared with reception age children, which is below the county average of around 10-12%. However, this represents an increase from the percentage recorded at reception level.

Transport and Access

- The predominantly rural nature of the District means that many households and activities are heavily reliant on private transport; the proportion of households with more than one car is significantly higher than the county and national situation. Relatively few people car share or use public transport to get to work; the most popular method of travel to work is driving a car (65%).
- The M40 cuts across the District, although there is not a major junction within the area. Junction 15 at Longbridge, just outside Warwick, is about six miles to the north-east of Stratford on Avon. The other strategic route is the A46(T) which crosses the District between Evesham and Warwick and forms the northern bypass to Stratford town.
- The Chiltern railway line, which runs between Birmingham and London Marylebone, passes through Stratford District. There are no stations within the District itself, although those at Warwick Parkway, Leamington Spa and Banbury are all relatively accessible to local residents. The Shakespeare line between Birmingham and Stratford on Avon provides an important service for shoppers, tourists and students.

Environment

- Most of the District to the north of Stratford on Avon lies within the West Midlands Green Belt. The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty extends into the southern fringes of the District. The countryside supports a wide range of active and passive recreation pursuits, including an extensive rights of way network, golf courses and equestrian activities. The Burton Dassett Country Park is a popular local destination.
- There is a wide range of valuable ecological sites across the District, with nearly forty Sites of Special Scientific Interest and four Local Nature Reserves. Changing agricultural practices, new development, and climate change are however putting increasing pressure on valuable habitats, which must be protected from gradual deterioration.
- The District has been badly affected by recent flood events, most notably at Easter 1998 and July 2007. These caused considerable damage to property and put lives at risk. Environment Agency maps illustrate that a significant amount of land within the District is subject to flood risk.

2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

Parks, open spaces and recreational facilities are planned for, managed and maintained by a variety of agencies operating in a complex legislative and policy context. Further to this, there are a range of documents that offer assistance in developing open space, sports and recreational policies into practical delivery and implementation strategies. A review of the key planning policies and best practice guidance that will directly influence the Stratford PPG17 Audit and Playing Pitch Strategy has been undertaken. Regional and local studies and strategies have also been reviewed to identify their implications for both the Audit methodology and baseline analysis.

A summary of the key points from this review can be found below. The full review can be found in the accompanying Working Paper.

- Opportunities and facilities for open spaces, sport and recreation **underpin people's quality of life**. Well designed and implemented planning policies for open space, sport and recreation are **fundamental to delivering broader Government objectives**;
- This study is undertaken in the context of Government policy on the **need for a local approach to setting open space policies and standards** (PPG17), and the **need for evidence based policy and decision making at a local level** (PPS12);
- The proposed new planning policy statement, **Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment** marks an important progression in national policy thinking around the natural environment and recreational and sporting facilities. The document, in final form would replace PPG17, and thereby form the core policy framework for this assessment.
- The standards and recommendations arising from this study will form **the basis of planning policies** to be developed through the LDF and will underpin development control decisions and **negotiation of developer contributions**;
- The methodology for this Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment applies the **five key attributes outlined in the Companion Guidance** (accessibility, quality, multi-functionality, primary purpose and quantity) adopting both a qualitative and quantitative approach to the audit of sites in Stratford on Avon;
- The current Stratford on Avon District Council Local Plan Review 1996-2011 contains saved policies setting local standard for some forms of open space, outdoor sport and children's play, which are supported by the Authority's Supplementary Planning Guidance 'Provision of Open Space.' A significant part of this assessment will be a **review of the current standards in the context of the five key attributes of open space**;
- The assessment methodology reflects the emphasis in PPG17 on the need to assess the quality, range of provision and accessibility of open space and recreational facilities in addition to overall quantities of provision in order to **identify potential barriers to usage**;

- Government policy encourages local authorities to consider open spaces as part of a **continuous network of open space** and to treat the open space network as an integrated system;
- PPS12 states that all evidence should derive from the participation of the local community as well as other key stakeholders who have a stake in the future of the area. Within this assessment we have **sought to consult widely with a range of stakeholders** as part of informing the evidence base and subsequent setting of open space standards. This is also consistent with CABE guidance which suggests that the **analysis of demand is based on demographic analysis and stakeholder consultation**;
- A review of open spaces within the District which was undertaken by Stratford on Avon District Council in 2005 identified a **deficiency of open space in Stratford town and most of the Main Rural Centres**.

As part of the review of legislation, policy and guidance, existing policies and standards for open space in Stratford on Avon were considered with Council Officers. Key findings from this review are also set out in the Working Paper.

2.1 Forecasting Future Needs

2.1.1 Population Change

Estimates of future open space requirements have been calculated for three population growth scenarios up to 2023 (Table 2.1). Two of the scenarios are based upon housing led growth, and the third reflects demand led population growth².

Table 2.1 Population Growth Scenarios up to 2023

Growth Scenario	% growth 2009-2023	Total Population 2023	Additional Population
Policy constrained low growth (based on 280 new dwellings per annum)	6%	12,6200	7,334
Policy constrained medium growth (based on 375 new dwellings per annum)	8%	12,9000	10,134
Trend-based demand-led growth (based on ONS population projections):	12%	13,5800	16,934

² It should be noted however that these figures do not represent a commitment by the District Council to a specific level of housing growth in the District, and are solely to allow an assessment of the possible level of future provision.

2.1.2 Key Trends and Drivers

The PPG17 Companion Guide recommends that when forecasting future needs for open space, existing needs cannot necessarily simply be projected forward in proportion to anticipated population change. There is instead a need to consider other trends, influences and factors that may impact on existing levels of participation, the type of open space provided, and the overall quantity.

The following section summarises some key trends and drivers that may impact on the nature and quantity of open space provision in the future.

Social Benefits

The social benefit of local green space is well documented. A report to Defra and CLG³ groups the most significant social benefits of green space into three broad categories:

- Improvements in levels of physical activity and health - The role of accessible green space to wider health agendas and the drive to increase the amount of time people exercise.
- Promotion of psychological health and mental well-being - There is strong evidence to suggest that green spaces have a beneficial impact on mental well-being and cognitive function through both physical access and usage, as well as through access to views.
- Facilitation of social interaction, inclusion and community cohesion - Access to and engagement with green space can play a significant role in community well-being. It can help bring people together, engaging individuals from different social groupings that may not normally interact together and it can provide a venue for community events. Green space has been found to have a particularly important role in fostering social capital and tackling social exclusion.

Maximising Economic Value

Open space, sport and recreation facilities play an important role in the success of local economies through a number of influences. Research into the economic role of the environment has revealed a number of key messages:

- The quality of the green environment can generate a range of jobs such as tourism, agriculture, maintenance and improvement work and local 'green' enterprises.
- Green infrastructure can mitigate and alleviate the effects of climate change and pollution, reduce the impact of flooding, and improve public health, civic pride and educational opportunities – all of which have a clear positive economic impact.
- Environmental attractiveness draws in investment and jobs and enhances the value of property.
- Workers with access to green infrastructure are healthier and more productive, and green infrastructure is vital to sectors such as tourism, agriculture and local sustainable enterprises.

³ Forest Research, 2010. Benefits of Green Infrastructure. Report to Defra and CLG. Forest Research, Farnham.

- Footpaths, cycle paths and bridleways enable healthy, low-cost recreation.

Thinking about the economic benefits of open space is particularly important in the current economic climate, where securing investment and long term viability is fundamental.

Natural England's report *No Charge? Valuing the Natural Environment* (2009) found that investment in the natural environment is critical to long-term economic prosperity, and that natural services provide a highly cost-effective solution to growing problems like flood and coastal defence, carbon emissions, and the preservation of soil, water and air quality. Research shows that the economic value of nature now runs to billions of pounds in the UK, and that there are major savings to be made through looking after it.

Increasing participation in sport and recreation activities

There is a national drive to increase participation in sporting activities that is linked to the promotion of healthy lifestyles and advent of the Olympic and Paralympics Games coming to the UK in 2012, which has helped raise the profile of sport and physical activity. Much of the current drive to increase participation in sport is focused around the legacy of the Olympic Games 2012. Participation will form an important consideration to the study when assessing the adequacy of the existing sporting facilities provision, and when considering issues of access to sporting facilities.

The Department for Culture, Media and Sport are responsible for Government policy on sport. The Department advise Ministers, drive forward sport sector programmes and projects, and work with the sports delivery non-departmental public bodies. These include Sport England, which invests money in grassroots projects to increase and sustain participation in sport and UK Sport, which is responsible for developing high performance sport in the UK and also for bringing major events to the UK through its World Class Events Programme.

Sport England is focused on the "*creation of a world-leading community sport system.*" Sport England work with UK Sport, which has responsibility for elite success, and the Youth Sport Trust, which is focused on PE and school sport. Accountable to Parliament through the DCMS, Sport England has an important role in protecting sports provision as a statutory consultee on planning applications that affect playing fields. As part of the Olympic legacy target, the Department requires Sport England to deliver an additional one million people doing at least 30 minutes of sport three times a week by March 2013.

For the period 2005-06 to 2007-08 the Department had a target to increase participation in cultural and sporting opportunities by 3 per cent amongst 'priority groups' – women; people from black and minority ethnic communities; people with a limiting disability; and those in lower socio-economic groups. The Department did not meet its target and participation amongst priority groups increased by between 0.1 and 1.8 per cent. In 2008, Sport England set a new target to increase by one million the number of people doing moderate intensity sport for at least 30 minutes three times a week. The Department also has a Public Service Agreement target to increase the number of adults who participate in two or more different cultural or sport sectors by 2 per cent by March 2011. It expects Sport England (through the one million target) to contribute to the Public Service Agreement target and to the Department's Olympic Legacy target to increase by two million the number of people taking part in sport and physical

activity by 2013. Whilst overall adult participation in sport over the three year period to March 2008 increased by 520,000, the Department did not meet its targets to increase participation in sport and physical activity amongst priority groups.

Sport England is an active promoter of increasing participation in sport and understanding barriers to participation. Sport England emphasise the importance of understanding what drives participation and why some people, particularly harder to reach groups, do not take part in sport and physical activity and the public interventions that can successfully reduce barriers.

Sport England has recently clarified its primary role; to grow, sustain and excel participation in community sport in the Sport England Strategy. Its ambition is to get more people playing and enjoying sport and to help talented people progress. It seeks to achieve this through working closely with national governing bodies of sport and building strong partnerships with local authorities. The Strategy commits Sport England to deliver the following targets:

- One million people doing more sport;
- A 25% reduction in the number of 16-18year olds who drop out of five key sports;
- Improved talent development systems in at least 25 sports;
- A measurable increase in people's satisfaction with their experience; and
- A major contribution to the delivery of the five hour sports offer for children and young people.

Local authorities and Parish Councils have traditionally provided the bulk of sports facilities – especially recreation ground, school playing fields, swimming pools, leisure centres and village halls.⁴ In addition, local authorities play an important role in subsidising access to these facilities. Clearly, there are now a range of private organisations providing sports and leisure facilities, which are typically at a higher expense to users.

The Sport England Active People Surveys undertaken between October 2008 and October 2009 provided the following results for Stratford District:

- 22.7% of the population take part on at least 3 days a week in moderate intensity sport and active recreation. This is above the 21.6% average for England;
- 5.7% of the population volunteer to support sport for at least one hour a week. This is one percentage point above the England average of 4.7%;
- 23.8% of the population are a member of a club particularly so that they can participate in sport or recreational activity in the last 4 weeks. This is slightly below the England average which stands at 24.1%;
- 19.4% of the population have received tuition from an instructor or coach to improve performance in any sport or recreational activity in the last 12 months. This is higher than the figure for England of 17.5%;

⁴ Sport England, 2004. Driving up Participation: The Challenge for Sport.

- 19.4% of the population have taken part in any organised competition in any sport or recreational activity in the last 12 month. This is considerably above the figure for England of 14.4%; and
- 70.6% of adults are very or fairly satisfied with sports provision in their local area, the England average is 68.4%.

At a local level the Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sports Partnership (CSW Sport) is an established regional agency, made up of local bodies including Stratford on Avon District Council, who have formally committed to working together and contributing to developing sport and active recreation for people throughout the area. It is one of six sub regional County Sports Partnerships within the West Midlands and one of forty-nine across England. The CSW Sport have published a ***Sport and Physical Activity Partnership Strategy 2009-2012***, which sets out headlines that it will aim to achieve over this time period. Stratford on Avon District is part of the Partnership. The headlines include the aims of:

- Growing and retaining participation in sport, physical activity and active recreation; and
- Growing infrastructure for sport with a focus on improving access and quality of facilities

The Partnership have set increasing participation as one of their five strategic themes and aim to develop pathways for young people, through supporting high quality clubs and other delivery authorities. Through working with the CSW Sport Partnership, Stratford District Council was able to access various funds to invest in community sports and promote increased participation.

Increasing participation in Stratford on Avon

There are a number of national and local programmes and initiatives which seek to increase participation at grassroots level in sport, improve access to play facilities, and increase participation in a range of activities in the natural environment. These may influence demand for facilities in the future and should therefore be considered, albeit in a qualitative way, when forecasting emerging demand.

Details of country wide initiatives that may either encourage participation or provide funding opportunities for improving the provision of local facilities in the future can be found below:

- Andy Fanshaw Memorial Trust – trust allowing disadvantaged children to experience the great outdoors;
- Cash4Clubs – provides grants for community sports clubs;
- The Dickie Bird Foundation – provides grants for the cost of children's clothing and equipment for a variety of sports;
- The Football Foundation – delivers a programme of new and improved community sports facilities and funds projects that increase participation in football and other sports;

- The Hockey Foundation - encourages the development and growth of hockey by providing capital and operational funding to the sport through clubs and educational establishments;
- UK Sport - supports the UK's top sportsmen and women to train and compete against the best athletes in the world;
- Government Physical Education and Sport Strategy for Young People, Youth Sport Trust - improves the PE experience in schools to engage those not currently engaged; supports sports colleges and academies, widen the opportunity for young people to compete within, and between, schools; and work with schools and National Governing Bodies of Sport to establish new clubs on schools sites;
- Natural England Access to Nature grant scheme - £25 million grant scheme to encourage people from all backgrounds to understand, access and enjoy the natural environment;
- Community Spaces - £57.5 million open grants programme to help community groups create or improve green, open spaces to enhance people's quality of life;
- MAGIC - makes use of standard GIS tools to allow people to view and query information on key environmental schemes and designations; and
- National Society of Allotments and Leisure Gardeners - protects, promotes and preserves allotment gardening. Aims to help all to enjoy the recreation of allotment and leisure gardening, and thus to promote their education and community fellowship.

There are also a number of initiatives at the local or regional level which seek to provide opportunities for people to participate in sport and physical activity, as set out below:

- Warwickshire County Council Playbuilders - funding to develop new play provision and embed child-friendly space within plans and frameworks;
- Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sport - physical activity small grants scheme;
- West Midlands Moving Together – host a range of sporting activities associated with the 2012 Olympic Games; and
- Coventry and Warwickshire 2012 Partnership – host a variety of activities using 2012 Games as a catalyst to increase participation.

There is a wealth of initiatives aimed at encouraging more people to participate in sport, children's play, and activities in the natural environment which we can assume will increase the number of active participants in the District. A number of the initiatives are associated with the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and it is reasonable to expect a surge in demand for sports facilities in the immediate run up to the Games, however the longer term impact of these initiatives is difficult to predict. The majority of these initiatives are aimed at children so it can be expected that any increase in participation will be seen most strongly in this age group.

Additionally, older people are increasingly aware of the benefits of physical activity and there is a general desire to stay fit, healthy and happy for as long as possible. This is particularly the case in Stratford upon Avon where there is a

significant existing population of independent older people with relatively active lifestyles. Although there is evidence to suggest that uptake of this age group in sporting activities nationally is slowly increasing, their overall level of involvement is relatively low. Generally, the type of physical activities that individuals are likely to want to engage in as they get older shifts from competitive contact and organised team sports to other forms of physical recreation activities such as bowls, walking and swimming. This national trend, combined with the District's forecast increase in the older population is likely to result in an increased demand for parks, bowling greens and swimming pools. Stratford District Council is already running several initiatives aimed at targeting those aged over 45, including:

- 'Get Active' drop in activity sessions (indoor sports such as table tennis and badminton);
- 'Set the Pace' free guided health walks;
- 'Go Green' a green exercise programme centred around the concept of a green gym whereby physical activity (such as gardening) is taken in the natural environment in a structured and regular manner. The project includes the development of a shared allotment plot; and
- Water exercise at Shipston, Studley and Southam Leisure Centres.

Ecosystem Services

Green infrastructure can offer a response to a range of issues around energy, waste, climate change, water, demographics, urbanisation, food and poverty. Green infrastructure can serve as a critical link between land conservation and land development, considering both sides, their values and synergies within the process of open space planning and growth management.

'Multifunctionality' is central to the ecosystem concept and approach. It refers to the potential for green infrastructure to have a range of functions, to deliver a broad range of ecosystem services. Multifunctionality can apply to individual sites and routes, but it is when the sites and links are taken together that they achieve a fully multifunctional open space network.

The concept of ecosystem services has been developed to aid our understanding of the human use and management of natural resources. The concept recognises that health and wellbeing depends on the services provided by ecosystems and their components: water, soil, nutrients and organisms⁵. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment provides the most comprehensive assessment of the state of the global environment to date; it classifies ecosystem services as follows:

- **Supporting services:** the services that are necessary for the production of all other ecosystem services including soil formation, photosynthesis, primary production, nutrient cycling and water cycling.
- **Provisioning services:** the products obtained from ecosystems, including food, fibre, fuel, genetic resources, biochemicals, ornamental resources and fresh water.

⁵ Defra, 2010. Ecosystem Services: living within environmental limits.

- **Regulation services:** the benefits obtained from the regulation of ecosystem processes, including air quality regulation, climate regulation, water regulation, erosion regulation and flood defence.
- **Cultural services:** the non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems through spiritual enrichment, cognitive development, reflection, recreation and aesthetic experiences- thereby taking account of landscape values.

In terms of applying this approach to the PPG17 Assessment, Natural Accessible Greenspaces will provide opportunities for:

- Improving and maximising greenspaces that provide practical functions to local people; and
- Incorporating a multi-functional approach the setting of standards to encourage higher quality and purposeful provision of green space.

Climate Change

The potential global and local impacts of climate change continue to be explored and debated. In respect of open space it is important that links to the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts are acknowledged. Impacts on Green Infrastructure resulting from climate change include:

- Warmer temperatures may increase the demand for urban green spaces as people enjoy a more outdoors lifestyle and green areas offer a lower temperature and shaded environment.
- Increased temperatures, together with less rainfall, could increase the water demand for irrigating green space.
- Grass productivity is reduced in hotter, drier summers.
- Changes in air quality associated with climate change will impact on the vitality of urban trees and green spaces. Plants may have reduced growth and productivity, and certain crop plants can be damaged at low concentrations of ozone.
- Tree health is a function of air pollution concentrations and water stress.
- Drier summers may make natural woodlands more susceptible to insect pests, disease and windthrow.
- More intense winter rainfall could increase soil erosion especially where there is no vegetation cover.

Greenspaces also play an important role in the mitigation of climate change impacts, including:

- Carbon storage and sequestration;
- Fossil fuel substitution and the production of bio-fuels;
- Local and organic food production; and
- Green infrastructure and reducing the need to travel by car.

Research undertaken by the Centre for Urban and Regional Ecology⁶ has established that the creative use of greenspace is also a vital climate change adaptation strategy. The research recommends that *“it is significant that greenspace provides multifunctional benefits, for example by enhancing human health and providing habitats for flora and fauna. Conserving and where possible enhancing greenspace areas must therefore be encouraged. However, it is important that greenspace provision is carefully planned. There is a need for a more strategic approach to be taken to the planning and development of greenspace areas. For example, it is vital that areas such as schools, hospitals, high density residential areas and urban cores are furnished with adequate greenspace cover. It is clear, therefore, that in the same way in which the spatial planning system has a key role to play in addressing flood risk problems, planning can also aid the development of climate change adaptation measures based around greenspace resources.”*

Opportunities for adaptation to climate change which should be reflected in the provision of open space include:

- Even modest increases in tree canopy cover can significantly reduce the urban heat island effect via evapotranspiration and shading, as well as improving air quality, which often suffers because of higher temperatures. Connectivity of open space facilities via wildlife corridors is also critical in ensuring that biodiversity is safeguarded in the face of a changing climate, and green space can ameliorate surface water run-off to reduce the risk of flooding.
- Mature trees are particularly important in terms of shade provision and water capture; it is important that the provision of mature trees is secured in the planning of new and improved green spaces. Developers should be encouraged to contribute towards tree planting and maintenance. Tree planting should include species which will have a large canopy and ability to withstand hotter drier summers.
- Greenspaces provide vital ecosystem services which become even more critical under climate change. “The creative use of green space is one of the most promising opportunities for adaptation.” This should be reflected in policies and standards to encourage a truly multi-functional design of open spaces that includes a consideration of climate change.
- The provision of adequate water supply for irrigating green space in time of drought – recognising that they provide benefits beyond amenity. Options include rainwater storage and distribution (potentially as SUDS within green spaces).
- To encourage and support the use of green space for food production purposes.
- To maximise the role of green space to improve accessibility and provide connectivity for pedestrians.
- Incorporate the role of green spaces in mitigating and adapting to climate change into the adoption of quality standards.
- To ensure that accessibility, quantity and quality standards for Stratford on Avon as the main urban area have due consideration to climate change.

⁶ Centre for Urban and Regional Ecology (University of Manchester), 2006. Adaptation Strategies for Climate Change in the Urban Environment (ASCCUE) report to the National Steering Group.

In Stratford District there are several initiatives which are aimed at combating climate change and encouraging locally based, low carbon living. This includes Transition Stratford, which seeks to inspire a community response to the challenges of climate change, peak oil and economic change. Its initiatives aim to provide positive solutions to these challenges by supporting action by individuals and communities. A similar initiative has been set up in Shipston on Stour and its surrounding communities (Transition Shipston).

Sustainable Travel

Stratford on Avon has a network of greenways. They form valuable breaks in built-up areas or between built development, with the primary purpose of improving biodiversity and acting as a “*green lung*” buffer between buildings. These greenways provide a good basis on which to improve access between Stratford’s open spaces and the surrounding countryside outside built up areas. There are opportunities to develop a green grid, with green routes for walking & cycling, which contribute towards the sustainable transport plan.

Encouraging and planning for sustainable travel is a significant Government agenda. The Department for Transport have a range of initiatives to reduce congestion, improve local environments and encourage healthier and safer lifestyles. This is reflected in the increasing requirement for the preparation of travel plans to support the proposals for new development.

The National Travel Survey for 2009 found that 29% of all trips made were by walking and 2% by bicycle. The average number of trips made by walking decreased between 1995 and 2007, but increased from 2007 to 2009. People in the West Midlands the years 2008 and 2009 on average took fewer trips by walking than all over regions except the East of England.

The maintenance and provision of new green corridors is particularly important to Stratford on Avon in light of the rural nature of the District. The National Travel Survey found that national wide the use of car and other private transport are most dominant in rural areas, comprising 79% of all trips, compared to 42% in London and 65% nationally. This is unsurprising considering the more sparse distribution of settlements in rural areas. Quality standards for green corridors will be important to increase their use.

Improving Access to the Countryside

Environmental law in England provides the right to walk, ride, cycle and drive in public rights of way in the countryside. Public rights of way include footpaths, byways and bridleways. A raft of legislation guides the use of these routes including the following:

- Highways Act 1980
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Over recent years there has been a drive to better promote the use of public rights of way and consider the creation of additional rights of way. This is widely associated with the ‘The Ramblers’ organisation.

Public rights of way are designated either by order or by agreement made with the landowner. Highway authorities and the Secretary of State have the power to

make an order creating any type of right of way over a piece of land where it is considered to add to the accessibility or enjoyment of the public. A creation order may create a new right of way or establish higher rights over an existing right of way. Future open space provision should aim to:

- Optimise accessible routes via ‘green corridors’ for pedestrians and cyclists
- To ensure that green corridors offer an accessible and safe environment
- An emphasis on high quality standards for green corridors

Natural England is currently promoting the concept of ‘Our Natural Health Service’ whereby the provision of sufficient natural accessible greenspace (and other types of open space) can provide a cost effective means of helping people to stay active, thereby reducing their biological age and enhancing their quality-adjusted life expectancy⁷.

Allotments and Community Gardens: Grow Your Own

Creating space for food production through allotments and community gardens and orchards increases access to healthy food, provides educational opportunities, saves energy and carbon through lower food miles, contributes to food security and reconnects communities with their local environment. This is becoming more widely recognised and ‘growing you own food’ is becoming more popular. This is already evident in Stratford on Avon, where many areas have waiting lists for allotments. It is likely that the demand for allotments in the District will continue, making the case for future open space provision to incorporate allotments.

Allotments are guided by specific legislation, which includes the Small Holdings, Allotments Act 1908 and the Allotments Act 1922 (as amended) and provisions within the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This legislation provides significant power to provide a sufficient amount of allotments. Key points include:

- Provided that land intended for allotments was previously agricultural land, planning permission is not required for allotments (Section 55 and Section 336 of the TCPA 1990).
- Local authorities are under statutory obligation to provide a sufficient number of allotments under Section 23 (1) of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908. The provisions of s.23 (1) become engaged where, pursuant to the provision of Section 23 (2), six Parliamentary electors make written representations to the municipal authority, expressing a demand for allotments. The authority must then make shift to provide a sufficient number.
- Section 25 Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 confers powers of compulsory acquisition of land for allotments on municipal authorities, and land so acquired can be within or without the Parish boundaries.

As part of Transition Stratford, a Local Food initiative has been set up in Stratford upon Avon. The project includes establishment of a community garden, Stratford Garden Share and a recent Land for Food survey aimed at identifying additional unused land for allotments within and around the town. Transition Shipston have also established a Community Garden.

⁷ Natural England, 2010. Nature Nearby

At the national level, 'Food Vision' has been launched which aims to promote safe, sustainability and nutritious food to improve local community health and well-being. In response to this Warwickshire has produced its Food for Health strategy which aims to help individuals and groups improve their health through increased awareness and knowledge, and improved availability of safe and healthy food. The strategy covers a range of themes, including food production, sustainable food choices and local food.

The National Trust has also launched an allotment programme, which will seek to create 1,000 new allotment plots on Trust land in the next three years, to give communities space to grow their own fruit and vegetables. The Trust has identified that there are more than 100,000 people currently on allotment waiting lists and recognise that a growing number of people want to grow their own fruit and vegetables. Hugh Fearnley-Wittingstall has also launched 'Landshare' which aims to connect those with land to share with those who need land for cultivating food. The scheme currently has over 57,000 members. There is however no land currently registered on the scheme in Stratford District.

3 Scope and Approach

3.1 Open Space Typologies

PPG17 classifies open spaces into typologies according to their primary purpose in order to develop a more structured approach to auditing and assessing open space:

- Parks and Gardens
- Amenity Greenspace
- Provision for children and young people
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Indoor sports facilities (sports halls and swimming pools)
- Community facilities (e.g. village halls)
- Natural / semi-natural accessible greenspace
- Green Corridors
- Civic spaces
- Other open space, including cemeteries, church yards and allotments

This structure has been used as the basis for organising and undertaking the Stratford audit and assessment, which covers (to varying degrees) all the typologies identified in PPG17. Given the rural nature of the District, and the lack of formal urban parks and gardens, the Parks and Gardens typology has been expanded to include larger open spaces such as recreation grounds and other more less formal open spaces which provide high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.

Typical site types included within the Park and Garden and Amenity Greenspace typologies are set out in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Parks and Gardens and Amenity Greenspace Typologies

Typology	Typical types of open space
Park and Garden	Urban Parks and Gardens (regardless of size) Registered Parks and Gardens Recreation grounds Village parks Sites typically providing more than a single amenity function
Amenity Greenspaces	Village greens Small greenspaces within housing developments

3.1.1 Open Space Hierarchy

In accordance with best practice and PPG17 Companion Guide, a hierarchy of open space provision has been developed as a means of reflecting the relative size, role and associated function of open spaces within the District. The hierarchy will also provide a means of bringing together analysis of parks and gardens and Amenity Greenspaces into an overarching assessment of open space provision across the District.

The open space hierarchy has been developed on the basis of best practice - widely recognised to be the London Planning Advisory Committee's open space hierarchy, which has been applied in a variety of locations outside London. The site size thresholds have however been amended to reflect the nature of open space provision across Stratford District.

Table 3.2 Open Space Hierarchy

Classification	Site Size	LPAC Category
District Parks	5-10ha	Based on lower threshold for Local Parks as set out in GLA classification (2-20ha).
Local Parks	2-5ha	
Neighbourhood / Pocket Parks	<2ha	Small open space and pocket parks (0.4-2ha)
Amenity greenspaces		

The assessment has considered all open spaces, outdoor sports and recreational facilities for which there is legitimate public access, making a distinction between those with unrestricted public access (free and open at all times) and those where access is conditional (e.g. club members only, entry fees etc).

Unless they were considered to offer particular amenity value, sites smaller than 0.20ha were excluded from the audit, as were the following:

- Roadside verges, roundabouts and junctions;
- SLOAP (space left over after planning);
- Farmland and farm tracks; and
- Private roads and gardens.

3.2 Site Identification

Identification of sites was undertaken in partnership with the District Council. Existing GIS databases were used as a starting point for listing sites within each typology. Parish Councils were also asked to provide details of any facilities within their area which were then added to the database, and to review the final database for accuracy and soundness. The Woodland Trust and Warwickshire Wildlife Trust also provided datasets.

Site visits also provided a valuable means of verifying the sites database with regards to:

- Ensuring that sites had been classified under the correct primary typology;
- Cross checking site boundaries/ sizes;
- Identifying sites that are no longer in recreational/ sporting use; and
- Identifying additional sites.

Further sites information was also provided during the course of consultation with sports clubs, schools, Parish Councils and local communities.

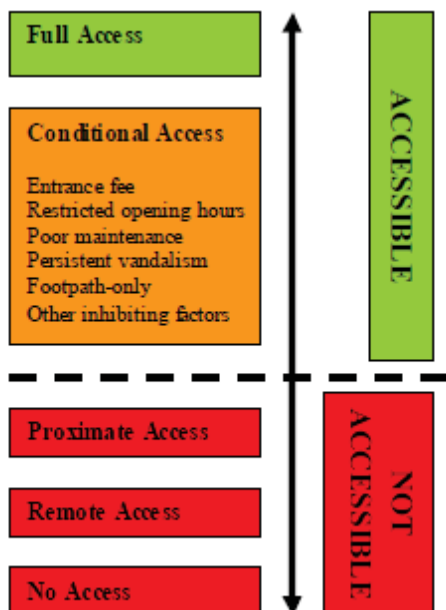
3.2.1 Natural and Semi-Natural Accessible Greenspace

Natural and Semi Natural Accessible Greenspace was identified using the methodology set out in Natural England's Report No 526 – Providing Natural accessible greenspace in Towns and Cities: A Review and Toolkit for Implementation, which defines natural accessible greenspace as '*places where human control and activities are not intensive so that natural processes are allowed to predominate*'.

For a natural greenspace site to be considered accessible, Natural England recommends that it must be either fully or conditionally accessible:

- Full public access: right of entry to the site by any member of the public is possible without restriction.
- Conditional public access: sites are characterised by a 'right of entry' whereby there are one or more restrictions or conditions affecting whether or not a member of the public can access the site (e.g access only via public right of way, members only, opening hours, entrance fees etc).

Proximate or remote access (i.e. where there is no physical access to the site but it can be experienced only from the boundary or visually) is not considered sufficient (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 Access Categories

A range of data sources were used to identify natural and semi natural greenspaces in the District (Box 3.1), which were then classified as either 'Fully Publicly Accessible' or 'Conditionally Publicly Accessible' as per Natural England's classifications.

Box 3.1 Natural Greenspace Data Sources

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Local Nature Reserves

Ancient Woodland

Warwickshire Wildlife Trust Nature Reserves

Regionally Important Geological Sites

National Trust Land

Woodland Trust Accessible Woodland

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

Sub-set of Warwickshire Habitat Biodiversity Action Plan Habitat classifications⁸

Public Rights of Way & Green Corridors

Registered Parks and Gardens

Local knowledge

The approach to refining the baseline list of sites and assigning them to one of the two accessibility categories is set out below:

Category 1: Full / Unrestricted Public Access

- Country Parks⁹
- Warwickshire Wildlife Trust sites identified as being fully publicly accessible by the Trust;
- Sites containing relevant HBAP categories and identified as being fully publicly accessible using Stratford District Council officer's local knowledge;
- Sites identified by the Woodland Trust as being fully publicly accessible; and
- Relevant HBAP habitat categories overlapping with any of the other PPG17 typologies known to be fully publicly accessible and cross checked on an individual site basis to remove anomalies.

Site visits were undertaken for all these sites to confirm that the sites were fully publicly accessible.

⁸ Sub categories included in the Audit were A111 Broad leaved semi natural woodland, A112 Broad leaved plantation, A122 Coniferous plantation, A131 Mixed semi natural woodland, A132 Mixed plantation, A21 Dense/ continuous scrubland, A22 Scattered scrub, A31 Broad leaved parkland, A32 Coniferous parkland, B11 Unimproved acidic grassland, B12 Semi improved neutral grassland, B21 Unimproved neutral grassland, B22 Semi improved neutral grassland, B31 Unimproved calcareous grassland, B32 Semi improved calcareous grassland, B4 Improved Grassland, B5 Marsh/ marshy grassland, B6 Poor semi improved grassland, C31 Tall herb and fern, G1 Open Water, G2 Rivers

⁹ Although PPG17 identifies that Country Parks can be classified under the Parks and Gardens typology, given the nature of these sites in the District, and their significance as areas of Natural Greenspace, they have been classified under Natural accessible greenspace in terms of their primary purpose.

Category 2: Conditional Access

- Relevant HBAP categories overlain onto National Trust sites to identify natural greenspace areas. Public Rights of Way (PROW) (including 50m buffer on either side¹⁰) then overlain onto HBAP filtered National Trust sites to identify areas that are publicly accessible;
- Relevant HBAP categories overlain onto Registered Parks & Gardens to identify NAG space. PROW (inc 50m buffer on either side) then overlain onto HBAP filtered RPG sites to identify areas that are publicly accessible;
- Natural greenspace sites already identified as having conditional access using local knowledge;
- Warwickshire Wildlife Trust sites identified as being conditionally publicly accessible by the Trust (i.e. members only);
- Woodland Trust identified conditionally accessible woodland;
- PROW (inc 50m buffer) overlain onto SSSIs, LNRs, SINC, Ancient Woodland, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust Sites & RIGS; and
- PROW (inc 50m buffer) overlain onto relevant HBAP areas to identify any outstanding areas of natural greenspace not picked up in any of the above.

3.3 Site Audits

Given resource, capacity and time constraints, not all typologies were audited by way of a site visit. Site visits focused on principle typologies, namely:

- Parks and Gardens¹¹
- Amenity Greenspaces
- Natural and semi natural accessible greenspaces
- Children and young people's facilities
- Outdoor sports facilities

Where site visits were not undertaken, consultation with local communities, District Council Officers and Parish Councils provided a reliable means of gaining qualitative information relating to the condition and quality of other open space typologies (such as allotments).

For those typologies which were visited, standard pro formas were developed for each typology to record a range of site characteristics and information for each site, including as appropriate for each typology:

- Physical attributes
- Transport and access arrangements
- Description of transport
- Charges for entry
- Safety and security

¹⁰ 50m buffer identified from best practice as an acceptable limit to define how far people may range from a designated Public Right of Way (based on analysis in Devon for the Woodland Trust, in Space for People).

¹¹ Site visits focused on sites with unrestricted/ full public access; audits were not undertaken for Parks and Gardens or Natural Greenspaces with restricted access – ie members only, entry fees applicable etc).

- Cleanliness and maintenance
- Ancillary accommodation / facilities
- Quality of natural environment

The assessment of facilities for children and young people was based on guidance prepared by the Children's Play Council and Play England as contained in *Play Indicators Project: DRAFT Guidance for the pilot local authorities* (2007), which covered the following topics:

- Location;
- Play value; and
- Care and maintenance.

Outdoor sport assessments were based on the standard Pitch Quality Assessment Pro Forma contained in the Sport England Electronic Toolkit, which was amended to incorporate the requirements of the PPG17 Audit as well.

The pro formas provided a reliable and consistent means of data collection that have provided the basis for quantitative analysis and comparison between sites. Copies of the pro formas have been provided in Appendix A.

Site audits were undertaken by Officers from Stratford District Council. A paper setting out the proposed assessment methodology was provided to Officers in advance and this was followed by a briefing session for all site auditors. The paper and briefing session explained the use of the pro formas to ensure that data was collected accurately and consistently. Surveys were conducted between July and November 2010.

3.4 Consultation

Extensive consultation with stakeholders and members of the public has been undertaken to inform the assessment. Feedback and findings from the consultation exercises have been incorporated into the assessment of each typology as appropriate. Full details of all consultation responses can be found in the Working Paper.

3.4.1 Raising Public Awareness

In order to raise public awareness about the study posters were produced and distributed at key venues within the District. These included Stratford on Avon District Council Offices, Alcester area office, Southam area office, leisure centres (Studley, Shipston and Stratford) and libraries (Stratford, Main Rural Centres (MRCs) and Harbury). The poster introduced the aim of the study and the opportunity for members of the public to express their views through the online survey (see below) and provided contact details should members of the public wish to discuss the study.

A local press notice was issued in July and again in September 2010, and circulated through a variety of online forums and free newspapers in the District. The press release was also distributed by the following organisations, who issued the press release through newsletters, websites and mailing lists:

- Everyone Active database (District Leisure Centre members)
- Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sports Partnership
- Voluntary Action Stratford on Avon

An advert was placed on Stratford on Avon District Council's website, Facebook and Twitter page on 28th July 2010 to promote awareness of the study and the opportunity to complete the online survey. This remained in place until 28th October 2010.

Details of the open space study were also sent to all Council employees and Councillors via the Weekly Information Email, and to Parish Councils via two issues of Parish Talk (Appendix B).

Further awareness raising was also undertaken at each of the six Community Forums which ran during September and October 2010.

3.4.2 Online Questionnaire

An online questionnaire was set up for the purpose of the Audit. This was publicised via the means outlined above, and made available for completion via the Council's website. Paper copies and a FREEPOST return address were also provided upon request and in the District Council's reception. They were also distributed via other SDC initiatives and events, including GET SET GO, Streetscene recycling roadshow, District Council open day, Senior Citizen's Active Network and the Youth Panel.

The questionnaire was available for completion on the Council's website from mid August 2010 until 28th October 2010. A total of 252 questionnaire responses were received. Whilst this is a relatively small number, given the amount of publicity for the study, we believe that those wishing to make their views known about the Audit had sufficient opportunity to do so. Officers have commented that the response rate is perhaps reflective of the fact that residents do not on the whole perceive open space to be a particularly contentious or problematical issue. Whilst not statistically representative of the whole District, the responses nonetheless provide valuable qualitative information on perceptions of open space, sport and recreational facilities across the District.

A copy of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix B.

3.4.3 Parish Council Forum

A Parish Council Forum was held on 5th October 2010. The purpose of the forum was to understand the Parish Council's opinions on the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities in their area and to seek agreement on local priorities for protection, maintenance and improvement of facilities. Initial findings from the study were also shared in order to identify any issues that had not previously been raised or that were perceived to be under-represented.

The Parish Council Forum also provided an opportunity to seek views on the creation of new local standards for quantity, quality and accessibility of open space and recreation facilities within the District.

An agenda containing a series of questions was circulated to Parish Councils in advance. A Parish Council questionnaire was also sent to all Parish Councils, which sought to gain the views of Councils not able to attend the forum, as well as providing an opportunity for all PCs to provide further details of current provision and future priorities in their Parish to the project team.

The forum was attended by 18 Parish Council representatives, including:

- Alderminster Parish Council
- Alcester Town Council
- Wellesbourne Parish Council
- Henley Parish Council
- Preston Bagot Parish Council
- Shipston Town Council
- Kineton Parish Council
- Bidford-on-Avon Parish Council
- Old Stratford and Drayton Parish Council
- Studley Parish Council
- Stockton Parish Council

Arup gave a short presentation introducing the study, the initial findings and what Arup hope to gain from the meeting. Parish Councillors were then given the opportunity to make general comments before splitting into two focus groups for more detailed discussion. The agenda for the Focus Group can be found in Appendix B.

3.4.4 Community Forums

Warwickshire County Council and Stratford-District Council hold Community Forums which take the form of a public meeting and provide an opportunity to engage the public in council business. These Community Forums provided the opportunity to engage collectively with the people of Stratford District to discuss the Audit.

The Audit was discussed at all six of the community forums (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Community Forums

Location	Venue	Date
Alcester/Bidford	Welford Primary School	Tuesday 21 st September 7pm
Studley/Henley	Studley Youth Club	Thursday 7 th October 7.30pm
Shipston/Stour	Shipston High School	Tuesday 7 th September 7pm
Southam/Feldon	Southam Primary School	Wednesday 6 th October 7pm
Stratford	Stratford High School	Wednesday 15 th September 5.30pm
Wellesbourne/Kinerton	Wellesbourne Primary	Thursday 9 th September 7pm

Arup prepared four display boards to be exhibited at each of the forums, which provided information on the purpose of the study, work done so far, initial results and results from other previous studies and a series of questions to think about (Appendix B). A consultation Strategy was also prepared detailing the overarching programme for consultation, a copy of which is contained in Appendix B.

At each of the Community Forums, a short presentation was given which outlined the purpose of the study and initial findings. Meeting attendees were then given the opportunity to comment on issues relating to open space, sport and recreation provision in their local area. Attendees were also provided with a written sheet containing a number of questions to think about and space for answers. This provided attendees who did not have an opportunity to voice their comments during the forum discussion with a means to ensure that their views were recorded.

3.4.5 Other consultation inputs

Citizens' Panel

Stratford District Council's Citizens' Panel provides a systematic way of gathering residents' opinions on matters of local concern. The Citizens' Panel is a group of around 1200 residents of the Stratford on Avon District who are representative of the general population in the area. To obtain their views on a number of issues, questionnaires are regularly sent to them. As part of the consultation for this study, seven questions on open space, sport and recreation provision were included in the questionnaire sent out in May 2010. The response rate to the questionnaire was 45.1%.

Other Consultation

As well as the Citizen's Panel, Stratford District Council undertakes a number of other regular consultation exercises across the District, including the Young People's Survey, Customer Satisfaction Index and Place Survey. The findings from these consultation exercises were reviewed to identify issues of relevance to this study, and are summarised in the Working Paper.

Parish Plans

Parish Councils play a particularly active role in Stratford District in terms of managing and improving local facilities. They also have a recognised administrative role devolved from Stratford District Council, which makes them a key delivery and action vehicle for local communities. Most Parishes in Stratford on Avon District have prepared, or are in the process of preparing Parish Plans. These Plans were reviewed as part of the Assessment to identify local priorities and issues relating to the provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities. A summary of the Parish Plans is provided in the Working Paper.

3.4.6 Consultation: Key Themes

The consultation process highlighted a number of key themes and priorities for the District, which are set out below.

Open Space Provision

- Generally, residents consider that the District has a good supply of parks and gardens, that are reasonably high quality and accessible, although there are localised areas in need of improvement;
- In smaller villages, open spaces perform a variety of functions - typically including a formal sport and open space/ recreational role;
- The level of children's play and amenity space provision in the newer housing developments in Stratford is much higher than the older parts of the town. This indicates that the SPG and open space standards are having some impact on the level of provision that is secured in new developments;
- Land ownership / the availability of suitable sites is often a barrier to providing new open spaces;
- New open space provision is largely confined to new developments, which means that smaller villages and communities where there is no new housing generally fail to benefit from any improvements; and
- Open spaces provided as part of new developments are very small, with corresponding limitations on their amenity and recreational value.

Natural Greenspace

- Although the District is predominantly rural, residents have expressed concern about the physical accessibility of the countryside, and the general lack of fully natural accessible greenspaces;
- The District's natural greenspaces are an underused resource in terms of their value for leisure and recreation; and
- Natural greenspaces provide a particularly important recreational resource in more rural areas where other open space provision is more limited.

Indoor Sports Provision

- There is a feeling that the District could increase provision of swimming pools and indoor halls in some of the larger Settlements – such as Wellesbourne;

- The majority of residents consider indoor sports facilities to be either very or fairly good in terms of overall quality, the range of facilities on offer and cleanliness; and
- Residents consistently report however that the cleanliness of changing areas in Stratford on Avon's leisure centre is poor.

Outdoor Sports Provision

- The capacity and potential of school sports facilities to become community resources needs to be explored further, and facilities made more generally available to the public;
- There is a limited supply of sports facilities that are generally accessible to the public without the requirement for those wishing to use them to be a member of a local club or pay expensive hire fees;
- Residents appreciate that active people can travel further for sports facilities, whereas young children and the elderly need facilities locally;
- Southam College has been given a £755,000 grant from the Football Foundation towards the estimated £1.2m cost of a 3rd generation FIFA level artificial floodlit pitch, changing rooms and seminar room to support the development of players, coaches and referees in the area, including women's and girl's football, which is apparently the fastest growing sport in the UK. The facilities will be available to local clubs, primary schools, college students and the local community. The College has been successful in achieving the majority of the remaining funding.

Provision for Children and Young People

- Residents consider there to be a shortage of facilities for young people in the District (e.g. skate ramps and MUGAs); several existing facilities are in need of better upkeep and maintenance;
- Transport between neighbouring villages should be improved to allow better access to existing facilities;
- Smaller villages should also have access to a children's play area without having to travel significant distances;
- There is a need to improve the Play Value of existing and new provision;
- Children's play provision provided as part of new developments is generally of a poor play value, very small and largely aimed at young children.

Community Facilities

- Village halls can be costly to maintain and repair;
- Community halls do however provide an important local community resource, particularly in more rural parts of the District;
- The use of village halls is more prevalent amongst older residents.

Allotments and Cemeteries

- There is a shortage of allotments across the District and demand for them is increasing;
- The availability of land for new allotments is limited;

- Allotment rent is generally very low and there is potential to increase this;
- More community orchards should be provided.

Footpaths and Bridleways

- There are mixed opinions about the quality of footpaths / bridleways in the District. Parish Councils generally felt that coverage of the District is patchy with some areas well served and others lacking;
- The provision of bridleways and more circuitous local routes could be improved;
- A number of Parish Councils felt that Warwickshire County Council (WCC) do not do enough to maintain these facilities, and the majority of investment goes to the maintenance of key 'gateways' rather than local access routes.

Accessibility

- Facilities should be located in the centre of a residential area;
- People generally prefer not to walk long distances for facilities – i.e. under 10 minutes;
- 10 minutes is generally considered to be an acceptable travel time to reach local facilities;
- Generally, the District has a high level of provision of open space. However, transport links to more strategic facilities can be poor which restricts their accessibility.

Delivery and Funding

- There have been issues over the transfer of S106 funds to Parish Councils where they are intended for improvements to existing sports facilities; Parish Councils have reported that they have in some cases not received the money;
- Parish Councils are responsible for providing the majority of local community facilities. Their financial resources are however limited when compared to the cost of insurance, maintenance and site acquisition;
- Mechanisms for providing new open spaces other than new development need to be considered, particularly where there is a need to address deficits within existing communities and smaller villages;
- The availability of suitable sites for new open space provision is limited. There are also 'bad neighbour' perceptions associated with the provision of some facilities, such as those for young people;
- There is a feeling that local communities need to become more proactive about delivery / funding and securing new facilities where there is a need for them. Local companies could for example sponsor a new facility; farmers could also provide greenspace for community activities/ facilities;
- At a time when government funding is being cut, it is important that local expectations are managed in terms of realistic outcomes from the study and the potential for improvements to be delivered on the ground;
- The application of current Local Plan open space standards on the basis of x sq.m/ £x per dwelling means that only fairly small pieces of open space can be provided on the back of each individual development, since the calculated

contribution is not enough to generate a larger open space. Some of the resulting spaces are not considered to be that usable and it may be better in some cases to pool contributions from several developments in order to provide a single larger open space that has a higher recreational and multi-functional value; and

- Future standards relating to provision of open space in new development should be more flexible and provide for a wider range of open spaces that respond to local need and circumstances.

Full details of all consultation findings can be found in the Working Paper.

3.4.7 Sports and Schools Questionnaire

As part of the preparation of Playing Pitch Strategies, Sport England's Electronic Toolkit provides sports club and schools questionnaires, which should be used as a basis for gathering baseline information to inform the early stages of the Playing Pitch Strategy (Stage 1: Identifying teams/team equivalents and Stage 2: Calculating home games per team per week), although it has also provided valuable information for the purpose of the PPG17 Audit).

The standard Sport England questionnaires were amended to reflect the specific aims and objectives of this particular study, and circulated to all Sports Clubs¹² and schools (excluding Primary Schools known not to have sports facilities of their own) in the District. The database of Sports Clubs was compiled by Stratford District Council, with input from the relevant National Governing Bodies, Leagues and County Sports Partnership.

Wherever possible the questionnaire was sent to the club via e-mail together with a customised covering letter; where this was not possible a hard copy was sent to the club along with a stamped addressed return envelope. Following a period of time for clubs to return the questionnaire, chase up phone calls were made to clubs from whom a response had not yet been received.

In total, 142 sports clubs were contacted; of these follow up telephone conversations revealed that 23 clubs had either merged with another club or were no longer in existence. 119 clubs returned the questionnaire. Overall response rates for each sport are set out in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Sports Club Response Rate

Sport	Response Rate (%)
Football	72%
Cricket	85%
Rugby	75%
Hockey	100%
Netball	38% ¹³
Tennis	80%

¹² Football, Rugby Union, Netball, Tennis, Athletics, Hockey, Cricket and Bowls

¹³ Response rates from clubs have been supplemented with information from the Warwickshire County Netball Association and relevant Leagues; information has therefore been obtained for 100% clubs

Bowls	75%
Athletics	100%

94% of all schools with a community use agreement returned their questionnaire; returns were obtained from all Secondary Schools/ colleges.

The findings from the schools and sports clubs questionnaire have been used primarily to inform the Playing Pitch Strategy, although relevant information has been incorporated into the PPG17 Audit assessment where appropriate.

A copy of the schools and sports club questionnaire can be found in Appendix B.

3.4.8 Consultation with NGBs and Sports Partnership

Consultation via telephone interview has also been undertaken with National Governing Bodies (NGB) and the County Sports Partnership (Table 3.5), to gather information relating to the supply and demand for facilities. Additional desk based research was also undertaken for local sports associations and local leagues.

The purpose of the interviews was to get an understanding how sport is currently played in the District, future plans and priorities for sports development, local issues and predicted trends in participation.

Table 3.5 Consultation with NGBs and County Sports Partnership

Sport	NGB	Position
Cricket	Birmingham Sports Development	Cricket Development Manager
Football	Football Association (West Midlands)	Regional Facilities Manager (West Midlands)
Rugby Union	Warwickshire Rugby Football Union (RFU)	Funding and Facilities Manager (Midlands).
Netball	Warwickshire County Netball Association	Active Sports Netball Development Officer
Hockey	Warwickshire Hockey Association	Hockey Development Officer
Tennis	Warwickshire Lawn Tennis Association	Tennis Development Manager
Multiple	Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull Sports Partnership	Sports Development Manager

Full details of the interviews can be found in the Working Paper and Playing Pitch Strategy.

3.5 Audit Analysis and Methodology

In order to undertake a robust audit of Stratford on Avon's open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities, and provide appropriate recommendations for

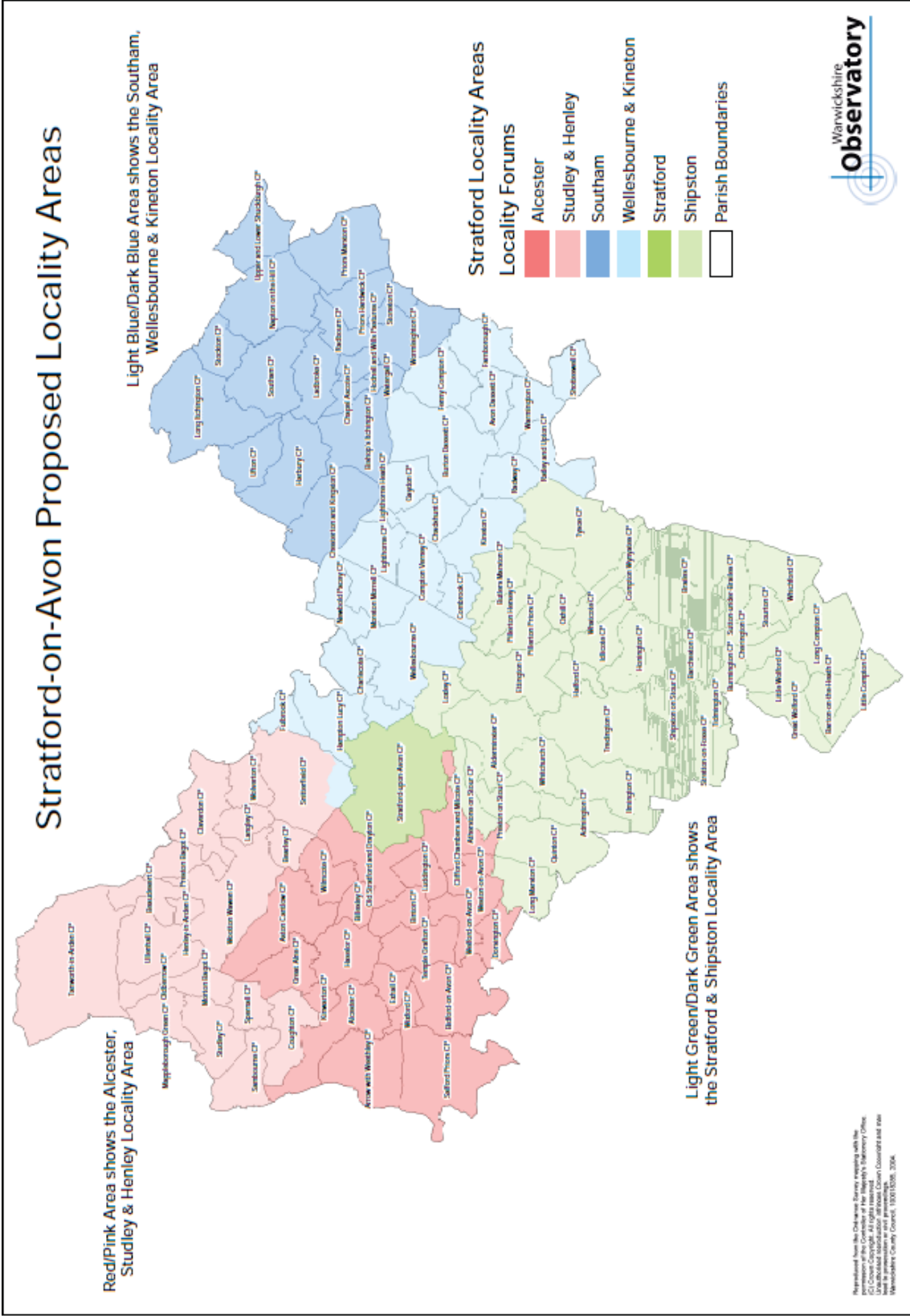
standards, the study methodology was derived from relevant planning policy, guidance and legislation material and adapted to suit the local context.

3.5.1 Sub Areas for Analysis

To ensure consistency with other policy documents and strategies, the open space, sport and recreational provision across District has been analysed on the basis of the six Community Forum Areas already used by Warwickshire County Council and Stratford District Council for administrative, community planning and strategy development (Figure 3.2):

1. Studley and Henley-in-Arden
2. Alcester and Bidford-on-Avon
3. Stratford upon Avon
4. Wellesbourne and Kineton
5. Shipston-on-Sour
6. Southam

Figure 3.2 Community Forum Sub Areas



3.5.2 Settlement Hierarchy

The analysis of open space provision has taken into account the settlement hierarchy in the District, in recognition that the provision of open space and recreational facilities will and should reflect the relative size of towns and villages within the District.

The settlement hierarchy for this Audit contains four categories. The existing Local Plan Review settlement hierarchy has been used as a basis for the categories, which have been amended so that they are based primarily on relative settlement size and population:

- 1) Category One: Stratford upon Avon town
- 2) Category Two: Main Rural Centres
- 3) Category Three: Local Service Villages
- 4) Category Four: Other villages, hamlets and rural areas

The town of Stratford upon Avon is the largest settlement with 11,000 dwellings (approx 24,200¹⁴ population, excluding Tiddington). The town has a range of facilities which serve its own residents as well as a sizable catchment of smaller settlements. It also plays a role as a major tourist/visitor attraction.

There are also a number of important market towns and similar large rural settlements, classified as Main Rural Centres (MRC) in the Local Plan Review 1996 – 2011 for their role as rural centres for residential and employment development and service provision. The MRCs form the basis for the Category Two settlements, which also contains an additional four settlements which have been included on the basis of their containing a similar number of dwellings to the smallest MRC. All settlements listed in Category Two contain between 700 and 3,200 dwellings and between approximately 1,600 and 7,500 population.

¹⁴ Given the absence of up to date population statistics, population sizes for each of the settlements have been calculated using the average household size for each settlement, as derived from the 2001 ONS Census statistics, which were applied to 2009 numbers of dwellings in each settlement.

Category Two: Main Rural Centres		
Settlement name	No. dwellings	Population
Alcester*	3,200	7,360
Bidford on Avon*	1,900	4,750
Bishops Itchington	850	2,210
Harbury	950	2,280
Henley in Arden*	1,400	2,940
Kineton*	950	2,380
Long Itchington	700	1,820
Quinton	700	1,680
Shipston on Stour*	2,200	4,840
Southam*	2,500	6,250
Studley*	2,500	6,000
Wellesbourne*	2,400	5,520

*Designated as a Main Rural Centre in Local Plan Review

Category Three comprises smaller rural centres which have a good range of recreation facilities serving their own residents and, to some extent, smaller villages in the vicinity. These all have 250 to 600 dwellings, and between approximately 600 and 1,400 population.

Category Three: Local Villages		
Settlement name	No. dwellings	Population
Bearley	300	780
Brailes	445	1,020
Claverdon	335	840
Earlswood	415	1,000
Ettington	430	1,080
Fenny Compton	325	810
Ilmington	325	750
Lighthorne Heath	325	780
Long Compton	360	790
Napton on the Hill	390	980
Salford Priors	435	1,090
Snitterfield	430	1,080
Stockton	505	1,310
Temple Herdewycke	295	800
Tiddington	645	1,420
Tysoe	405	970
Welford on Avon	550	1,320
Wootton Wawen	510	1,020

The remainder of the District which does not fall into Categories One, Two or Three has been assigned to Category Four. All settlements contained within this category have populations of less than 550 residents (maximum 250 dwellings).

3.5.3 Assessment Analysis

Analysis of Audit findings comprises both a quantitative and qualitative approach.

Accessibility Assessment and Effective Catchments

Analysis of the current accessibility of the District's open space, sport and recreation provision has been undertaken on the basis of identifying Effective Catchment areas for each open space typology, which provide a robust means of identifying areas not currently served by existing open spaces. Typical catchments for each typology have been identified through the application of a distance threshold, defined as the maximum distance that users can reasonably expect to travel to access a particular type of provision.

Other factors affecting accessibility – such as conditions of access (e.g. members only, entry fees etc), severance lines, availability of public transport services and correlations with issues such as deprivation have also been examined.

Quantitative Assessment and Standards

Standards for the quantity of open space provision across the District have been expressed as xxha/1,000 population, to enable a comparison between analysis areas and different settlements within the settlement hierarchy. The interrelationship between some forms of provision and the complementary manner of their provision has also been considered – for example the role that Natural accessible greenspace can play in compensating for a lack of formal parks and gardens in more rural areas.

Quality Assessment and Standards

Quality standards have been expressed as a set of specific objectives or targets, the achievement of which can be measured and monitored over time. The targets have been derived from an assessment of the quality of existing open spaces across the District and identification of priority areas for improvement.

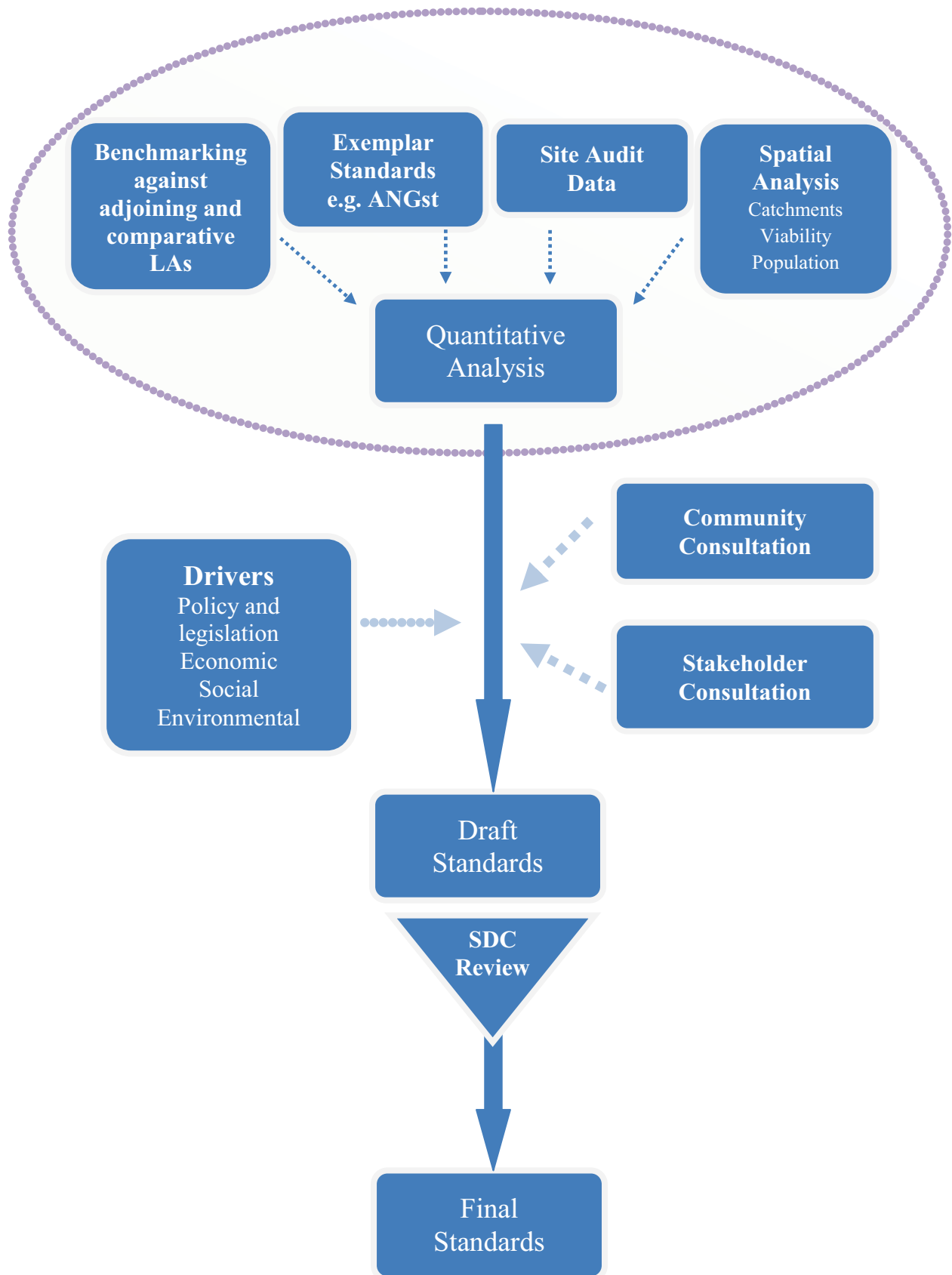
Assessment of the quality of existing provision was informed by existing best practice and national benchmarks, such as the Green Flag Award, Play England, Children's Play Council and Nature Nearby.

Both the analysis and subsequent provision standards have been derived using a common set of factors or inputs, including:

- Review of national standards and best practice
- Existing local standards and a review of their effectiveness
- Key trends
- Consideration of the dispersed settlement pattern and population distribution across the District
- Mode of transport residents might typically use to access a particular facility
- Consultation responses and feedback
- Benchmarking against other Rural-80¹⁵ Districts
- Sign off by Stratford District Officers

An overview of the method for analyzing assessment findings and deriving suitable standards of provision is illustrated in Figure 3.3. Appendices C, D and E provide a full explanation of how provision standards were defined for each open space typology, including assumptions.

¹⁵ ONS Classification of districts with at least 80 per cent of their population in rural settlements and larger market towns

Figure 3.3: Assessment Overview

4 Overarching Analysis: Greenspace

This chapter provides an overview of the distribution of greenspace across the District. A distinction is made between unrestricted greenspace, where residents are free to take advantage of open space, sports and recreational provision without any conditions on its access - such as entry fees or club membership, and conditional greenspace where access is conditional on rights of entry such as club or membership subscriptions or entry fees (Box 4.1).

Box 4.1 Unrestricted and Conditional Greenspace

Unrestricted Greenspace	Conditional Greenspace
Parks, gardens and recreation grounds, excluding those with entry fees	Registered Parks and Gardens with entry fees
Amenity greenspace	National Trust properties
Sports pitches with community access	Allotments
Cemeteries	Conditionally accessible natural greenspace
Fully accessible natural greenspace	Private sports pitches
Facilities for children and young people	
Green Corridors	

Map 1 illustrates the distribution of unrestricted greenspace across the District, which is also summarised by Sub Area in Table 4.1. Studley and Henley has the largest amount of unrestricted greenspace, largely owing to the presence of several large natural accessible greenspaces. Shipston and Southam have relatively low amounts of unrestricted greenspace, although this is largely due to the comparative lack of natural accessible greenspace.

The distribution of open spaces across the District is largely due to historical and/or natural circumstances. Many of the smaller villages have for example got a village cricket ground, which is reflective of historic conditions rather than recent provision. In a predominantly rural District it is not surprising that natural accessible greenspace comprises the largest category (70% of all unrestricted greenspace), although much of this is concentrated in several large sites, rather than being distributed evenly across the District. Where natural greenspace comprises the only form of provision for a local community (particularly in rural areas), there is a need to ensure that it provides sufficient recreational amenity and leisure value.

Table 4.1 Distribution of Unrestricted Greenspace

Sub Area	Total (ha)	ha per 1,000
Alcester & Bidford	176.44	8.34
Shipston	60.74	3.24
Southam	71.82	4.11
Stratford upon Avon	164.59	6.24
Studley & Henley	265.16	13.86
Wellesbourne & Kineton	98.48	6.16
District Total	837.23	7.04

Table 4.2 District Breakdown of Unrestricted Greenspace by Typology

Typology	Total (ha)	% total
Parks, Gardens & Amenity Greenspace	131.72	16%
Sports Pitches	72.45	7%
Children & Young People	8.88	1%
Cemeteries	46.54	6%
Natural Accessible Greenspace	584	70%
Total	835.01	100%

Table 4.3 Breakdown of Unrestricted Greenspace by Typology and Sub Area

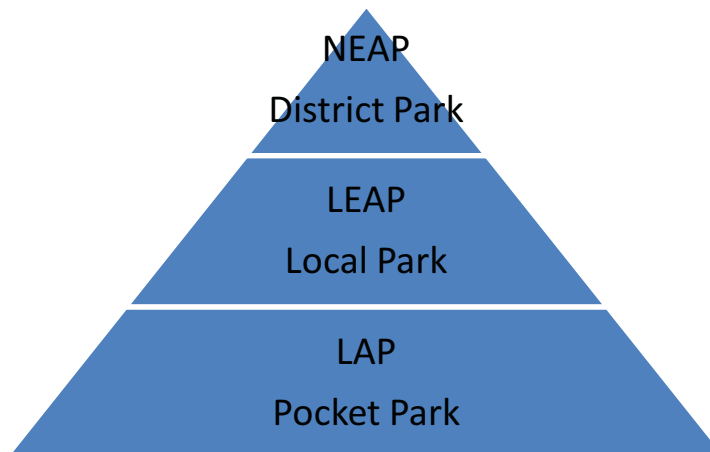
Sub Area	Total Area (ha)				
	Park, Garden & Amenity	Sports Pitch	Children & young people	Cemeteries	Natural Greenspace
Alcester & Bidford	28.94	7.86	1.58	10.09	127.96
Shipston	21.39	11.18	1.76	12.05	14.36
Southam	14.23	10.66	1.65	7.14	37.46
Stratford upon Avon	27.94	6.24	1.00	2.6	126.81
Studley & Henley	16.62	12.15	0.86	7.81	227.72
Wellesbourne & Kineton	27.68	21.14	2.02	6.85	49.69

Map 2 shows the distribution of both unrestricted and conditionally accessible greenspace across the District.

Whilst the widespread distribution of conditionally accessible greenspace across the District suggests that there are potentially a significant number of accessibility barriers to be overcome, it also illustrates the potential to improve existing open space, sports and recreational provision across the District by making best use and enhancing the accessibility of existing facilities, rather than relying on provision of entirely new sites to address identified deficiencies.

One of the most striking issues in the District is the lack of outdoor sports facilities that are publicly accessible to local communities without their having to be a club member or pay annual subscriptions. This has particular implications for encouraging healthy lifestyles, improving participation in sport and providing sufficient activities for young people. Provision of new facilities at the local level is generally dependent on Parish Councils, their priorities as set out in the Parish Plan, and corresponding availability of finance and other necessary resources.

Analysis of the distribution of greenspaces across the District and amongst local settlements and communities reveals that there is no distinct ‘hierarchy’ of provision across the District, as might be found in larger towns and cities where provision might typically be more systematic – there being for example a more evenly distributed network/ hierarchy of provision where smaller types of provision such as LAPs or pocket parks sit within the catchments of larger or higher quality facilities (Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1 Model Open Space Provision

Instead, the pattern of provision in Stratford District is more reflective of an ‘either / or’ situation where a settlement or local community might have access to a Local Park or a Pocket Park; a LAP or a LEAP, but not commonly both. In many smaller settlements where there has been limited or no new development, the distribution is reflective of historic provision (e.g. village cricket grounds) and the availability of suitable land, funding and resources for Parish and Town Councils in more recent years.

The pattern of open space provision across the District means that open spaces tend to perform a more multifunctional role than might be the case elsewhere; a sports pitch might for example also provide the main informal recreational resource for a local community, as well as performing the function of ‘amenity greenspace’ for residents living closest to it.

Where new development has occurred, this has typically been accompanied by small amounts of amenity greenspace and children’s play areas, its size rarely being sufficient to warrant the provision of larger neighbourhood facilities such as sports pitches, NEAPs or neighbourhood parks. The lack of quality standards or guidelines on the form or content of new provision has also meant that it has sometimes been unimaginative or lacking in leisure or amenity value, whilst not necessarily complementing the strengths and weaknesses of existing provision.

5 Parks and Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces

5.1 Introduction

Primary Purpose

Provision of a hierarchy of open space which together comprises a network of smaller sites offering opportunities for informal activities close to home or work and larger, accessible sites offering high quality opportunities for informal recreation, social interaction, and community events.

This chapter considers the provision of Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspace across the District, in terms of accessibility, quantity and quality. Key drivers or trends influencing the use and type of open space provision in the future have also been considered.

Analysis focuses on open spaces with unrestricted public access, although consideration has also been given to conditionally accessible sites such as Registered Parks and Gardens where these make a contribution to the local open space resource.

Although a distinction has been made between the Park and Garden and Amenity Greenspace typologies, given the nature of provision in Stratford District, analysis of these typologies has been undertaken simultaneously to reflect the interrelationship between them; sites classified as parks and gardens do for example often perform an amenity greenspace role, particularly in more rural parts of the District where single sites are more multi-functional.

Consideration of parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces in combination will also ensure a better understanding of the interaction between the typologies and the open space hierarchy across the District, and allow identification of the true extent and nature of existing open space deficiencies.

Map 3 shows the distribution of Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces across the District.

5.2 Accessibility Assessment

5.2.1 Defining Effective Catchment Areas & Accessibility Standard

There is currently no national standard relating to accessibility thresholds for amenity greenspaces. CABE recommends that the London Planning Advisory Committee's Open Space Hierarchy distance thresholds of around 400m for parks under 20ha could be adapted to fit local contexts outside London. Shaping Neighbourhoods¹⁶ recommends that a 10 minute walking distance is appropriate for parks of over 2ha.

¹⁶ Barton, Grant & Guise, 2003. Shaping Neighbourhoods for Local Health and Global Sustainability

Local consultation revealed that there is a clear emphasis in favour of walking to local parks, gardens and amenity greenspace, both in terms of current travel patterns and expectations. Given the need to promote healthy lifestyles; reduce dependence on the private car; encourage sustainable patterns of development; and ensure that open spaces are conveniently located close to the communities they serve to encourage their use and maximise their social and economic benefit, the Effective Catchment Area for parks, gardens and amenity greenspace has been based on walking/ cycling as the preferred mode of transport.

Consultation questionnaire analysis revealed that 75% of residents currently travel up to 10 minutes to access a local park or garden. This level of accessibility was considered to be either Very Good or Good by 75% respondents, and further reflected in findings from the Citizen's Panel and feedback at Parish Council and Community Forum meetings.

A review of distance thresholds in comparative local authority areas also revealed that a travel time of between 5 and 10 minutes was acceptable for amenity greenspaces; rising to between 7.5 and 15 minutes for parks and gardens.

The accessibility standard for Stratford on Avon District has therefore been set at 10 minutes travel time, equivalent to 480m walking distance.

The same distance threshold or Effective Catchment has been applied to all types of park, garden and amenity greenspace in the District regardless of their classification in the open space hierarchy. This was considered to be appropriate due to a number of factors, including:

- The pattern and nature of open space provision across the District;
- Relatively small size of all open spaces in the District (<10ha);
- Most open spaces perform a relatively 'local role' – there is a lack of open spaces of District wide significance;
- Lack of overlapping/ nested catchments within the open space hierarchy (provision is typically 'either/ or' rather than multiple);and
- Typical settlement sizes.

This standard should be applied to all Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements.

Consideration should also be given to the level of accessibility to parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces in Category 4 areas. Although it is acknowledged that residents of smaller villages cannot realistically expect to have the same level of access to a full range of different types of open space, sport and recreation facilities, the PPG17 Companion Guide does however emphasise that, '*residents of many quite small villages expect to have basic facilities, such as a **village green or recreation ground**, either within or immediately adjacent to their village*',¹⁷.

Where smaller villages and hamlets do not have ready access to an open space, this may however be compensated for by provision of other open space typologies, such as natural accessible greenspace, which also provide a recreational resource.

¹⁷ ODMF, 2002. Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17 (para 2.2).

Further details of factors contributing to the proposed Accessibility Standard are provided in Appendix C.

Accessibility Standard	
District wide	10 minutes walking time 480m Effective Catchment

5.2.2 Identifying Accessibility Deficiencies

Maps 4 and 5 illustrate the 480m Effective Catchment of every park, garden and amenity greenspace in the District with unrestricted access. The 480m catchment has been measured from the edge of each of the sites. Table 5.1 summarises the total area of each Sub Area that is within an Effective Catchment of a park, garden and amenity greenspace. The Stratford upon Avon Sub Area has the greatest coverage, which is to be expected given that it has the greatest concentration of open spaces and built up areas. Coverage in other Sub Areas ranges from 7.3% (Studley & Henley) to 39.5% (Stratford upon Avon). Low levels of coverage are however to be expected in a predominantly rural district.

Table 5.1 Effective Catchment Coverage by Sub Area

Sub Area	% Sub Area
Alcester & Bidford	9.6%
Shipston	8.1%
Southam	8.5%
Stratford upon Avon	39.5%
Studley & Henley	7.3%
Wellesbourne & Kington	12.4%
District Wide	10%

Table 5.2 sets out the combined percentage of Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements that are within a 10 minute walking distance of a park, garden or amenity greenspace within each of the Sub Areas. Generally, all Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements within the District have good access to an open space; at the District wide level, over 81% of the area of all these settlements is within a 10 minute walk of an open space. This is also relatively consistent across all the Sub Areas; Alcester and Bidford has the lowest proportion of coverage at 78.2%, and Stratford upon Avon the greatest (87.4%), although this is only marginally higher than Shipston and Wellesbourne and Kington.

Table 5.2 Combined Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlement coverage by Sub Area

Sub Area	% combined settlement coverage
Alcester & Bidford	78.2%
Shipston	87%
Southam	83.5%
Stratford upon Avon	87.4%
Studley & Henley	79.9%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	86.9%
District Wide	81.76%

At the individual settlement level, there is however a greater variation in accessibility. Table 5.3 sets out the proportion of each Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlement currently within a 10 minute Effective Catchment of a park, garden or amenity greenspace.

Table 5.3 Effective Catchment coverage by individual settlement

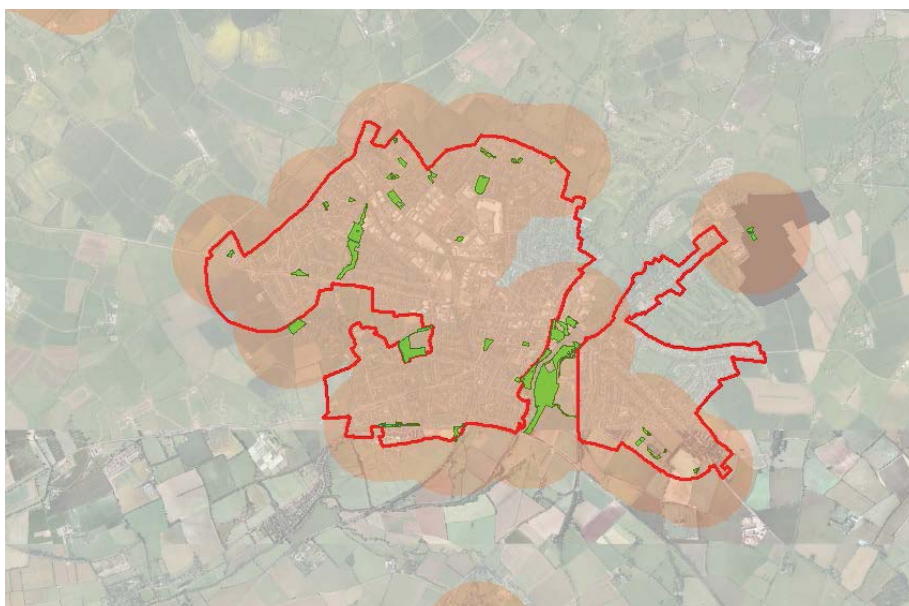
Settlement	Settlement Category	% settlement coverage
Stratford upon Avon	1	88.3%
Alcester	2	99.5%
Bidford on Avon	2	81.1%
Bishops Itchington	2	89.0%
Harbury	2	77.3%
Henley in Arden	2	92.1%
Kineton	2	99.6%
Long Itchington	2	85.3%
Quinton	2	96%
Shipston on Stour	2	92.1%
Southam	2	95.2%
Studley	2	77.0%
Wellesbourne	2	89.6%
Brailes	3	86.3%
Bearley	3	100.0%
Claverdon	3	95.2%
Earlswood	3	40%
Ettington	3	98.1%
Fenny Compton	3	34.7%
Ilmington	3	96.7%

Lighthorne Heath	3	100.0%
Long Compton	3	64.1%
Napton on the Hill	3	63.3%
Salford Priors	3	55.7%
Snitterfield	3	73.9%
Stockton	3	69.5%
Temple Herdewycke	3	90.9%
Tiddington	3	80.6%
Tysoe	3	71.2%
Welford-on-Avon	3	32.1%
Wootton Wawen	3	67.6%

Stratford upon Avon is generally well served by Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspace. Small areas not currently within a 10 minute catchment include (Figure 5.1):

- Area to the North East, in the vicinity of Maidenhead Road, Benson Road and Fordham Avenue axis (although this is compensated for by a nearby area of Natural Accessible Greenspace (see Section 6));
- Area to the East along Tiddington Road / B4086 (this area was also identified as being particularly deficient during consultation); and
- Area to the North of Banbury Road, east of Manor Road (this area was also specifically identified by residents, who commented that the King Edward Playing Fields are the only open space in the locality; although these are not generally publicly accessible at present, they nevertheless provide an important break in the built up area as well as providing strong visual amenity).

Figure 5.1 Effective Catchment Deficiencies in Stratford upon Avon



The River Avon acts as a natural severance line that can restrict access to Stratford Recreation Ground – the largest park in Stratford, where residents may need to take a more circuitous route to access it. The Shakespeare Line also presents an East-West severance line, in the north of the town, although the railway is largely flanked by employment and industrial uses immediately to either side.

Accessibility within Category 2 Settlements is also generally good, ranging from almost 100% in Kineton and Alcester to 77% in Studley and Harbury (the only Category 2 Settlements with less than 80% accessibility). In Studley, older residential areas to the south of Watts Road are lacking any formal open space provision. The western part of Harbury to the west of Farm Street is similarly lacking in provision. Indeed, the village as a whole only has two parks, gardens or amenity greenspaces, suggesting that these might be at or over capacity in terms of the intensity of their use.

Settlements within Category 3 exhibit the greatest difference in levels of accessibility, ranging from 90-100% to as low as 32%. Settlements with the lowest levels of accessibility include:

- Earlswood
- Fenny Compton
- Welford on Avon

Given the lack of new development in smaller villages, provision and therefore accessibility in Category 3 Settlements is likely to be more a function of historical provision; attendees at Community Forums commented in particular that there is no means of securing new open space unless there is new development.

In Category 4 areas, open space is similarly a reflection of historical provision, and the majority of the rural area is outside the catchment of existing parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces. Although not necessarily feasible to provide new parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces in smaller villages, residents of some of the larger villages - such as Alderminster and Avon Dassett did particularly highlight the lack of open spaces in their village during consultation.

Map 5 illustrates the Effective Catchment areas for both unrestricted and conditionally accessible open spaces. Accessibility to parks and gardens in the more rural areas in particular improves with consideration of conditionally accessible Registered Parks and Gardens which are accessible to the public on payment of an entry fee (ranging from £1 for Compton Verney to up to £12 for some of Shakespeare's Birthplace Trust Registered Parks and Gardens). Relatively poor access to parks, gardens and amenity greenspace in rural areas is also compensated for to an extent by the location of much of the District's natural accessible greenspace (see Section 6), although this type of open space does not always provide an equivalent recreational or leisure value for local communities.

5.2.3 Other Factors Influencing Accessibility

Other factors influencing accessibility must also be considered, including disabled access, topography, visibility, public transport accessibility and entrance fees. Disabled access to and within open spaces was particularly raised by Alcester residents in the consultation process; this is considered further in Section 5.4.

Cost was not identified in the consultation process as being a particular barrier to entry and accessibility, although the payment charges for most of the Registered Parks and Gardens does reduce their value as resources for the local community. This is particularly the case in the more rural areas, where free access to large Registered Parks and Gardens such as Compton Verney, Ragley Hall, Upton Hall, Farnborough House and Charlecote Park for local residents would significantly improve accessibility and potentially help to address existing issues of deficiency in rural areas where the potential for providing new open spaces is most limited. There are also some other Registered Parks and Gardens that are not currently accessible to the public at all – Clifford Manor, Honington Hall, Radway Grange and Alscot Park. The potential for these parks to provide some form of local community recreational resource could also be explored.

The importance of good public transport links to neighbouring settlements to allow residents access to a wider range of facilities was particularly highlighted through the consultation process. Residents indicated that they are prepared to travel to parks but efficient public transport needs to be provided in order to do so. There is however a potential incompatibility between those areas most in need of public transport to access open spaces (i.e. primarily rural areas) and the capacity of these areas to support viable public transport services.

Many of the pockets of greatest deprivation in the District are located within the main settlements, which are best served by open space provision. There are however some relatively more deprived rural areas around Bidford on Avon and Lighthorne Heath where a lack of provision coincides with slightly higher levels of deprivation – although there is no identifiable correlation.

5.3 Quantity Assessment

5.3.1 Baseline Provision

In total there are 79 Parks and Gardens and 82 amenity greenspaces within the District, covering a total area of 136.8ha. The size of sites varies considerably; the smallest park or garden is Memorial Gardens in Stratford upon Avon, which is 0.11ha. The size of amenity greenspaces ranges from just under 0.2ha to 1.5ha, the largest being some of the village greens; all but four amenity greenspaces are however smaller than 1ha.

The majority of open spaces in the District are less than 2ha in size. There are a limited number of large parks in the District; none are greater than 10ha. There are only three District Parks greater than 5ha - The Big Meadow in Bidford on Avon, Kington High School (grounds are accessible to the local community for informal recreation) and Stratford Recreation Ground. Of these, only Stratford Recreation Ground is considered to be a District wide resource performing more than a local function, the others being District Parks only by virtue of their size. Stratford Recreation Ground hosts several annual events and festivals, contains several

cafes and refreshment stands, and offers a variety of activities including an extensive children's playground, football pitches, mini golf and a paddling pool that attract visitors and tourists from outside the town.



Stratford Recreation Ground, the largest District Park

The lack of larger parks was raised as a particular issue during consultation. Residents have also commented that larger open spaces are often in dual use for outdoor sport, which can reduce their recreational and leisure value, particularly at weekends and in the evenings when matches and training are typically in progress. Residents would also like to see more traditional 'Parks' with formal planting and landscaping, which are currently largely confined to Stratford upon Avon town.



Residents would like to see more formal Parks, planting and landscaping, such as Bancroft Gardens and the Garden of Remembrance

The preponderance of smaller sites within the District has been reinforced by the pattern of new development in the District and the application of existing open space standards, which have typically led to small amounts of amenity greenspace being provided within relatively modest sized new developments. There is clearly a need to improve the provision of larger open spaces within the District, although the dispersed pattern of smaller sites perhaps better reflects the general population density and distribution of communities across the District.



New development has led to the preponderance of small amenity greenspaces

Figure 5.2 Open Space Provision in Stratford on Avon District

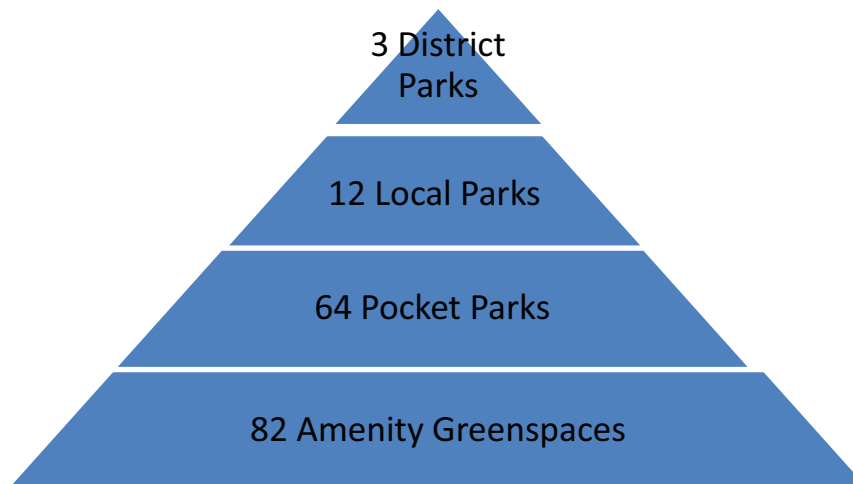


Table 5.4 summarises the distribution of parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces across each Sub Area.

Table 5.4 Distribution of Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces by Sub Area

Sub Area	Amenity	Pocket Park	Local Park	District Park	Total
Alcester & Bidford	9	11	3	1	24
Shipston	17	12	2	0	31
Southam	9	11	1	0	21
Stratford upon Avon	22	7	2	1	32
Studley & Henley	8	9	3	0	20
Wellesbourne & Kington	17	14	1	1	33
District Wide	82	64	12	3	161

Wellesbourne and Kington has the largest number of open spaces, although Shipston and Stratford upon Avon also have over 30 sites apiece. Studley and Henley and Southam Sub Areas have the smallest number of parks, gardens and

amenity greenspaces. The Southam Sub Area in particular has a lack of larger open spaces, containing just one Local Park and no District Parks.

Table 5.5 summarises the number of parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces in each of the Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements.

Table 5.5 Open Space provision in Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements

Settlement	Amenity Greenspace	Park and Garden	Total
Stratford upon Avon	21	10	31
Alcester	5	6	11
Bidford on Avon	2	2	4
Shipston on Stour	4	2	6
Quinton	2	1	3
Southam	3	6	9
Bishops Itchington	1	0	1
Harbury	1	1	2
Long Itchington	2	2	4
Studley	4	3	7
Henley in Arden	1	2	3
Wellesbourne	6	3	9
Kineton	2	2	4
Salford Priors	0	1	1
Welford on Avon	0	1	1
Wootton Wawen	1	1	2
Ilmington	1	1	2
Brailes	2	1	2
Ettington	1	1	2
Long Compton	0	1	1
Tysoe	0	1	1
Napton on the Hill	1	1	2
Stockton	0	1	1
Temple Herdewycke	1	0	1
Tiddington	1	0	1
Bearley	1	1	2
Claverdon	1	1	2
Earlswood	0	2	2
Fenny Compton	0	1	1
Lighthorne Heath	3	1	4
Snitterfield	0	2	2

Stratford upon Avon town has a much larger number of parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces (31) than any other settlements in the District, although this is reflective of its relative size and function. It has a particularly high number of amenity greenspaces, many of which have been provided through new development.

There are several other Category 2 Settlements that do not have a Local or District Park:

- Bishops Itchington
- Harbury
- Henley in Arden
- Long Itchington
- Quinton
- Wellesbourne

Residents in Shipston have also commented that they do not have a ‘traditional’ Local Park, as the main open space in the town is also shared with Shipston Sports and Social Club.

Category 2 Settlements with two or less open spaces include Quinton, Bishops Itchington and Harbury. Bishops Itchington in particular is the only Category 2 settlement not to contain a park or garden, compounded by the fact that the only amenity greenspace in the village (Ladbroke Road) is very small (0.23ha).

The level of provision of amenity greenspace generally declines with settlement size, largely due to relatively low levels of new development and the fact that in smaller settlements amenity greenspace performs less of an important local function. Open space provision in the District’s smaller settlements tends to comprise one or two relatively small open spaces, with the exception of Lighthorne Heath, which has four sites, and Brailes, Earlswood and Fenny Compton, all of which have a Local Park (2-5ha).

There are also a significant number of smaller villages and hamlets (Category 4 Settlements) that contain a park, garden or amenity greenspace, which are listed in Table 5.6. Many of these are village recreation grounds and village greens, the largest of which is 1.5ha. The Shipston Sub Area has the greatest number of parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces in Category 4 areas, although this is perhaps reflective of its relative geographical size.

Table 5.6 Category 4 Settlements with a Park, Garden or Open Space

Settlement	Sub Area	Amenity Greenspace	Park and Garden
Temple Grafton	Alcester & Bidford		1
Broom	Alcester & Bidford		1
Clifford Chambers	Alcester & Bidford		1
Great Alne	Alcester & Bidford		1
Wilmcote	Alcester & Bidford	2	2
Butlers Marston	Shipston	1	

Honington	Shipston	1	
Little Compton	Shipston		1
Loxley	Shipston	1	1
Newbold on Stour	Shipston	1	
Pillerton Priors	Shipston		1
Preston on Stour	Shipston	1	
Stretton on Fosse	Shipston		1
Sutton	Shipston	1	
Tredington	Shipston	1	1
Whichford	Shipston		1
Deppers Bridge	Southam		1
Ladbroke	Southam		1
Priors Marston	Southam	1	
Ullenhall	Studley & Henley		1
Arlescote	Wellesbourne & Kineton	1	
Combrook	Wellesbourne & Kineton		1
Farnborough	Wellesbourne & Kineton		1
Hampton Lucy	Wellesbourne & Kineton		2
Knightcote	Wellesbourne & Kineton		1
Lighthorne	Wellesbourne & Kineton	1	1
Moreton Morrell	Wellesbourne & Kineton		1
Northend	Wellesbourne & Kineton		1
Radway	Wellesbourne & Kineton	1	
Ratley	Wellesbourne & Kineton		1
Warmington	Wellesbourne & Kineton	1	

A full list of parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces is provided in Appendix F.

5.3.2 Developing a Quantitative Provision Standard

Given the relative size of open spaces in the District, their multi-functionality, distribution and the overlap between larger sites and amenity greenspaces where sites further up the open space hierarchy can also perform an amenity greenspace function by providing opportunities for informal recreation close to where residents live (particularly in the more rural parts of the District), a single quantitative provision open space standard is proposed that encompasses parks and gardens and amenity greenspace provision. This is supported by more qualitative recommendations relating to each typology where there are specific deficiencies that need to be addressed within a particular Sub Area or settlement. The pattern of relatively small new open spaces being provided in recent years also supports the adoption of a single open space standard without a separate amenity greenspace standard, which may help to facilitate the provision of larger open spaces in the future.

There are currently no national standards for the provision of parks and gardens. Provision for amenity greenspace has typically comprised part of Fields in Trust's (FIT) recommended standards for children's play facilities, which includes 0.55ha per 1,000 population of informal children's play space. Adopted standards in Stratford District comprise 0.6ha of incidental and general open space (0.2ha and 0.4ha respectively) in Stratford upon Avon, and 0.2ha incidental open space in the Main Rural Centres. The current distribution of amenity greenspace across the District largely reflects the local standard of 0.2ha, with only the Studley and Henley Sub Area falling short.

Current open space provision across the District is 1.15ha per 1,000 population comprising 0.27 amenity greenspace and 0.88 parks and gardens. Consultation feedback suggests that the current level of open space provision across the District is about right; 70% of responses to the online questionnaire indicated that there are Enough or More than Enough parks in the District. This view was consistent across the District indicating that there is no clear urban / rural divide. Furthermore, the quantity of provision across the District was not raised as a particular issue in the Citizen's Panel, Parish Council Forum or any of the Community Forums. Findings from the online questionnaire did suggest however that local parks and gardens are the most frequently used open spaces of all the typologies, reinforcing the need to maintain sufficient parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces in the future.

Comparison with the level of provision in other similar local authority areas suggests that it is roughly comparative with other areas – combined provision in these authorities ranging from 1.02ha/1,000 to 2.58ha/1,000.

Taking into account these considerations, it is suggested that the quantitative provision standard is set to maintain the existing level of provision. This standard should ensure that population growth is accompanied by further provision (at a rate of 1.15 hectares per 1000), whilst allowing current attention to focus on specific areas of quantitative under provision or accessibility deficiency, as well as improvements to the quality of existing sites. The standard should be treated as a minimum standard of provision.

Whilst it is potentially a little lower than the standards set in other local authority areas, the District wide provision of 1.15ha/1,000 masks some significant areas of under provision (see Section 5.3.3). By setting the standard to maintain the existing level of provision, this allows attention to focus on raising levels of provision in areas that are currently deficient. It is suggested that it is adopted as a District wide standard, although focus should be on improving provision in Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements where existing provision falls short. New provision should also focus on providing larger open spaces, which will provide greater recreational value for local residents, as well as addressing existing deficiencies further up the open space hierarchy.

Quantitative Provision Standard	
District wide	1.15ha per 1,000 population

5.3.3 Identifying Quantitative Deficiencies and Surpluses

Table 5.7 sets out provision per 1,000 population within each of the individual Sub Areas. The provision of amenity greenspace varies from 0.16ha per 1,000 population in Studley and Henley to 0.51ha/1,000 in Wellesbourne and Kineton. Provision of parks and gardens is more variable, with Southam having just 0.62ha/1,000 and Wellesbourne and Kineton having 1.22ha/1,000.

Overall open space provision varies between 0.81ha/ 1,000 in Southam and 1.73/ 1,000 in Wellesbourne and Kineton. Areas of over provision at the Sub Area level include:

- Alcester and Bidford (although residents of Alcester and Bidford on Avon perceive there to be a shortage in these towns)
- Wellesbourne and Kineton

Areas of under provision include:

- Southam
- Shipston (very marginal under provision)
- Studley and Henley
- Stratford upon Avon

Table 5.7 Quantitative provision of Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspace per 1,000 population by Sub Area

Sub Area	Area (ha)	ha per 1,000 population
Parks and Gardens		
Alcester & Bidford	25.20	1.19
Shipston	14.02	0.75
Southam	10.85	0.62
Stratford upon Avon	21.61	0.82
Studley & Henley	13.62	0.71
Wellesbourne & Kineton	19.53	1.22
District Wide	104.82	0.88
Amenity Greenspace		
Alcester & Bidford	3.74	0.18
Shipston	7.38	0.39
Southam	3.38	0.19
Stratford upon Avon	6.33	0.24
Studley & Henley	3.00	0.16
Wellesbourne & Kineton	8.15	0.51
District Wide	31.98	0.27
Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspace		
Alcester & Bidford	28.94	1.37
Shipston	21.39	1.14
Southam	14.23	0.81
Stratford upon Avon	27.94	1.06
Studley & Henley	16.62	0.87
Wellesbourne & Kineton	27.68	1.73
District Wide	136.80	1.15

Table 5.8 sets out provision per 1,000 population at the individual settlement level.

Table 5.8 Quantitative provision of Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces per 1,000 population by individual settlement

Settlement	Total Area Open Space (ha)	Open space per 1,000 (ha)
Stratford upon Avon	27.57	1.14
Alcester	11.39	1.55
Bidford on Avon	10.22	2.15
Shipston on Stour	3.44	0.71
Quinton	2.26	1.35
Southam	6.82	1.09
Bishops Itchington	0.23	0.10
Harbury	1.06	0.46
Long Itchington	0.98	0.54
Studley	5.43	0.90
Henley in Arden	2.51	0.85
Wellesbourne	3.82	0.69
Kineton	8.57	3.60
Salford Priors	1.23	1.13
Welford on Avon	1.26	0.95
Wootton Wawen	0.21	0.20
Ilmington	1.65	2.20
Brailes	3.92	3.84
Ettington	1.42	1.32
Long Compton	2.36	2.99
Tysoe	0.71	0.73
Napton on the Hill	0.69	0.70
Stockton	1.06	0.81
Temple Herdewycke	0.95	1.19
Tiddington	0.37	0.26

Bearley	0.90	1.16
Claverdon	2.22	2.64
Earlswood	4.25	4.25
Fenny Compton	2.56	3.15
Lighthorne Heath	2.23	2.86
Snitterfield	0.72	0.67

At this scale, open space provision in Stratford upon Avon town is marginally less than the District average. Provision per 1,000 population amongst the Category 2 Settlements is variable, with a considerable number not meeting the current standard. Bishop's Itchington is the most extreme case, with only 0.10ha/1,000 population. Other settlements experiencing significant under provision include:

- Shipston on Stour
- Harbury
- Long Itchington
- Wellesbourne.

The preponderance of Category 2 Settlements that do not meet the existing standard is reflective of the generally small size of most open spaces; whilst most settlements have performed quite well in terms of accessibility (i.e. the distribution of sites), analysis of the quantity of that provision reveals that it is insufficient in several cases, and that existing open spaces are therefore likely to be subject to quite intensive use. Sites that were particularly frequently identified during consultation are listed in Box 5.1. Noticeably, it is the larger parks and gardens that are most frequented, suggesting that there is a case for improving provision of larger open spaces across the District.

Box 5.1 Most frequently visited Open Spaces

Conway Fields, Alcester	Southam Recreation Ground
Moorfields, Alcester	Brailes Playing Field
Astwood Bank Park	Ettington Sports Club
Bleachfield Street, Alcester	Open space outside Village Hall in Lower Quinton
Big Meadow, Bidford	Preston on Stour village green
Dugdale Avenue, Bidford	Lower Quinton Playing Fields
Stratford Recreation Ground	Shipston Sports and Social Club
Bancroft gardens, Stratford	Shotteswell paying field
Shottery Fields, Stratford	Mountfort Sports Ground, Wellesbourne
Hodgson Road, Stratford	Kinwarton Park
Firs Garden, Stratford	Welford on Avon Primary School
Clopton Fields, Stratford	Playing Field
The Greenway, Stratford	Wilmcote Park
Riverlands, Henley	Bishop's Itchington Sports Field
Recreation ground, Sambourne	



Most frequently visited open spaces: The Bid Meadow, Hodgson Road, Henley Riverlands and Shipston Sports Club

Many of the Category 3 Settlements actually have better quantitative provision than the Category 2 Settlements; significant surpluses are identified in:

- Ilmington
- Brailes
- Long Compton
- Claverdon
- Earlswood
- Fenny Compton
- Lighthorne Heath

Category 3 Settlements with particular deficiencies include:

- Tysoe
- Napton on the Hill
- Stockton
- Tiddington
- Welford on Avon
- Wootton Wawen
- Snitterfield

Table 5.9 sets out the quantity of additional open space provision required to meet existing standards across all the Sub Areas. The most significant deficit in provision to meet current requirements is in Southam where an additional 5.88ha of open space is required. The Sub Area with the greatest provision is Wellesbourne and Kineton, which has a surplus of 9.31ha.

Table 5.9 Additional Open Space requirements by Sub Area

Sub Area	Current provision (ha)	Provision required to meet standard (ha)	Current deficit / surplus (ha)
Alcester & Bidford	28.94	24.32	4.63
Shipston	21.39	21.59	-0.19
Southam	14.23	20.11	-5.88
Stratford upon Avon	27.94	30.31	-2.37
Studley & Henley	16.62	22.00	-5.38
Wellesbourne & Kineton	27.38	18.37	9.31
District Wide Deficit	136.8	136.8	-

Table 5.10 summarises additional open space requirements for each settlement to meet the quantitative standard

Table 5.10 Additional Open Space requirements by individual settlement

Settlement	Current provision (ha)	Provision required to meet standard (ha)	Current deficit / surplus (ha)
Stratford upon Avon	27.57	27.83	-0.26
Alcester	11.39	8.46	2.93
Bidford on Avon	10.22	5.46	4.75
Shipston on Stour	3.44	5.57	-2.12
Quinton	2.26	1.93	0.33
Southam	6.82	7.19	-0.37
Bishops Itchington	0.23	2.54	-2.31
Harbury	1.06	2.62	-1.56
Long Itchington	0.98	2.09	-1.11
Studley	5.43	6.90	-1.47
Henley in Arden	2.51	3.38	-0.87
Wellesbourne	3.82	6.35	-2.53
Kineton	8.57	2.74	5.84
Salford Priors	1.23	1.25	-0.02
Welford on Avon	1.26	1.52	-0.26
Wootton Wawen	0.21	1.17	-0.97
Ilmington	1.65	0.86	0.79
Brailes	3.61	1.17	2.75
Ettington	1.42	1.24	0.18
Long Compton	2.36	0.91	1.45
Tysoe	0.71	1.12	-0.41
Napton on the Hill	0.69	1.13	-0.44
Stockton	1.06	1.51	-0.45
Temple Herdewycke	0.95	0.92	0.03
Tiddington	0.37	1.63	-1.26
Bearley	0.90	0.90	0.01
Claverdon	2.22	0.97	1.25
Earlswood	4.25	1.15	3.10
Fenny Compton	2.56	0.93	1.62
Lighthorne Heath	2.23	0.90	1.33
Snitterfield	0.72	1.24	-0.52

On the basis of the proposed standard, many of the Category 4 villages and hamlets which do not currently have an area of open space would qualify for some form of provision equivalent to a Pocket Park. Table 5.11 provides an indication of approximate open space provision requirements for a range of smaller settlement sizes, based on the standard of 1.15ha per 1,000 population.

Table 5.11 Park, Garden and Amenity Greenspace provision requirements for Category 4 Settlements

Population size	Provision requirement	
	ha	sqm
500	0.58	5,880
400	0.46	4,660
300	0.37	3,770
200	0.23	2,330
100	0.12	1,220

5.4 Quality Assessment

5.4.1 Assessment Framework

The quality assessment for parks, gardens and amenity greenspace is based on Green Flag Award best practice, which assesses open spaces against eight key criteria, including cleanliness, sustainability, management, conservation and heritage.

Aspirations set out in the District's Vision for Open Space have also been taken into account – in particular the contribution of open spaces towards other policy objectives such as biodiversity, culture and heritage and community wellbeing; improved multifunction and variety; facilitating access and participation; cleanliness and maintenance.

Feedback from public and stakeholder consultation about what factors contribute towards making open spaces places that people want to visit have also been incorporated into the quality assessment. Consultation revealed that the overall quality of a park is broadly dependent on the following factors:

- Evidence of a maintenance regime;
- Clean, well maintained spaces with no litter or vandalism;
- Variety in terms of visual appearance, vegetation and the natural environment, planting and other features of interest;
- Provision of a variety of facilities, including provision for a range of age groups;
- Safety and security;
- Consideration of the needs of users – for example benches, bins and shelter; and
- Physical accessibility – including disabled access.

The quality assessment of Parks and Gardens comprises the following categories:

A welcoming place: physical access and provision of signage and information.

Healthy, safe and secure: facilities and opportunities offered for exercise, as well as general safety and security.

Clean and well maintained: litter and waste management, grounds maintenance and management and maintenance of buildings.

Conservation and heritage: natural or historic heritage and quality of natural environment.

Diversity and variety: range of facilities and opportunities for activities.

The same categories have been used to assess Amenity Greenspace. However, the categories comprise fewer criteria to reflect the types of provision and facilities that might reasonably be found within an amenity greenspace. Criteria that are unlikely to be consistently found in most amenity greenspaces have been excluded from the analysis – for example buildings, cafes, shelter and toilets. The quality of the natural environment has also been assessed against fewer criteria because amenity greenspaces do not generally contain such a wide range of planting and habitats.

Further information about the breakdown of points for each category is provided in Appendix E.

The quality assessment is primary based upon information gathered during the site audits, which has been supplemented with consultation feedback and baseline information provided by Stratford District and Warwickshire County Council.

The scores for each component of the assessment have been translated into overall site ratings as follows:

Excellent	scoring over 80% available points
Good	scoring 65-70% available points
Fair	scoring 50-64% available points
Poor	scoring 25-49% available points
Very Poor	scoring less than 25% available points

5.4.2 Quality Assessment: Parks and Gardens

Overall, 13% of Parks and Gardens in the District have been assessed as Good; 48% Fair; and 39% as Poor. The District does not contain any parks or gardens classified as Excellent, although Stratford Recreation Ground and Bancroft Gardens are very close to achieving this classification.

A Welcoming Place

Quality Rating	No. sites	% sites
Excellent	10	14%
Good	13	18%
Fair	16	22%
Poor	35	47%
Very Poor	nil	-

When approaching or entering a park or garden, the overall impression for any member of the community should be positive and inviting. Stratford's parks and gardens demonstrated a wide variation in how welcoming they are. The majority of sites were considered to have good and safe access within the site. However, almost half of the sites were considered to have poor disabled access. The assessment also identified a lack of signage both to and within sites, with the majority of sites not having any signage at all.



Sites generally had good and safe access, although disabled access is limited



Parks and Gardens should have appropriate signage

Health, Safety and Security

Quality Rating	No. sites	% sites
Excellent	nil	-
Good	9	13%
Fair	37	53%
Poor	24	34%
Very Poor	nil	-

Parks and gardens should be healthy, safe and secure places for all members of the community to use. All parks and gardens were considered to be reasonably safe, with only one park (Conway Fields, Alcester) being awarded the lowest possible mark for overall safety. All sites tended to score poorly in terms of lighting, which has a knock on effect on how safe a site feels. Parks and gardens scored well in terms of dog fouling which is consistent with the high scores for cleanliness and maintenance. However, local consultation did raise issues with dog fouling in a number of locations – an issue which was also identified in the Citizen's Panel and previous Customer Satisfaction Index surveys.



Residents have raised concerns about the management of dog fouling

The consultation process also highlighted that a number of residents consider there to be issues with antisocial behaviour in their local parks, which can make spaces feel unsafe. In particular, residents commented that the local parks in Alcester, Bidford on Avon, Stratford upon Avon and Southam are used by congregating teenagers which discourages other users from visiting the parks. Local residents have also commented that several sites in the District are surrounded by busy roads, which makes them unsafe and inaccessible for younger children.

Cleanliness and Maintenance

Quality Rating	No. sites	% sites
Excellent	19	27%
Good	25	36%
Fair	21	30%
Poor	5	7%
Very Poor	nil	-

Sites across the District scored particularly well in terms of cleanliness and maintenance, which reflects the District Council's commitment to its Service Standards¹⁸. Generally, site assessments found that there was little or no litter and grounds, buildings and equipment were well maintained. Every Sub Area contains at least one site classified as Excellent in this respect; Shipston scored particularly well with two thirds of sites being assessed as Excellent. Only four parks or gardens in the District were awarded a score of Poor for cleanliness and maintenance, these are Shottery Brook (Stratford upon Avon), Studley Sports Club, Bearley Recreation Ground and Mountford Recreation Ground (Wellesbourne).



Generally, sites across the District are well maintained

These findings are echoed in the consultation results; satisfaction with the cleanliness and maintenance of the District's parks and gardens was generally high amongst respondents to the online questionnaire, with 57% rating current levels of management and maintenance as either 'Very Good' or 'Fairly Good'; only 15% respondents rated it as Poor. Specific issues relating to cleanliness and maintenance identified during consultation included dog fouling, litter and vandalism, particularly in Alcester and Studley.

Conservation and Heritage

Quality Rating	No. sites	% sites
Excellent	2	3%
Good	4	5%
Fair	14	19%
Poor	45	61%
Very Poor	9	12%

Scores for Conservation and Heritage displayed a wide variation across the District. Many of the sites do not contain any heritage features such as a Listed Building or Scheduled Ancient Monument, which may add value by making a park a more interesting place to visit.

The natural features and fauna in the District's parks and gardens are generally well managed and of a good quality. Almost all sites achieved maximum points for grass covering which is again reflective of the high level of maintenance. This

¹⁸ Stratford on Avon District Council, Stratford on Avon District Council Service Standards

was also reflected in the consultation findings; respondents to the online questionnaire considered the quality of the natural environment within the District's open spaces to be good, with 72% respondents rating it as either Very Good or Fairly Good and only 10% of responses considering it to be Poor.

Information about ecological features in parks was generally lacking; Stratford Recreation Ground is the only Park in the District which contained such information. The provision of more information about sites, their history and ecological features was suggested as a potential improvement through the consultation process - particularly in relation to larger or historical sites such as the Burton Dassett Hills.



Information about ecology is generally lacking across all sites

Diversity and Variety

Quality Rating	No. sites	% sites
Excellent	nil	-
Good	2	3%
Fair	19	26%
Poor	35	47%
Very Poor	18	24%

Stratford District's parks and gardens generally contain a limited variety of natural habitats. Whilst almost all parks contain grass and trees, provision of other types of habitat such as wetlands, shrub, water bodies and woodland is less common. This has been identified as a contributory factor to the lack of fully accessible natural greenspace in the District, as very few parks or gardens contain any natural habitats. Only a limited number of sites have formal planting, and there is a general lack of 'formal parks and gardens' outside Stratford upon Avon town. Provision of more trees was suggested through the consultation process as a potential improvement.

Generally, the District's parks are not very multifunctional and each site offers a limited range of experiences. This was also recognized in the consultation process; only 16% respondents to the online questionnaire rated the range of facilities as 'Very Good', rising to 45% for Fairly or Very Good. The minority of sites do not contain any seating; however where seating was provided it was

generally in good condition. Improved provision of seating and picnic benches in the District's parks was identified as a particular priority during consultation.



The diversity and variety of sites needs to be improved, both in terms of biodiversity and activities

Table 5.12 sets out the overall quality assessment results for each Sub Area. There is a concentration of particularly high scoring sites in the Stratford upon Avon Sub Area, which has five of the top ten sites. This may be a reflection of resources being targeted in Stratford upon Avon town in recognition of its appeal as a popular tourist destination. Conversely, the Shipston Sub Area does not contain any Parks or Gardens classified as Good or Excellent. The remaining four Sub Areas all contain just one Park or Garden classified as Good (Millennium Field in Southam; Lighthorne Heath Playing Field in Wellesbourne and Kineton, Earlswood Recreation Ground in Studley and Henley; and Alcester Recreation Ground in Alcester and Bidford).

Sub Area	A Welcoming Place		Healthy, safe and secure		Clean and well maintained		Conservation and heritage		Diversity and variety		Overall Score	
	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites
Southam	Excellent	1	Excellent	0	Excellent	1	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	1	Good	0	Good	3	Good	1	Good	0	Good	1
	Fair	2	Fair	3	Fair	2	Fair	2	Fair	1	Fair	2
	Poor	2	Poor	3	Poor	0	Poor	2	Poor	3	Poor	3
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	1	Very Poor	2	Very Poor	0
Stratford upon Avon	Excellent	4	Excellent	0	Excellent	4	Excellent	1	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	1	Good	4	Good	3	Good	1	Good	0	Good	5
	Fair	2	Fair	5	Fair	1	Fair	4	Fair	3	Fair	3
	Poor	2	Poor	0	Poor	1	Poor	3	Poor	5	Poor	1
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	1	Very Poor	0
Studley & Henley	Excellent	2	Excellent	0	Excellent	1	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	2	Good	0	Good	3	Good	1	Good	0	Good	1
	Fair	1	Fair	6	Fair	6	Fair	2	Fair	5	Fair	4
	Poor	7	Poor	6	Poor	2	Poor	8	Poor	3	Poor	7
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	1	Very Poor	4	Very Poor	0

Sub Area	A Welcoming Place		Healthy, safe and secure		Clean and well maintained		Conservation and heritage		Diversity and variety		Overall Score	
	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites
Wellesbourne & Kineton	Excellent	1	Excellent	0	Excellent	5	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	3	Good	1	Good	2	Good	0	Good	0	Good	1
	Fair	4	Fair	9	Fair	4	Fair	1	Fair	2	Fair	7
	Poor	6	Poor	4	Poor	2	Poor	11	Poor	9	Poor	6
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	2	Very Poor	3	Very Poor	0

Appendix G sets out the quality assessment scores for each individual site. Across the District the top ten scoring sites are:

- Moreton Morrell Playing Field (Wellesbourne & Kineton)
- Memorial Gardens (Stratford upon Avon)
- Millennium Field (Southam)
- Lighthorne Heath Playing Field (Wellesbourne & Kineton)
- Earlswood Recreation Ground (Studley & Henley)
- Theatre / Avonbank Gardens (Stratford upon Avon)
- Bancroft Gardens (Stratford upon Avon)
- Alcester Recreation Ground (Alcester & Bidford)
- Firs Gardens (Stratford upon Avon)
- Stratford Recreation Ground (Stratford upon Avon)

There is a particular concentration of poorly scoring sites in Studley and Henley and Alcester and Bidford; all but three of the lowest ten scoring sites are located in these Sub Areas, the exceptions being Mountford Recreation Ground (Wellesbourne), Quinton Playing Fields and Old School Field (Southam). Sites that scored poorly tend to have a very limited range of facilities, and Conservation / Heritage value. The ten lowest scoring sites are as follows:

- Bearley Recreation Ground (Studley & Henley)
- Mountford Recreation Ground (Wellesbourne & Kineton)
- Studley Common (Studley & Henley)
- Studley Sports Club (Studley & Henley)
- Kinwarton Park, Alcester (Alcester & Bidford)
- Quinton Playing Fields (Shipston)
- Cloweswood Lane, Earlswood (Studley & Henley)
- Conway Fields, Alcester (Alcester & Bidford)
- Old School Field, Southam (Southam)
- Kings Lane, Broom (Alcester & Bidford)

Table 5.13 considers the quality of the District's parks and gardens on an individual settlement basis. The higher scoring sites tend to be located in Stratford upon Avon and Category 2 Settlements. Only two sites rated as Good are located in Category 3 Settlements; these are Lighthorne Heath Playing Field and Earlswood Recreation Ground.

Table 5.13 Quality of Parks and Gardens by individual settlement

Settlement	Overall Quality Score (number of sites)				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Stratford upon Avon		5	3	1	
Alcester		1	2	2	
Bidford			1	1	
Shipston on Stour			2		
Quinton				1	
Southam			1	2	
Bishops Itchington					
Harbury					
Long Itchington				1	
Studley			1	2	
Henley in Arden			2		
Wellesbourne				3	
Kineton			1	1	
Salford Priors			1		
Welford on Avon			1		
Wootton Wawen					
Ilmington				1	
Brailes				1	
Ettington			1		
Long Compton			1		
Tysoe					
Napton on the Hill			1		
Stockton					
Temple Herdewycke					
Tiddington					
Bearley				1	
Claverdon			1		
Earlswood		1		1	
Fenny Compton			1		
Lighthorne Heath		1			
Snitterfield				2	

5.4.3 Quality Assessment: Amenity Greenspaces

The majority of Amenity Greenspaces (58%) have been categorised as Fair. Of the remaining sites, 27% are considered to be Good; 12% are Poor; and 3% are Excellent. No sites were identified as being Very Poor. The two sites which were awarded a score of Excellent are St Peters Way in Stratford Upon Avon and Leam Road in Lighthorne Heath. Both of these sites were considered to be safe and secure, and were also very clean and well maintained – they both scored maximum points for dog fouling, litter and maintenance of landscape.

Amenity greenspaces generally scored poorly in terms of Diversity and Variety, although this is unsurprising given that they are usually small sites which perform a limited function. Similar to parks and gardens, sites across the District scored highly for Cleanliness and Maintenance; only one site (Elliot Drive, Wellesbourne) scored poorly in this respect. Site visits revealed that amenity greenspaces provided as part of new developments can however have a tendency to be quite bland in terms of variety and interest, which can be improved through planting schemes, seating or public art. A particularly good example of more interesting and varied amenity greenspace is Signal Road in Shipston.



Signal Road, Shipston

There was a wide spread of results in terms of how Healthy, Safe and Secure sites are. A number of the sites in this category are small greenspaces which do not contain any of the more formal provisions such as lighting and secure boundaries that might be expected of larger parks or gardens. Where they are not located adjacent to housing, this can mean that sites have a tendency to feel less safe. Their limited size also means that they offer less opportunity for recreation.

Table 5.14 provides a summary of quality assessment scores by Sub Area. The Stratford Sub Area demonstrates the most variety in terms of the quality of amenity greenspaces; it contains several of the highest scoring sites, including St Peters Way, Three Trees, and Joseph Way, but also contains four of the lowest scoring sites (Knights Lane, Oakleigh Road, Park Court and Glebe Road). Wellesbourne and Kineton also displays a range of quality, with Leam Road classified as Excellent and Elliot Drive classified as Poor. The amenity greenspaces in Studley and Henley are of particularly high quality, with 57% classified as Good, which is higher than any other Sub Area.

Table 5.14 Quality Assessment Scores for Amenity Greenspace by Sub Area

Sub Area	A Welcoming Place		Healthy safe and secure		Clean and well maintained		Conservation and heritage		Diversity and Variety		Overall Score	
	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites
Alcester & Bidford	Excellent	5	Excellent	1	Excellent	4	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	2	Good	2	Good	4	Good	3	Good	0	Good	3
	Fair	2	Fair	6	Fair	1	Fair	3	Fair	1	Fair	5
	Poor	0	Poor	0	Poor	0	Poor	1	Poor	4	Poor	1
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	2	Very Poor	4	Very Poor	0
Shipston	Excellent	1	Excellent	2	Excellent	10	Excellent	4	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	4	Good	9	Good	6	Good	6	Good	0	Good	3
	Fair	12	Fair	5	Fair	1	Fair	5	Fair	1	Fair	12
	Poor	0	Poor	1	Poor	0	Poor	1	Poor	6	Poor	2
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	1	Very Poor	10	Very Poor	0

Sub Area	A Welcoming Place		Healthy safe and secure		Clean and well maintained		Conservation and heritage		Diversity and Variety		Overall Score	
	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites
Southam	Excellent	3	Excellent	2	Excellent	3	Excellent	1	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	3	Good	4	Good	4	Good	4	Good	1	Good	3
	Fair	2	Fair	1	Fair	1	Fair	2	Fair	0	Fair	5
	Poor	0	Poor	1	Poor	0	Poor	1	Poor	3	Poor	0
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	4	Very Poor	0
Stratford	Excellent	3	Excellent	2	Excellent	10	Excellent	6	Excellent	0	Excellent	1
	Good	12	Good	13	Good	10	Good	3	Good	0	Good	3
	Fair	7	Fair	6	Fair	2	Fair	12	Fair	6	Fair	14
	Poor	0	Poor	1	Poor	0	Poor	1	Poor	2	Poor	4
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	14	Very Poor	0
Studley & Henley	Excellent	2	Excellent	2	Excellent	3	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	2	Good	4	Good	3	Good	3	Good	0	Good	4
	Fair	3	Fair	1	Fair	1	Fair	4	Fair	0	Fair	2
	Poor	0	Poor	0	Poor	0	Poor	0	Poor	3	Poor	1
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	4	Very Poor	0

Table 5.15 summarises quality scores for amenity greenspaces on an individual settlement basis. Poorly rated sites are located in Henley in Arden, Ettington, Stratford upon Avon, Bidford on Avon, Wellesbourne and Shipston on Stour. The only 'Excellent' rated sites are in Lighthorne Heath (Leam Road) and Stratford upon Avon (St Peters Way).

Table 5.15 Quality of Amenity Greenspaces in Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements

Settlement	Overall Quality Score				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Stratford upon Avon	1	3	14	4	
Alcester		3	2		
Bidford				1	
Shipston on Stour		1	2	1	
Quinton		1	1		
Southam		1	2		
Bishops Itchington					
Harbury		1			
Long Itchington		1	1		
Studley		3	1		
Henley in Arden				1	
Wellesbourne		1	1	1	
Kineton			2		
Salford Priors					
Welford on Avon					
Wootton Waven			1		
Ilmington			1		
Brailes			2		
Ettington				1	
Long Compton					
Tysoe					
Napton on the Hill			1		
Stockton					
Temple Herdewycke					
Tiddington					
Bearley		1			
Claverdon			1		

Earlswood					
Fenny Compton					
Lighthorne Heath	1	2			
Snitterfield					

5.4.4 Developing a Quality Standard

The creation of a quality standard for parks and gardens and amenity greenspaces has been considered in parallel because quality for both these typologies is dependent on a common set of attributes, albeit slightly tailored to what might reasonably be provided at each type of site.

The Green Flag Award is intended to encourage local authorities to achieve high environmental standards and set a benchmark for excellence in recreational open spaces. The Green Flag Award criteria have therefore been used as the basis for the quality assessment and are also reflected in the resulting quality standard.

Local consultation revealed that residents are generally happy with the quality of the District's parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces, with 66% respondents rating them as either 'Very good' or 'Fairly good' and only 16% of residents considering them to be Poor.

Taking these factors into consideration it is proposed that the standard should seek to bring all parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces in the District up to a 'Fair' standard as determined by the quality assessment scoring methodology. In the longer term, there is an aspiration for all sites to reach a 'Good' standard. A considerable number of sites in the District already achieve or exceed this standard and the focus in the short term should therefore be to improve the sites currently classified as Poor (Box 5.2). It is not proposed that any distinction should be made between rural and urban areas. All residents regardless of where they live should have access to a high quality site which is welcoming, safe, clean, and offers a range of activities.

The results of this assessment also provide an indication of the potential for future Green Flag Awards within the District. It is the Green Flag Awarding Organisation's aim for 50% of green spaces in England and Wales to be of Green Flag Award standard by 2020, amounting to 15,000 sites. Given the findings from the quality assessment, it is recommended that Stratford applies for the Green Flag Award for the top scoring parks and gardens.

Box 5.2 Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces classified as Poor

Amenity Greenspaces	Parks and Gardens
Alcester and Bidford Lambourne Close, Bidford Shipston Queens Avenue, Shipston on Stour Rogers Lane, Ettington Stratford Knights Lane, Stratford upon Avon Oakleigh Road, Stratford upon Avon Park Court, Stratford upon Avon Glebe Road, Stratford upon Avon Studley & Henley Littleworth, Henley in Arden Wellesbourne & Kineton Elliot Drive, Wellesbourne	Alcester & Bidford Kinwarton Park, Alcester Conway Fields, Alcester Kings Lane, Broom Dugdale Avenue, Bidford on Avon Shipston Quinton playing Fields Brailes Playing Field Ilmington Playing Field Little Compton Recreation Ground Tysoe Recreation Ground Stretton Playing Field Southam Old School Field, Southam Tollgate Road, Southam Long Itchington Recreation Ground Merestone Close, Southam Stratford upon Avon Shottery Brook Studley & Henley Bearley Recreation Ground Studley Common Snitterfield Sports Ground Cloweswood Lane, Earlswood Studley Sports Club Snitterfield Recreation Ground Wellesbourne & Kineton Mountford Sports Field, Wellesbourne Kineton High School Ratley sports field Hampton Lucy Playing Fields Dovehouse Field, Wellesbourne

Quality Standard	
District wide	All parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces should be classified as 'Fair' using the quality assessment criteria.

5.5 Summary of Spatial Distribution of Unmet Needs

Areas of particular deficiency in terms of **accessibility** include:

Stratford upon Avon

- Area to the North East, in the vicinity of Maidenhead Road, Benson Road and Fordham Avenue axis (although this is compensated by Natural Accessible Greenspace);
- Area to the East along Tiddington Road / B4086; and
- Area to the North of Banbury Road, east of Manor Road

Category 2 Settlements with lowest accessibility:

- Studley - older residential areas to the south of Watts Road are lacking any formal open space provision
- Harbury – west of Farm Street

Category 3 Settlements with lowest accessibility:

- Earlswood
- Fenny Compton
- Welford on Avon

Areas of particular **quantitative deficiency** include:

Sub Areas:

- Southam
- Studley and Henley
- Stratford upon Avon

Category 1 & 2 Settlements:

- Stratford upon Avon
- Southam
- Shipston on Stour
- Bishops Itchington
- Harbury
- Long Itchington
- Studley
- Henley in Arden
- Wellesbourne

Category 3 Settlements:

- Tysoe
- Napton on the Hill
- Stockton
- Tiddington
- Welford on Avon
- Wootton Wawen
- Snitterfield

Sites failing to meet the proposed **quality standard** are listed in Box 5.3.

Box 5.3 Sites failing to meet the quality standard for parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces

Amenity Greenspaces	Parks and Gardens
Alcester and Bidford Lambourne Close, Bidford Shipston Queens Avenue, Shipston on Stour Rogers Lane, Ettington Stratford Knights Lane, Stratford upon Avon Oakleigh Road, Stratford upon Avon Park Court, Stratford upon Avon Glebe Road, Stratford upon Avon Studley & Henley Littleworth, Henley in Arden Wellesbourne & Kineton Elliot Drive, Wellesbourne	Alcester & Bidford Kinwarton Park, Alcester Conway Fields, Alcester Kings Lane, Broom Dugdale Avenue, Bidford on Avon Shipston Quinton playing Fields Brailes Playing Field Ilmington Playing Field Little Compton Recreation Ground Tysoe Recreation Ground Stretton Playing Field Southam Old School Field, Southam Tollgate Road, Southam Long Itchington Recreation Ground Merestone Close, Southam Stratford upon Avon Shottery Brook Studley & Henley Bearley Recreation Ground Studley Common Snitterfield Sports Ground Cloweswood Lane, Earlswood Studley Sports Club Snitterfield Recreation Ground Wellesbourne & Kineton Mountford Sports Field, Wellesbourne Kineton High School Ratley sports field Hampton Lucy Playing Fields Dovehouse Field, Wellesbourne

5.6 Forecasting Future Need

Looking forward to future population growth and open space requirements, Table 5.16 summarises additional open space requirements needed to meet three growth scenarios for the District, based on the application of a standard of 1.15ha/1,000. If the District's population increases by 17,100 people as forecast in the trend based demand-led scenario, an additional 19.5ha of parks, gardens and amenity

greenspace will be needed. Exactly where this provision will be required will depend on the District's Housing Strategy.

Table 5.16 Future open space requirements to meet population growth up to 2023

Growth Scenario	% growth	Population 2023	Additional population from 2009	Open space requirement (ha)
Policy constrained low growth	6%	126,200	7,334	8.4
Policy constrained medium growth	9%	129,000	10,134	11.7
Trend based demand-led growth	14%	135,800	16,934	19.5

Local Trends that may impact on future open space provision requirements

Local trends in activities, socio-economic and demographic changes can also impact on future open space requirements. Trends that may impact on future open space requirements – in relation to quantity, quality and the nature of open space are summarised below:

- Stratford has an ageing population – this is unlikely to reduce the requirement for open space, since all members of the population benefit from open space for the purpose of informal recreation. Increased attention may however need to be paid to the design and manner in which open space is provided to ensure that it is accessible and enjoyable for older members of the population.
- Increasing life expectancy will place additional pressure on existing resources as people continue to live longer.
- Stratford District has a higher than average proportion of people engaging in regular exercise. In the current economic climate, some people are choosing not to pay expensive gym subscriptions and club membership fees. This may result in an increase in the number of people using open spaces for personal exercise. National initiatives promoting healthy lifestyles and wellbeing will also encourage local residents to make use of their local parks and open spaces.
- Although childhood obesity in the District is relatively low, there has been a recent increase. The importance of open space in providing accessible and informal opportunities for children to play, run around and take exercise within their local community will continue to remain important.
- Current economic circumstances may impact on the availability of funding and grants to provide new open spaces. They may also impact on the ability of developers to make open space contributions on a site by site basis.
- The increasing number of people choosing to holiday in the UK may put additional pressure on existing open spaces – particularly in Stratford upon Avon.
- The role of open space in providing a means of mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change in terms of urban cooling, shade, flood storage and providing local habitats for endangered species is increasingly being

recognised. This could have implications both for the amount and nature of future open space provision.

- Open spaces also have the potential to become more multifunctional, particularly in connection to promoting and providing opportunities for local food production – for example through the creation of community gardens and orchards. These initiatives are growing in popularity, and would fit well with local projects such as Transition Stratford and Transition Shipston.
- Open space is recognised as having a role to play in stimulating the local economy, both by helping to create a physical environment that is attractive to potential investors and skilled workers and enhances local property values, as well as helping to create and sustain green infrastructure related jobs and profit in tourism, nature conservation and other similar sectors.

Analysis suggests that open spaces will continue to provide a popular recreational resource for the local community, as well as providing wider economic and environmental benefits. There may be a case for increasing future open space provision to respond to these trends and challenges. Table 5.17 summarises future open space requirements based on a 10% factor increase to account for the trends identified above. In order to make provision for this standard, the quantitative provision standard would need to be raised to 1.27ha/1,000 population.

Table 5.17 Factored Open Space Requirements

	Open Space Requirement (ha)		
	Low growth scenario	Medium growth scenario	Demand led scenario
Requirements based on 1.15ha/1,000 standard			
Existing provision at 1.15ha/1,000	136.80	136.80	136.80
Future provision up to 2023 at 1.15ha/1,000	8.4	11.7	19.5
Total Provision up to 2023	145.2	148.5	156.3
Requirements based on 10% factor increase (1.27ha per 1,000 population)			
10% factor increase on existing provision	13.7	13.7	13.7
10% factor increase on future provision	0.8	1.2	2
Total Provision up to 2023 inc 10% factor	159.8	163.4	172
Provision required additional to existing up to 2023	23	26.6	35.2

5.7 Standards and Recommendations

Accessibility Standard	
District wide	10 minutes walking time 480m Effective Catchment
Quantity Standard	
District wide	1.15ha per 1,000 population
Trend based	1.27ha per 1,000 population
Future provision should focus on providing a greater number of larger parks in the District. These should not be shared with outdoor sports provision, but be provided primarily for the purpose of informal leisure, recreation and relaxation – perhaps in the form of more traditional parks, rather than recreation grounds.	
Quality Standard	
All parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces should achieve a ‘Fair’ rating using the quality assessment criteria. The District should also consider obtaining the Green Flag Award for its most popular parks.	

5.7.1 Cost Components

Capital costs for new facilities

Table 5.18 sets out approximate capital costs for providing various facilities components of new open spaces. Given its variability, the cost of acquiring land has not been included.

Table 5.18 Capital costs for new facilities

Soft landscape	UNIT	Cost ¹⁹
Meadow	m2	£5.90
Wildflower meadow	m2	£5.90
Grass seeding	m2	£5.90
Grass areas to be re-turfed	m2	£11.70
Shrub beds	m2	£66.70
Bulbs	m2	£15.00
Hedge Screen	m	£30.00
Hedge	m	£30.00
Specimen trees - semi mature	1	£850.00
Specimen trees - 18-20cm girth	1	£250.00
Semi mature tree, 25-30cm girth	1	£850.00
Climbing plants to bridge abutment	1	£40.00

¹⁹ Sources: Spons Civils 2008 & Derby Landscape Estimates 2008

Native planting	m2	£15.00
Enhance marginal wetland habitat	m	£40.00
Pond & wetland	m2	£30.00
Hard landscape	UNIT	Cost
Block pavings (assume interlocking block paving)	m2	£62.00
New footpath	m2	£51.00
Gravel	m2	£25.00
Childrens play area (890m2)	m2	£17.98
Enhance toddlers play area (126m2)	m2	£79.37
Raised traffic table	m2	£40.00
Street furniture	UNIT	Cos
Long bench	1	£800.00
Litter bin	1	£300.00
Seats and picnic tables	1	£1,200.00
Extra Long Curved Bench	1	£850.00
Allowance for external lighting	m2	£1.47

Commuted Sums for Maintenance

Stratford on Avon District Council Parks and Gardens team have provided estimations of the cost of maintaining an open space, which allows commuted sums for maintenance of open spaces to be calculated per square metre of provision (Figure 5.3). This is based on SPONS External Works and Landscape Price Book (2010) and current contract costs²⁰.

²⁰ These figures are likely to change and increase from 2013, when the existing grounds maintenance contract comes to an end.

Figure 5.3 Open Space Maintenance Costs

Commuted Sum Period		20
Inflation*		2.5

Main Operation	Description	Rate	Frequency	Unit	Cost per unit (£)	Quantity	Overall Yearly Cost
Grass Maintenance	Public Open Space Cut	0.065	13	m2	£0.85		£0.00
	Nature Area Cut	0.008	2	m3	£0.02		£0.00
Shrub Maintenance	Cultivate	1.6	1	m2	£1.60		£0.00
	Replacement (15%)	20	0.05	m2	£1.00	0	£0.00
Hedge Maintenance	Cut	0.4	2	m2	£0.80		£0.00
	Formative Pruning	2	0.33		£0.66		£0.00
Tree Maintenance	Safety work (20%)	100	0.05		£5.00	0	£0.00
	Replacement (15%)	70	0.05		£3.50	0	£0.00
	Planting (15%)	16	0.05		£0.80	0	£0.00
	Sweeping	5.25	0.2	m2	£1.05		£0.00
Path Maintenance	Repairs (Tarmac w Edging)	50	0.05	m2	£2.50	0	£0.00
	Litter Grass	0.0008	52	m2	£0.04	0	£0.00
General Maintenance	Litter Shrubs & Natural Space	0.015	1	m2	£0.02	0	£0.00
	Bin Emptying	1.4	52		£72.80		£0.00
	Furniture Maintenance	0.4	1		£0.40		£0.00
	Fencing Close Boarded	50	0.05	m	£2.50		£0.00
	Fencing Open Pale	40	0.05	m	£2.00		£0.00
Water Courses	Ditch Clearance	6	0.33	m	£1.98		£0.00
	Jetting of Culverts	200	0.2	Day Rate	£40.00		£0.00
Cost per Year							£0.00
Total cost of commuted sum for period							£0.00

*Inflation applied cumulatively over period

5.7.2 Design Guidelines

On the basis of assessment findings and national best practice, the following Design Guidelines are provided as a way of improving the quality of existing and future open space provision to maximise its value to the local community:

- Open spaces should be located close to the communities that they serve.
- Consideration should be given to the security of open spaces – including the need for them to be overlooked, suitable lighting and proximity to housing. Open spaces should be easily accessible by foot and on cycle.
- The location, design and character of new open spaces should aim to reinforce and complement the existing network of open spaces.
- Consideration should be given to providing more large open spaces with greater community value. Where possible (particularly in the Category 2 Settlements), these should take the form of more formal open spaces, rather than shared spaces for outdoor sport.
- The multifunctional value of open spaces should be considered; particularly the potential for designs to incorporate a more varied range of open spaces, including community gardens or orchards, natural accessible greenspace and outdoor gyms.
- Stricter controls need to be placed on the quality of open spaces provided as part of new developments, to avoid the provision of bland areas of grassland. New open spaces should include a variety of features and promote biodiversity, including for example landscaping, formal planting, trees, seating, public art or nature conservation areas.
- The design and layout of the open space needs to give consideration to the care and maintenance needs in the design and layout of trees and specific habitats. Light and root obstruction should for example be avoided around new and existing trees.
- Open spaces must promote inclusivity by being accessible to all and – particular consideration should be given to those with mobility or physical

impairments, including the elderly and children. Entry points and boundaries should be enhanced to improve the welcome of the open space. Within the site, suitable surfaces and paths should be provided. Larger greenspaces should include some form of shelter.

Minimum Acceptable Site Size

There are no recommended minimum site sizes for open spaces, although clearly the value of a site diminishes with its size; analysis has drawn attention to the limited value of smaller amenity greenspaces in the District – particularly on new developments. Stratford District Council does not currently have a minimum site size threshold for adopting open spaces on new developments; they adopted all the sites provided as part of the Trinity Mead development some of which were as small as 0.12ha, and have stated that the decision to adopt an open space generally depends on the perceived amenity value of the space. Officers have however commented that the cost of maintaining several smaller open spaces such as those in Trinity Mead is much greater than the cost of maintaining a single larger open space of equivalent size. The minimum site size threshold of 0.2ha adopted for amenity greenspaces in this and other PPG17 Assessments might provide a useful starting point for establishing a minimum acceptable size component.

Given the relative lack of larger open spaces in the District, it is recommended that new open spaces are as large as possible. There may be options for pooling developer contributions to provide larger combined sites in locations that can serve a number of new and existing communities.

5.7.3 Conclusions and Recommendations

At the District wide level, there is a satisfactory supply of Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces, evidenced by community and stakeholder consultation. However, this masks considerable variation at the Sub Area and individual settlement level, and existing deficits in provision must be addressed to improve equity of supply and accessibility. In the medium to long term, District wide open space provision will also need to be increased to cater for future demands arising from new development and population growth. There is also evidence to suggest that the use and demand for open space may increase in the future as a consequence of trends such as healthy living initiatives, the demand for informal recreational opportunities, multi functionality and growing life expectancy.

Although the majority of open spaces across the District are freely accessible, there are several Registered Parks and Gardens where access is restricted. Increased community access to these sites offers potential the address existing deficits in the supply of unrestricted open space, particularly in rural areas.

New open spaces should be carefully designed in order to maximise their social, environmental and economic value. There should be an emphasis on moving away from bland, grassed open spaces to provide greater variety and interest through the provision of more creative and multifunctional open spaces, which might incorporate features such as local nature reserves, outdoor gyms or community orchards. Where open spaces are proposed as part of new developments, consideration should be given to the supply, type and distribution of existing open spaces to ensure that new provision complements and enhances existing patterns of provision.

The pattern and size of new developments in the District and the application of existing standards has tended to encourage the provision of small, amenity greenspaces with consequently limited recreational value. There is a need to improve the provision of larger parks and gardens in the District, which might be achieved through the pooling of resources and financial contributions. This should not however be at the expense of the provision of local facilities close to where people live. Greater consideration of a development's context and partnership working to provide solutions that benefit the wider community should however be encouraged - where new developments are proposed in neighbouring locations there may for example be an opportunity to provide a shared park, rather than separate amenity greenspaces.

Where there is a sufficient supply of open space in a particular location, the focus should be on improving the quality of existing Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces to improve their recreational value; particularly where new developments are likely to place added pressure on them. In the short term, resources should be focused on raising the standard of open spaces ranked as 'Poor' in this assessment. This will require cross departmental cooperation and partnership working between Council departments, Parish Councils and developers.

6 Natural and Semi Natural Accessible Greenspace

6.1 Introduction

Primary Purpose

Sites that combine wildlife conservation and biodiversity value with community access and benefit by offering opportunities for environmental education, access to nature and connectivity with the natural environment.

This chapter considers the distribution of Natural and Semi Natural Accessible Greenspace across the District. Consideration is given to both fully accessible (i.e. unrestricted) natural greenspace and conditionally natural accessible greenspace, although the focus is on unrestricted natural greenspace, as this is considered to offer the greatest recreational and amenity value. The assessment draws upon Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace standards (ANGst), although analysis and recommendations are tailored specifically to Stratford District. The quality assessment focuses on the quality of natural greenspaces from a visitor / community amenity perspective, rather than a biodiversity perspective. This reflects the purpose and objectives of this particular study, and is aimed to complement other studies such as the Warwickshire Biodiversity Action Plan, which deal specifically with biodiversity and nature conservation.

Map 7 shows the distribution of unrestricted and conditionally accessible natural greenspace across the District.

6.2 Accessibility Assessment

6.2.1 Defining Effective Catchment Areas & Accessibility Standard

Natural England has set some ambitious targets for natural accessible greenspace (ANGst). Recent research by Land Use Consultants²¹ suggests that local authorities have generally found these to be overly ambitious, although Natural England are keen to promote the local standard of there being a fully accessible greenspace within 300m (5 minutes walk) from home, on the basis that:

- There should be provision of the widest range of access opportunities for people of all abilities, ages, ethnic groups and social circumstances to actively engage in, value and enjoy the natural environment;
- Access opportunities should aid healthy activity and be integral to people's daily lives particularly close to where they live; and
- Access should contribute to achieving the transition to a low carbon economy by encouraging sustainable leisure use; integrating people with landscape and wildlife is an essential outcome²².

²¹ Land Use Consultants, 2008. Understanding the relevance and application of the Access to Natural Greenspace Standard

²² Natural England, 2010. Nature Nearby

Land Use Consultants' research has generally found however that local authorities have chosen to adopt their own accessibility standards, based on the PPG17 methodology, rather than adopt Natural England's standards. A review of comparative local authority standards, suggests that the setting of standards for natural greenspace is not as widespread as other open space typologies. Effective Catchments are also typically further than those suggested by Natural England, ranging from 12 to 20 minutes walking time.

Local consultation feedback has revealed that 65% residents travel up to 10 minutes to access a natural greenspace, rising to 88% within 15 minutes, with the majority of users accessing sites by foot or cycle. Current levels of accessibility are generally thought to be good, although issues about their accessibility on a practical level have been raised. Residents have also commented that whilst the District contains many beautiful natural areas, these are mostly on private land and there is poor accessibility for the general public, particularly in terms of the provision of unrestricted natural greenspaces. This is an issue that Natural England are particularly keen to address through their concept of 'connectivity' defined as *'an emotional and physical association between the community and local accessible natural green space, which encourages involvement, engagement and ownership of accessible natural green space'*²³.

Given these considerations, it is therefore proposed that Effective Catchments for natural accessible greenspace are defined as the following:

Given that access to natural greenspace is generally more constrained in towns and larger settlements, it is proposed that residents living in **Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements** should be within 300m from an unrestricted, fully natural accessible greenspace, as recommended by Natural England. It is important to note that to achieve this standard there may be ways of delivering it without necessarily providing new sites – areas of existing open spaces – in particular parks and gardens and cemeteries can be intentionally cultivated to provide access to natural greenspace, and sites with restricted public access could be opened to the general public.

A **district wide standard** for unrestricted natural accessible greenspace has also been proposed that reflects current levels of accessibility and local consultation feedback. It is considered appropriate to set a wider accessibility standard, both because natural accessible greenspace plays an important role in more rural areas in compensating for the relative lack of parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces; and because there is a need to improve the level of unrestricted access to natural greenspaces at the District wide level, to maximise their role as a recreational and amenity resource.

Accessibility Standard	
Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements	5 minutes walking distance 300m Effective Catchment
District wide	15 minute walking distance 720m Effective Catchment

²³ Land Use Consultants, 2008

6.2.2 Identifying Accessibility Deficiencies

Maps 8 and 9 illustrates the 300m and 720m Effective Catchments for unrestricted natural accessible greenspace, total coverage of which by Sub Area is summarised in Table 6.1. On the basis of the 300m Effective Catchment, overall District accessibility is only 3%. However, this rises to 10% on the basis of the 720m Effective Catchment.

Table 6.1 Coverage of Effective Catchments by Sub Area

Sub Area	% Sub Area	
	300m	720m
Alcester & Bidford	4.9%	14.5%
Shipston	0.6%	2.1%
Southam	2.5%	8.7%
Stratford upon Avon	21.3%	43.9%
Studley & Henley	5.7%	15.7%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	2.2%	6.9%
District Wide	3%	10%

Table 6.2 summarises the total proportion of Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements that are within the 300m and 720m Effective Catchments of unrestricted natural accessible greenspace. On the basis of Natural England's 300m distance threshold, less than 25% of the combined area of Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements within any of the Sub Areas are within the Effective Catchment.

Based on the 720m Effective Catchment, over 50% combined settlement area in Southam and Stratford upon Avon Sub Areas is within the catchment, although even under this scenario none of the Sub Areas achieve over 60%. Under both scenarios, no Category 2 or 3 Settlements within Shipston Sub Area are within an Effective Catchment. Coverage in Wellesbourne and Kineton is similarly limited. The limited accessibility of natural accessible greenspace within Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements is of course reflective of the fact that most natural greenspace is going to be located in rural areas. The issue is exacerbated however, as very few of the District's other open spaces (such as parks and gardens) contain areas of natural or semi natural greenspace.

Table 6.2 Combined Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlement coverage by Sub Area

Sub Area	% combined settlement coverage	
	300m	720m
Alcester & Bidford	19.4%	45%
Shipston	0%	0%
Southam	25.4%	57%
Stratford upon Avon	22.5%	53%
Studley & Henley	14.5%	30%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	5.4%	12%
District Wide	16%	36%

Table 6.3 considers Effective Catchments at the individual settlement level. Accessibility within the 300m catchment is limited across all the settlements, with the exception of Henley in Arden and Harbury, which achieve 63.6% and 55.1% coverage respectively. Based on the 720m catchment, accessibility improves considerably, with the following settlements achieving over 80% coverage:

- Alcester
- Southam
- Bishops Itchington
- Harbury
- Henley in Arden

There are however several Settlements that achieve 0% accessibility on the basis of the 720m catchment, including several Category 2 Settlements:

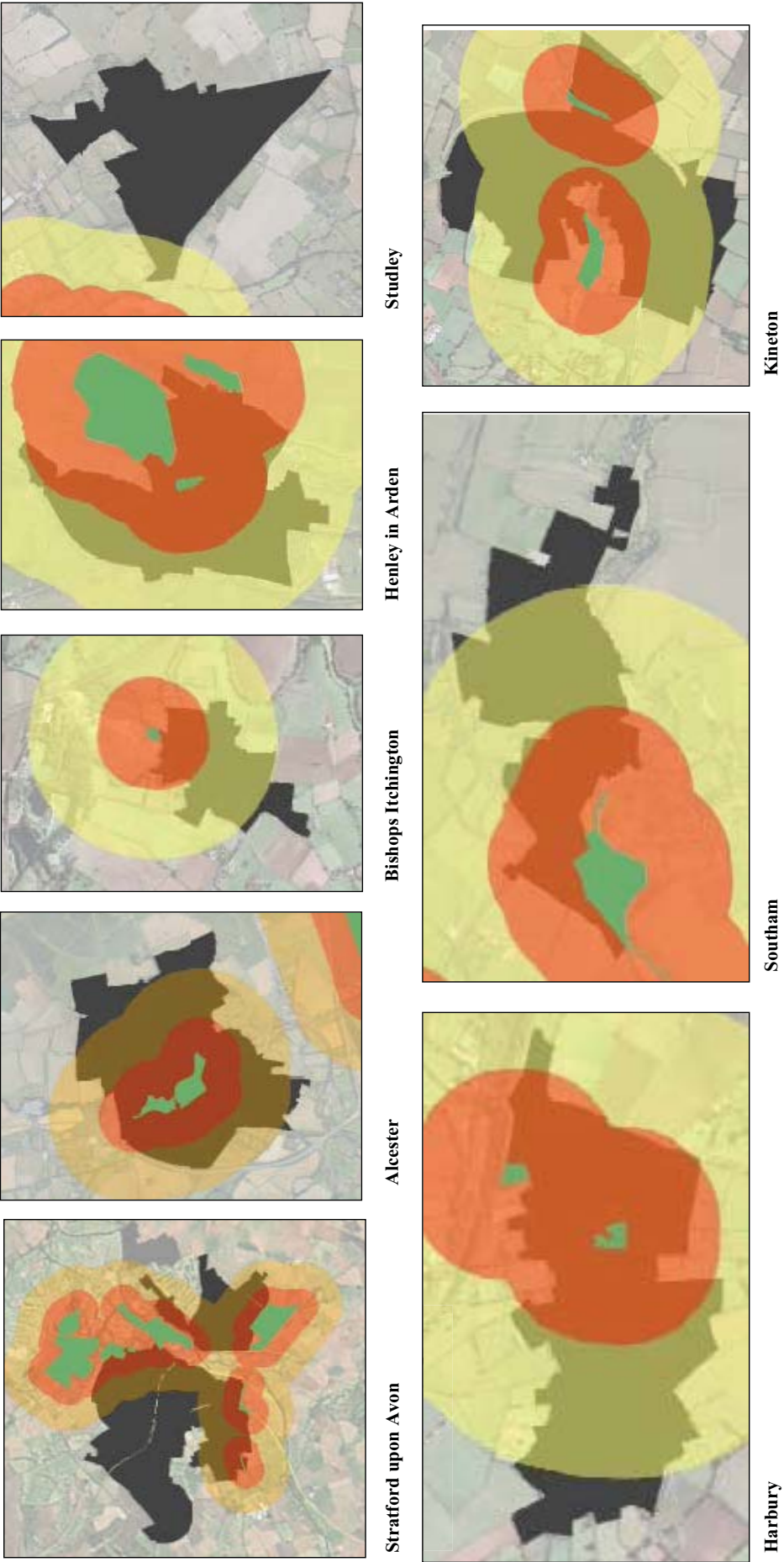
- Bidford on Avon
- Shipston on Stour
- Quinton
- Long Itchington
- Wellesbourne

Table 6.3 Effective Catchment coverage by individual settlement

Settlement	% settlement coverage	
	300m	720m
Stratford upon Avon	23.1%	55.9%
Alcester	39.4%	84.5%
Bidford on Avon	0%	0%
Shipston on Stour	0%	0%
Quinton	0%	0%
Southam	36.4%	88.6%
Bishops Itchington	27.9%	85.6%
Harbury	55.1%	90.2%
Long Itchington	0%	0%
Studley	0%	4.7%
Henley in Arden	63.6%	100%
Wellesbourne	0%	0%
Kineton	36.3%	78.1%
Salford Priors	0%	0%
Welford on Avon	6.0%	19.3%
Wootton Wawen	0%	0%
Ilmington	0%	0%
Brailes	0%	0%
Ettington	0%	0%
Long Compton	0%	0%
Tysoe	0%	0%
Napton on the Hill	0%	0%
Stockton	0%	0%
Temple Herdewycke	0%	0%
Tiddington	0%	6.8%
Bearley	0%	0%
Claverdon	0%	0%
Earlswood	18.7%	68.1%
Fenny Compton	0%	0%
Lighthorne Heath	0%	0%
Snitterfield	0%	0%

Figure 6.1 provides a spatial illustration of the 300m and 720m Effective Catchments in Category 1 and 2 settlements (excluding Bidford on Avon, Long Itchington, Quinton, Shipston and Wellesbourne as these are not covered by any Effective Catchment).

Figure 6.1 300m and 720m Effective Catchments for Unrestricted Natural Greenspace in Category 1 and 2 Settlements



When the Effective Catchments for unrestricted natural accessible greenspace and parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces are considered in combination, the location of unrestricted natural accessible greenspace compensates for the lack of a park, garden or amenity greenspace in several locations. For Stratford upon Avon, Harbury, Southam and Earlswood, the location of unrestricted natural accessible greenspace in and around the settlements helps to compensate for some of the accessibility deficiencies identified in the parks, gardens and amenity greenspace typology. This is similarly true for some of the more rural areas, particularly in the north western parts of the District.

Conditionally Natural Accessible Greenspace

As mentioned previously, residents have raised issues concerning general access to natural greenspaces, many of which are accessible only to members of organisations such as the National Trust or Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, or via an entry fee. Indeed, conditionally accessible greenspace comprises the majority of natural and semi natural accessible greenspace across the District. On that basis, when Effective Catchments are applied to both unrestricted and conditionally accessible greenspace, accessibility levels are much improved (Maps 10 & 11). On the basis of the 300m Effective Catchment for both unrestricted and conditionally natural accessible greenspace, overall District accessibility is 68% (Table 6.4); this rises to 95% on the basis of the 720m Effective Catchment.

Table 6.4 Coverage of Effective Catchments by Sub Area

Sub Area	% Sub Area	
	300m Effective Catchment	720m Effective Catchment
Alcester & Bidford	69.1%	95.4%
Shipston	64.6%	94.2%
Southam	64.4%	92.7%
Stratford upon Avon	66.4%	98%
Studley & Henley	83.3%	99.6%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	61.9%	91.8%
District Wide	68%	95%

Table 6.5 sets out the percentage of Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements within a 300m and 720m Effective Catchment of either an unrestricted or conditionally natural accessible greenspace for each Sub Area. Southam and Studley and Henley in Arden Sub Areas achieve over 90% coverage at the 300m distance threshold. Poorest performing Sub Areas at this threshold are Stratford upon Avon and Wellesbourne and Kineton, although both achieve over 50%. At the 720m catchment level, over 90% of all Sub Areas are within the Effective Catchment.

Table 6.5 Combined Unrestricted and Conditionally Natural Accessible Greenspace Effective Catchment settlement coverage by Sub Area

Sub Area	% combined settlement coverage	
	300m	720m
Alcester & Bidford	78.5%	97%
Shipston	86.3%	100%
Southam	94%	100%
Stratford upon Avon	57.8%	96%
Studley & Henley	91.4%	100%
Wellesbourne & Kington	60.3%	95%
District Wide	76%	98%

Table 6.6 sets out percentage of individual settlements within the 300m and 720m catchment areas. The situation is again much improved with the addition of conditionally accessible greenspace. Settlements achieving the lowest percentage coverage at the 300m distance threshold include:

- Bidford on Avon
- Shipston on Stour
- Wellesbourne
- Temple Herdewycke
- Tiddington

At the 720m distance threshold, accessibility is above 75% for all settlements, and in the majority of cases, above 90%.

Table 6.6 Combined Unrestricted and Conditionally Natural Accessible Greenspace Effective Catchment coverage by individual settlement

Settlement	% settlement coverage	
	300m	720m
Stratford upon Avon	64%	98%
Alcester	91%	100%
Bidford on Avon	25%	86%
Shipston on Stour	59%	100%
Quinton	100%	100%
Southam	88%	100%
Bishops Itchington	100%	100%
Harbury	99%	100%
Long Itchington	89%	100%
Studley	83%	100%
Henley in Arden	100%	100%
Wellesbourne	44%	92%
Kineton	100%	100%
Salford Priors	93%	100%
Welford on Avon	70%	100%
Wootton Wawen	99%	100%
Ilmington	100%	100%
Brailes	100%	100%
Ettington	100%	100%
Long Compton	100%	100%
Tysoe	100%	100%
Napton on the Hill	100%	100%
Stockton	100%	100%
Temple Herdewycke	50%	100%
Tiddington	0%	75%
Bearley	99%	100%
Claverdon	100%	100%
Earlswood	88%	100%
Fenny Compton	100%	100%
Lighthorne Heath	77%	100%
Snitterfield	94%	100%

Many of the conditionally accessible sites are accessible via public right of way and are therefore accessible to all, although the visitor experience and recreational

and amenity value of these areas is clearly less than those which are freely and intentionally publicly accessible and are managed with that purpose in mind.

There is clearly significant scope to improve access to natural greenspaces by opening up sites with restricted access to the general public. The lack of fully natural accessible greenspace is perhaps a key factor in why respondents to the online questionnaire reported that they visited natural greenspaces relatively infrequently in comparison to other types of open space. Only 38% of respondents said that they visit these sites at least once a week, which is perhaps surprising in a rural District such as Stratford.

Where issues over the potential loss of revenue or over intensity of use are concerns for owners or proprietors of restricted access sites, it may be that access can be limited to local residents only. This is already the case with Charlecote Park, which is a National Trust managed property with an entrance fee, except for local residents for whom entry to the grounds is free. Residents have also suggested that a more responsible 'right to roam' by local farmers would also improve access and enjoyment of the local countryside.

Accessible Woodland

The Woodland Trust has recently undertaken a review of Stratford District to estimate its performance relative to their standards for accessible woodland, findings from which are summarised in Box 6.1; generally Stratford District has below access to all sizes of woodland. The Woodland Trust has recommended that new accessible woodland should be provided to underpin green infrastructure delivery for sustainable communities and place making.

Box 6.1 Woodland Trust Standards and Assessment

No person should live more than 500m from at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 2ha in size; and

There should also be at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 20ha within 4km (8km roundtrip) of people's homes.

Standard	Stratford	Warwickshire	West Midlands
% population with access to 2ha+ wood within 500m	2.60%	5.16%	9.42%
% population with access to 20ha+ wood within 4km	44.46%	44.41%	54.66%

6.2.3 Other Factors Influencing Accessibility

Clearly, conditions of access covering many of the District's natural greenspaces are the main barrier for local residents. Local residents have also raised issues over the physical accessibility of sites for those with mobility impairments (see Section 6.3), which can prevent some members of the community from enjoying them.

Natural England is keen to promote equality of access to natural greenspace amongst all social groups. The distribution of natural greenspace across the district does not correlate particularly well with areas of greatest deprivation, largely because these are concentrated in the District's larger settlements. Improvement of accessibility to natural greenspace in Category 1 and 2 Settlements will help to address this issue.



Even though the District is predominantly rural, there is a need to improve community access to natural greenspace

6.3 Quantity Assessment

6.3.1 Baseline Provision

There are a wide range of valuable ecological sites across the District, with nearly forty Sites of Special Scientific Interest and four Local Nature Reserves. In total the District has 41 natural or semi natural greenspaces that are fully accessible to the general public (Table 6.7).

Table 6.7 Distribution of Unrestricted Natural Accessible Greenspaces

Sub Area	Number of sites		
	<2ha size	2-20ha size	>20ha size
Alcester & Bidford	4	2	2
Shipston	1	2	0
Southam	5	1	1
Stratford upon Avon	3	2	3
Studley & Henley	3	5	3
Wellesbourne & Kington	1	2	1
District Wide	17	13	11

The majority of sites in the District are under 2ha, which is less than the minimum size threshold suggested by Natural England. Correspondingly, the District has a limited number of large sites; only a quarter of fully accessible sites in the District are larger than 20ha. The southern part of the District is particularly deficient in larger natural accessible greenspaces; there are none any further south than Kington.

The largest site in the District is Oversley Green District Woodland in Alcester. Other sites over 20ha are listed in Box 6.2; many of these were identified by local residents as the most frequently visited areas of natural greenspace – Oversley Woods, Welcombe Hills and Burton Dassett Country Parks have been identified as particularly important recreational assets for local communities, with District wide appeal. Of note is Trinity Mead wildlife area, which is the first natural greenspace site to be provided via a developer contribution.

There are no sites larger than 100ha in the District; nor are there any of such size in local authority areas adjoining the District.

Box 6.2 Unrestricted Natural Accessible Greenspaces larger than 20ha

Site	Size (ha)
Oversley Green District Woodland, Alcester	92.75
Grove Hill, Exhall/ Haselor	23.34
Ufton District Woodland	31.36
Snitterfield Bushes SSSI	61.72
Roughill and Wirehill Woods SSSI, Sambourne	53.28
Coughton District Woodland	75.01
Lench Meadows (pSINC) Stratford upon Avon	27.27
Trinity Mead wildlife area, Stratford upon Avon	30.67
Welcombe Hills Country Park	57.27
Burton Dassett Country Park	39.62

A full list of unrestricted natural accessible greenspaces is provided in Appendix F.



The District has two Country Parks



Oversley Wood is the biggest natural accessible greenspace in the District

Map 7 shows the distribution of both unrestricted and conditionally natural accessible greenspace across the District. There is a considerable amount of conditionally natural accessible greenspace across the District, amounting to a total area of 10,892ha.

6.3.2 Developing a Quantitative Provision Standard

As part of their ANGst Natural England recommend that there should be a minimum of 1 hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per 1,000 population; they do not recommend a general quantitative standard for natural accessible greenspace as a whole. There are no other national standards or benchmarks for the provision of natural accessible greenspace, and Stratford District has not previously set a standard for this typology. Officers have also emphasised that any quantitative standard must reflect the capacity of the district in terms of its natural environment and opportunities to increase or create new areas of natural accessible greenspace.

Local consultation has revealed a greater variation in opinion regarding the current provision of natural greenspace than for the other typologies. In total 60% respondents to the online questionnaire consider there to be Enough or More than Enough provision; however 40% residents do not consider there to be enough. Standards in comparative local authorities show considerable variation; in no case however is the standard more than the existing level of provision, and in several cases no quantitative standard has been set. Table 6.8 summarises provision across the District as a whole and across the Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements.

Table 6.8 Quantitative provision of Unrestricted Natural Accessible Greenspace

Settlement Category	Population	Natural accessible greenspace (ha)	Ha/1,000
Stratford upon Avon	24,200	126.8	5.24
Category 2	48,030	35.93	0.75
Category 3	17,840	4.45	0.25
District Wide	118,866	584.78	4.92

With the exception of Stratford upon Avon town whose built up area boundary adjoins several natural accessible greenspaces, there is a considerable difference between the level of provision at the District wide scale, and at the settlement scale, with provision significantly decreasing in and around the District's built up areas. This reflects findings from the accessibility assessment, in that there is a clear need to improve provision in the more urban areas.

Given the discrepancy in levels of provision in the urban and rural areas, it is not appropriate to set a single standard for the whole District. Separate standards have therefore been suggested for urban and rural areas. In general, they reflect existing levels of provision, in order that attention can focus on improving provision in areas where there is currently little or no unrestricted natural accessible greenspace.

Category 1, Stratford upon Avon: 5.24ha per 1,000. Given the significant amount of fully natural accessible greenspace in and around Stratford upon Avon, and the limited opportunities within the town itself to enhance provision in that

the built up area does not afford much potential natural greenspace, it is not suggested that the provision standard should be increased above existing levels. Attention should however be given to addressing areas of under provision in terms of accessibility. This might be achieved by developing areas of natural greenspace within other areas of open space (such as larger parks or churchyards), or getting developers to provide natural greenspace instead of amenity greenspace or parks and gardens as part of their open space contribution.

Category 2 & 3 Settlements: 0.75ha per 1,000. This standard reflects the overall provision across Category 2 Settlements. However, it masks considerable variation in provision between settlements; much of the existing provision is concentrated in one or two locations rather than being dispersed evenly between settlements, which has led to correspondingly low levels of accessibility to unrestricted greenspace and relatively low quantitative provision in most Category 2 and 3 Settlements. There is therefore a need to bring provision levels up to a comparable standard across all settlements. A standard of 0.75ha/1,000 represents a realistic target given the considerable amount of conditionally accessible greenspace located in and around most of the settlements.

District wide: 4.92ha per 1,000. This reflects existing provision across the District as a whole. However, the overall total again masks significant areas of under provision. By adopting the existing level of provision as a standard, this will also allow resources to be focused on areas where there is a relative under provision. In most instances, it will be possible to address these deficits by improving levels of public access to existing conditionally natural accessible greenspaces.

Given the District's under performance against Natural England's Local Nature Reserve standard (see below), opportunities for creating new Local Nature Reserves should also be explored as part of any new provision.

Despite the fact that there is clearly a need to improve the levels of unrestricted access to natural greenspaces in recognition of the enhanced amenity value that they provide, the proposed standards nevertheless take into account the prevalence of open countryside across the District as a whole, the significant amount of conditionally natural accessible greenspace, and the District's relatively well developed network of Public Rights of Way which provide residents with easy access to the countryside. The standards should also be largely achievable by improving levels of access to conditionally accessible greenspaces.

Quantitative Provision Standard	
Category 1 – Stratford upon Avon	5.24ha/1,000
Category 2 & 3 Settlements	0.75ha/1,000
District wide	4.92ha/1,000

6.3.3 Identifying Quantitative Deficiencies and Surpluses

Table 6.9 summarises quantitative provision by Sub Area. Alcester and Bidford and Studley and Henley both exceed the quantitative standard at Sub Area level; Stratford upon Avon has marginally less. Studley and Henley has over twice the adopted standard, although this is largely down to the presence of three sites

exceeding 50ha in size, rather than an even distribution of smaller sites across the Sub Area as a whole. Similarly, in Alcester, Oversley Green accounts for well over half the total provision in the area.

Shipston has the least amount of unrestricted natural accessible greenspace, with only 14.36ha – amounting to 0.77ha per 1,000. Southam is also relatively poorly served with only 2.14ha per 1,000. Wellesbourne and Kineton is marginally better, although area wide provision is still below the adopted standard at 3.11ha per 1,000.

Table 6.9 Quantitative provision of Unrestricted Accessible Greenspace per 1,000 population by Sub Area

Sub Area	Total Area (ha)	Ha per ,1000
Alcester & Bidford	127.96	6.05
Shipston	14.36	0.77
Southam	38.24	2.19
Stratford upon Avon	126.8	4.81
Studley & Henley	227.72	11.90
Wellesbourne & Kineton	49.69	3.11
District Wide	584.00	4.92

Table 6.10 sets out quantitative provision of natural accessible greenspace on an individual settlement basis. Natural greenspaces are often located on the edge of settlements; where this is the case they have been attributed to the nearest settlement if they are located within 300m of the edge of the built up area.

Table 6.10 Quantitative provision of Unrestricted Natural Accessible Greenspace per 1,000 population by individual settlement

Settlement	Total Area (ha)	Ha per ,1000
Stratford upon Avon	126.80	5.24
Alcester	5.89	0.80
Bidford on Avon	0	0
Bishops Itchington	0.45	0.21
Harbury	0.40	0.17
Henley in Arden	19.07	6.49
Kineton	5.13	2.16
Long Itchington	0	0
Quinton	0	0
Shipston on Stour	0	0
Southam	4.99	0.80
Studley	0	0
Wellesbourne	0	0
Bearley	0	0

Brailes	0	0
Claverdon	0	0
Earlswood	3.97	3.97
Ettington	0	0
Fenny Compton	0	0
Ilmington	0	0
Lighthorne Heath	0	0
Long Compton	0	0
Napton on the Hill	0	0
Salford Priors	0	0
Snitterfield	0	0
Stockton	0	0
Temple Herdewycke	0	0
Tiddington	0	0
Tysoe	0	0
Welford on Avon	0.48	0.37
Wootton Wawen	0	0

As mentioned previously, overall standards set for each of the settlement categories mask considerable variation within those categories that future provision should seek to address. In terms of the Category 2 and 3 Settlements, the only ones to meet existing quantitative provision standards are:

- Alcester
- Henley in Arden
- Kineton
- Earlswood

For Henley and Earlswood this helps to counterbalance the relative under supply of parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces in these settlements. In the majority of other settlements, there is currently no provision of unrestricted natural accessible greenspace within an acceptable distance threshold. The location of conditionally accessible greenspace across the District does however suggest that there is considerable potential to improve existing provision. In larger settlements, opportunities to create areas of natural accessible greenspace within existing open spaces and the built up area will however also need to be addressed to simultaneously improve both the quantity and accessibility of natural greenspace; this fits well with the Government's aim to maximise the multifunctional value of greenspaces. Furthermore, provision of new or enhanced natural greenspaces is required to meet the aims of the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Biodiversity Action Plan which contains 26 Species Action Plans for threatened plants and animals and 24 Habitat Action Plans covering farmland, woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, urban areas and post-industrial land.

Table 6.11 sets out current provision of Local Nature Reserves in the District. Natural England emphasise that the role of a Local Nature Reserve is both for nature conservation, education and the enjoyment of nature by local communities. Given their value to the local community, there is a need to ensure that there is adequate access to such sites across the District. When compared to Natural England's standard for Local Nature Reserves, the District has an overall provision of 0.78ha per 1,000 population, which falls short of the recommended standard of 1ha per 1,000. Much of the current provision is accounted for by Welcombe Hills Country Park, which is 57ha in size and Ufton Fields, which is 31.68ha. In order to meet Natural England's standard, an additional 26 hectares of Local Nature Reserves would need to be provided across the District.

Table 6.11 Provision of Local Nature Reserves

Local Nature Reserve	Sub Area	Size (ha)
River Arrow	Alcester & Bidford	2.94
Ufton Fields	Southam	31.68
Stockton Railway Cutting	Southam	0.78
Welcombe Hills Country Park	Stratford upon Avon	57.44
District Wide		92.84



Provision of Local Nature Reserves in the District falls below Natural England's recommended standard

Table 6.12 sets out the additional natural greenspace requirements for each Sub Area to meet the quantitative provision standard; the greatest requirements are in Shipston and Southam Sub Areas.

Table 6.12 Additional Natural Accessible Greenspace requirements by Sub Area

Sub Area	Current provision (ha)	Provision required to meet standard (ha)	Current deficit / surplus (ha)
Alcester & Bidford	127.96	104.03	23.94
Shipston	14.36	92.35	-77.99
Southam	38.24	86.02	-47.79
Stratford upon Avon	126.81	129.68	-2.87
Studley & Henley	227.72	94.13	133.59
Wellesbourne & Kineton	49.69	78.61	-28.92

Table 6.13 summarises additional natural greenspace requirements for each settlement to meet the quantitative standard.

Table 6.13 Additional Natural Accessible Greenspace requirements by individual settlement

Settlement	Current provision (ha)	Provision required to meet standard (ha)	Current deficit / surplus (ha)
Stratford upon Avon	126.80	5.24	nil
Alcester	5.89	5.52	0.37
Bidford on Avon	0.00	3.56	-3.56
Bishops Itchington	0.45	1.66	-1.20
Harbury	0.40	1.71	-1.31
Henley in Arden	19.07	2.21	16.86
Kineton	5.13	1.79	3.35
Long Itchington	0.00	1.37	-1.37
Quinton	0.00	1.26	-1.26
Shipston on Stour	0.00	3.63	-3.63
Southam	4.99	4.69	0.30
Studley	0	4.50	-4.50
Wellesbourne	0	4.14	-4.14
Bearley	0	0.59	-0.59
Brailes	0	0.77	-0.77
Claverdon	0	0.63	-0.63
Earlswood	3.97	0.75	3.22
Ettington	0	0.81	-0.81
Fenny Compton	0	0.61	-0.61

Ilmington	0	0.56	-0.56
Lighthorne Heath	0	0.59	-0.59
Long Compton	0	0.59	-0.59
Napton on the Hill	0	0.74	-0.74
Salford Priors	0	0.82	-0.82
Snitterfield	0	0.81	-0.81
Stockton	0	0.98	-0.98
Temple Herdewycke	0	0.60	-0.60
Tiddington	0	1.07	-1.07
Tysoe	0	0.73	-0.73
Welford on Avon	0.48	0.99	-0.51
Wootton Wawen	0.00	0.77	-0.77

6.4 Quality Assessment

6.4.1 Assessment Framework

Natural England defines Greenspace Quality as a 'recognised standard of excellence that meets the expectations of both the staff and users of a site and the wider community and neighbourhood. Such sites are visually stimulating and attractive, safe and welcoming to all sections of society, managed and maintained to the highest standards of sustainability, and provide an enjoyable and inspirational visitor experience²⁴.' They also recommend that the Green Flag criteria are used as an appropriate means of assessing the quality of natural greenspaces. Natural England is currently revising its guidance on the declaration of Local Nature Reserves, which will include recommended service standards for visitors in due course.

In developing the quality assessment framework for natural accessible greenspaces, consideration has also been given to Natural England's Country Parks Accreditation Scheme which scores sites in respect of the following criteria:

- Area
- Accessibility
- Character
- Facilities
- Links to local communities and neighbourhoods
- Links to the wider countryside
- Management
- Activities
- Information and Interpretation

²⁴ Natural England, Nature Nearby (2010)

The Vision for Open Space for Stratford upon Avon specifically identifies the need to improve the use and enjoyment of the District's natural assets and countryside by ensuring that they are accessible to local communities. This has been reflected in the quality assessment which specifically focuses on the needs of visitors and improving accessibility of natural accessible greenspaces.

Given these considerations, the quality assessment framework for natural accessible greenspace is based upon the same overarching categories as those used for parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces. However, the criteria upon which each category is assessed have been amended to suitably reflect what might be expected from this type of site. The assessment focuses in particular on the likely experiences and needs of the public and those visiting the site, rather than their specific biodiversity value/ quality, which is outside the remit of this assessment and already covered as part of other workstreams, such as the Warwickshire Biodiversity Action Plan.

The quality assessment categories are therefore as follows:

A welcoming place: physical access and provision of signage and information

Healthy, safe and secure: facilities and opportunities offered for exercise, as well as general safety and security

Clean and well maintained: litter and waste management and grounds maintenance

Conservation and heritage: natural or historic heritage, environmental designations, information about ecology and range of natural features

Diversity and variety: range of facilities and opportunities for activities

Full details of the components of each category can be found in Appendix E.

The assessment uses the same scoring thresholds as those for parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces.

Given the number and nature of conditionally accessible sites, only unconditionally natural accessible greenspaces have been included in the quality assessment.

6.4.2 Quality Assessment: Natural Accessible Greenspaces

Overall, just 5% of natural accessible greenspaces have been assessed as Good; 36% Fair; and 56% as Poor. Burton Dassett Country Park is the only site in the District classified as Excellent. The consultation process also highlighted Burton Dassett as a particularly high quality site which is very popular amongst the District's residents.

With the exception of the Country Parks and Local Nature Reserves, site visits revealed that despite being fully accessible, very few of the sites are intentionally managed with visitors in mind. This is an issue which potentially needs to be addressed, particularly if natural accessible greenspace is to play a more valuable contribution to the overall supply of open space in the District and maximise its value as a community, educational and recreational resource.

A Welcoming Place

Quality Assessment	No. sites	% sites
Excellent	6	15%
Good	6	15%
Fair	17	41%
Poor	12	29%
Very poor	nil	-

There is considerable variation in how welcoming natural accessible greenspaces are. Over 75% of the natural accessible greenspaces were considered to have poor disabled access. Whilst it is reasonable to expect some natural greenspaces not to have full access for disabled visitors to all parts of the site (for example they may contain stepping stones or steep gradients), sites should still offer good access within the majority of the site where it is practical to do so. During consultation Wellesbourne residents in particular noted that some of their natural greenspaces have poor disabled access.

Sites generally had little or no signage or information available. Given their potential for education about nature conservation, this is an issue that should be addressed in order to increase their value to visitors.



Sites should offer good access within the majority of the site where it is practical to do so



Given their educational value, natural greenspace sites should provide local information

Health, Safety and Security

Quality Assessment	No. sites	% sites
Excellent	1	2%
Good	5	12%
Fair	27	66%
Poor	8	20%
Very poor	nil	-

The majority of sites were awarded a score of Fair for this category. All sites scored poorly in terms of lighting although a low level of lighting clearly has advantages from a biodiversity perspective. Natural accessible greenspaces generally had the lowest levels of visibility of all open space typologies, although this is again unsurprising given that they are typically located on the edge of built up areas. Burton Dassett Country Park is the only natural accessible greenspace that has toilets.



Burton Dassett Country Park is the only natural greenspace with toilets



Visibility within natural greenspaces is comparatively poor

Cleanliness and Maintenance

Quality Assessment	No. sites	% sites
Excellent	16	39%
Good	18	44%
Fair	7	17%
Poor	Nil	-
Very poor	nil	-

Similar to parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces, natural accessible greenspaces generally scored well in terms of cleanliness and maintenance. No sites were assessed as being Poor; and all sites in Wellesbourne & Kineton and Shipston were considered to be Excellent.

All sites scored well in terms of overall cleanliness. A large number of sites have limited or no provision of bins. However, sites generally scored highly in terms of litter indicating that the lack of bin provision is not currently a big issue, although this might change if levels of visitors to these sites increases. Consultation did highlight some localised concerns about litter in Alcester, Kineton and Great Wolford.

The majority of sites do not contain any seating, but where they do it is well maintained. Scores for the maintenance of the landscape were also consistently high. The generally high level of management and maintenance is also reflected in the consultation findings; 56% of respondents to the online questionnaire considered the standard of maintenance to be Very Good or Fairly Good and only 7% of respondents considered it to be Poor. Residents in Alcester and Bidford did however comment that natural greenspaces are sometimes in need of better maintenance, although this needs to be balanced against their management for nature conservation and biodiversity value.



The District's natural greenspaces are generally well maintained

Conservation and Heritage

Quality Assessment	No. sites	% sites
Excellent	nil	-
Good	2	5%
Fair	2	5%
Poor	17	41%
Very poor	20	49%

Almost all sites achieved a low score for Conservation and Heritage, which is largely because they do not have formal environmental designations or contain any historic features. Approximately half of all sites either contained a Listed Building, a Scheduled Ancient Monument or were located in a Conservation Area.

Only nine sites were identified as displaying information on ecology. The provision of such information is an easy way to enhance the visitor experience and educational value and is something that Stratford District Council, in consultation with landowners, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and Warwickshire County Council, should consider improving. This was an issue that was also raised during the consultation process; in particular one resident suggested that more information about the history of Burton Dassett Country Park should be provided at the Beacon Tower.

The variety of habitats at some sites is considerable, for example Arrow Nature Reserve and Upton Fields Nature Reserve both contain over seven different habitat types.

The District also contains a number of nationally designated sites which play a significant role in contributing to the overall biodiversity value of the District. Of particular note are Rough Hill & Wirehill Woods and Snitterfield Bushes which are designated SSSIs. 13 of the natural accessible greenspaces also contain ancient woodland.



More information should be provided about the Beacon Tower

Diversity and Variety

Quality Assessment	No. sites	% sites
Excellent	nil	-
Good	2	5%
Fair	1	2%
Poor	15	37%
Very poor	23	56%

All sites achieved a score of Poor or Very Poor for Diversity and Variety, with the exception of three sites (Burton Dassett Country Park in Wellesbourne and Kineton, Ufton Fields Local Nature Reserve and Stockton Railway Cutting, both in Southam). Sites tended to score poorly because they did not contain any facilities such as seating, toilets, shelter or cafes. None of the sites had provision for cycle parking.

This finding is supported by the results of the public questionnaire; although 50% of respondents found the range of activities on offer at the District's natural greenspaces to be Good, a significant proportion considered them to be Average or Poor.



Sites tended to score poorly in terms of provision of facilities

Table 6.14 sets out the overall quality assessment results for each Sub Area. Wellesbourne & Kineton, Stratford upon Avon and Southam are the only Sub Areas that contain sites classified as either Good or Excellent. Shipston has a particular lack of high quality sites; all three of the natural accessible greenspaces located in the area have been classified as Poor (Radway Meadows, Darlingscote and Whichford NE).

Table 6.14 Quality Analysis Scores for Natural Accessible Greenspaces by Sub Area

Sub Area	A Welcoming Place		Healthy, safe and secure		Clean and well maintained		Conservation and heritage		Diversity and variety		Overall Score	
	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites
Alcester & Bidford	Excellent	1	Excellent	0	Excellent	1	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	1	Good	0	Good	5	Good	0	Good	0	Good	0
	Fair	4	Fair	5	Fair	2	Fair	1	Fair	0	Fair	3
	Poor	2	Poor	3	Poor	0	Poor	4	Poor	3	Poor	4
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	3	Very Poor	5	Very Poor	0
Shipston	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	3	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	0	Good	0	Good	0	Good	0	Good	0	Good	0
	Fair	1	Fair	1	Fair	0	Fair	0	Fair	0	Fair	0
	Poor	2	Poor	2	Poor	0	Poor	1	Poor	1	Poor	3
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	2	Very Poor	2	Very Poor	0

Sub Area	A Welcoming Place		Healthy, safe and secure		Clean and well maintained		Conservation and heritage		Diversity and variety		Overall Score	
	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites
Southam	Excellent	2	Excellent	0	Excellent	2	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	2	Good	2	Good	5	Good	1	Good	1	Good	1
	Fair	2	Fair	3	Fair	0	Fair	0	Fair	1	Fair	3
	Poor	1	Poor	2	Poor	0	Poor	2	Poor	3	Poor	3
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	4	Very Poor	2	Very Poor	0
Stratford upon Avon	Excellent	1	Excellent	0	Excellent	3	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	1	Good	3	Good	4	Good	0	Good	0	Good	1
	Fair	6	Fair	4	Fair	1	Fair	0	Fair	0	Fair	2
	Poor	0	Poor	1	Poor	0	Poor	3	Poor	3	Poor	5
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	5	Very Poor	5	Very Poor	0
Studley & Henley	Excellent	1	Excellent	0	Excellent	3	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	1	Good	0	Good	4	Good	0	Good	0	Good	0
	Fair	2	Fair	11	Fair	4	Fair	1	Fair	0	Fair	4
	Poor	7	Poor	0	Poor	0	Poor	5	Poor	4	Poor	7
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	5	Very Poor	7	Very Poor	0

Sub Area	A Welcoming Place		Healthy, safe and secure		Clean and well maintained		Conservation and heritage		Diversity and variety		Overall Score	
	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites
Wellesbourne & Kineton	Excellent	1	Excellent	1	Excellent	4	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	1
	Good	1	Good	0	Good	0	Good	1	Good	1	Good	0
	Fair	2	Fair	3	Fair	0	Fair	0	Fair	0	Fair	2
	Poor	0	Poor	0	Poor	0	Poor	2	Poor	1	Poor	1
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	2	Very Poor	0

Appendix G sets out the quality assessment scores for each individual site.

Across the District the top ten scoring sites are:

- Oversley Green SE (Alcester & Bidford)
- The Lench Meadows (Stratford upon Avon)
- Kineton North West (Wellesbourne & Kineton)
- King Johns Castle (Wellesbourne & Kineton)
- Welcombe Hills Local Nature Reserve (Stratford upon Avon)
- Yellow Land (Southam)
- Snitterfield Bushes (Studley & Henley)
- Seven Meadows Road (Stratford upon Avon)
- Ufton Fields Local Nature Reserve (Southam)
- Burton Dassett Country Park (Wellesbourne & Kineton)

The sites with the lowest scores are spread across the District, with all Sub Areas except Wellesbourne and Kineton containing at least one of the ten lowest scoring sites. There is a particular concentration of poorly scoring sites in Studley and Henley. The ten lowest scoring sites are as follows:

- Henley Mount (Studley & Henley)
- Harbury Wood (Southam)
- Blue Cap Road (Stratford upon Avon)
- Preston Green Meadow (Studley & Henley)
- Whichford NE (Shipston)
- Luddington dismantled railway (Alcester & Bidford)
- Henley in Arden East (Studley & Henley)
- Arden Paddocks (Stratford upon Avon)
- Yarningale Common (Studley & Henley)
- Great Alne SW (Alcester & Bidford)

6.4.3 Developing a Quality Standard

Natural England emphasise the importance of considering the quality of natural accessible greenspaces from a visitor perspective. In particular, they encourage the adoption of quality standards such as the Green Flag Award and Visitor Service Standards as a means to ensure that everyone can benefit from regular contact and experiences of the natural environment close to where they live.

Local consultation revealed that residents are generally happy with the quality of the District's natural accessible greenspace, with 69% respondents rating them as either Very or Fairly Good, and less than 10% residents considering them to be Poor; although site visits indicate that there is some room for improvement.

Taking these factors into consideration it is proposed that the quality standard for natural accessible greenspaces should seek to bring all sites in the District up to a

‘Fair’ standard as determined by the quality assessment scoring methodology. In the longer term there is an aspiration for all sites to reach a ‘Good’ standard. A considerable number of sites in the District already achieve or exceed this standard and the focus in the short term should therefore be to improve the sites currently classified as Poor (Box 6.3).

Box 6.3 Natural Accessible Greenspaces classified as Poor

Alcester & Bidford	Stratford upon Avon
Great Alne SW	Blue Cap Road
Luddington Dismantled Railway	Arden Paddocks
Riverside	Maidenhead Road
Swanfold	Seven Meadows Road Greenway link
Shipston	Trinity Mead
Darlingscote	Studley & Henley
Radway Meadows	Coughton Woodland
Whichford NE	Earlswood Moathouse
Southam	Henley Mount
Harbury Wood	Henley in Arden East
Welsh Road East	Riverlands
Southam West	Preston Green Meadow
Wellesbourne & Kineton	Yarningale Common
Combroke wild area	

Quality Standard	
District wide	All natural accessible greenspaces should achieve a ‘Fair’ rating using the quality assessment criteria.

6.5 Summary of Spatial Distribution of Unmet Needs

On the basis of the 300m Effective Catchment, areas of particular deficiency in terms of **accessibility** include all the Category 1 and 2 sites with the exception of Henley in Arden and Harbury.

On the basis of the 720m Effective Catchment, poorest performing Category 2 and 3 Settlements include:

Category 2 Settlements:

- Bidford on Avon
- Shipston on Stour
- Quinton
- Long Itchington
- Wellesbourne
- Studley

Category 3 Settlements:

- Welford on Avon
- Tiddington
- Ilmington
- Brailes
- Ettington
- Long Compton
- Tysoe
- Napton on the Hill
- Stockton
- Temple Herdewycke
- Tiddington
- Bearley
- Claverdon
- Fenny Compton
- Lighthorne Heath
- Snitterfield.

Areas of particular **quantitative deficiency** include:

Sub Areas:

- Shipston
- Southam
- Stratford upon Avon
- Wellesbourne and Kineton

Category 2 Settlements:

- Bidford on Avon
- Bishops Itchington
- Harbury
- Long Itchington
- Quinton
- Shipston on Stour
- Studley
- Wellesbourne

Category 3 Settlements:

- Bearley
- Brailes
- Claverdon
- Ettington
- Fenny Compton
- Ilmington
- Lighthorne Heath
- Long Compton
- Napton on the Hill

- Salford Priors
- Snitterfield
- Stockton
- Temple Herdewycke
- Tiddington
- Welford on Avon
- Wootton Wawen

Sites failing to meet the proposed **quality standard** are listed in Box 6.4.

Box 6.4: Natural Accessible Greenspaces classified as Poor

Alcester & Bidford	Stratford
Great Alne SW	Blue Cap Road
Luddington Dismantled Railway	Arden Paddocks
Riverside	Maidenhead Road
Swanfold	Seven Meadows Road Greenway link
Shipston	Trinity Mead
Darlingscote	Studley & Henley
Radway Meadows	Coughton Woodland
Whichford NE	Earlswood Moathouse
Southam	Henley Mount
Harbury Wood	Henley in Arden East
Welsh Road East	Riverlands
Southam West	Preston Green Meadow
	Yarningale Common
	Wellesbourne & Kineton
	Combroke wild area

6.6 Forecasting Future Need

Looking forward to future population growth and open space requirements, Table 6.15 summarises additional natural accessible greenspace requirements needed to meet three growth scenarios for the District, based on the application of a standard of 4.92ha/1,000. If the District's population increases by 16,934 people as forecast in the trend based demand-led scenario, an additional 83.3ha of natural greenspace will be required. Exactly where this provision will be required will depend on the District's Housing Strategy.

Table 6.15 Future Natural Accessible Greenspace requirements to meet population growth up to 2023

Growth Scenario	% growth	Population 2023	Additional population from 2009	Natural greenspace requirement (ha)
Policy constrained low growth	6%	126,200	7,334	36.1
Policy constrained medium growth	9%	129,000	10,134	49.9
Trend based demand-led growth	14%	135,800	16,934	83.4

Local Trends that may impact on future natural accessible greenspace provision requirements

Trends that may impact on the role, function and requirement for natural accessible greenspace in the future are summarised below:

- Given potential resource and financial constraints that may limit the ability to provide new open spaces within the District, attention must focus on maximising the benefits and value of existing greenspaces within the District. The existence of a significant amount of conditionally natural accessible greenspace in the District represents an untapped resource that could be better utilised in the future to meet the informal recreational needs of local communities.
- Maintaining a high standard of environmental quality throughout the District is essential to maintaining its appeal as a visitor and tourist destination. Provision of more high quality natural accessible greenspaces will widen its appeal to walkers and visitors, as well as catering for increasing numbers of domestic holiday makers.
- Natural greenspace will continue to provide valuable opportunities for outdoor pursuits, physical recreation and activities such as mountain biking, walking, orienteering etc. These may be of wider appeal to those who don't enjoy competitive sports or wish to take part in less rigorous or formal types of recreation.
- Natural greenspace can provide opportunities for local food production, which is growing in popularity. Local food production itself can help to foster a healthy, cohesive community by helping to supply residents with fresh food, as well as supporting local retailers, growers and producers. It can also help to strengthen the local economy and promote a culture of community cohesion.
- The role of natural greenspace in promoting healthy lifestyles and prolonging life expectancy is increasingly recognised. Natural England are actively encouraging local GPs to point patients in the direction of approved health walks and outdoor activity programmes, such as those provided by Stratford on Avon District Council.
- Natural greenspace needs to be protected in order to maintain and improve its biodiversity function. Warwickshire Local Biodiversity Action Plan contains 26 Species Action Plans for threatened plants and animals and 24 Habitat

Action Plans covering farmland, woodlands, wetlands, grasslands, urban areas and post-industrial land.

- In light of climate change and its impacts on natural habitats and species migration, the connections and links between the greenspace network need to be protected and reinforced. A careful balance also needs to be struck between providing community and amenity value through improving access to natural greenspaces, and the potentially negative impact that this might have on their nature conservation and habitat value.
- Natural greenspaces – in particular woodlands, will have a strong role to play in mitigating and adapting to climate change. Existing assets will need to be protected and new resources provided where possible. This is particularly important in urban areas where trees and vegetation will provide natural cooling and shading. They can also perform a multi-functional role in terms of recreation and flood risk mitigation, although this may impact on their value as community resources.

Analysis suggests that natural greenspaces will continue to play an important role within the community. They are one of the most versatile and multi-functional types of greenspace, particularly when it comes to consideration of wider objectives such as biodiversity, eco systems and climate change mitigation and adaptation. The fulfilment of the latter roles is not however conditional on natural greenspaces being fully publicly accessible – they can perform these roles regardless. Indeed, careful consideration needs to be given to the potential conflict between nature conservation and biodiversity objectives and the value of natural greenspace for wider community and recreational benefit. On that basis, and given the increase in natural accessible greenspace that will already result if existing quantitative targets are met and delivered in all areas of the District, it is not suggested that projected natural accessible greenspace requirements are subjected to any factored increase to account for identified future trends and drivers.

6.7 Standards and Recommendations

Accessibility Standard	
District wide	15 minutes walking time 720 Effective Catchment
Category 1, 2 & 3 Settlements	Residents should be 300m from an unrestricted, fully accessible natural greenspace, as recommended by Natural England
Quantity Standard	
District wide	4.92 ha per 1,000 population
Category 1 Settlements	5.24 ha per 1,000 population
Category 2 & 3 Settlements	0.75ha per 1,000 population
In the context of new development, Natural England are keen to emphasise that standards adopted for the provision of additional natural accessible greenspace should be incorporated into overarching standards for open space, rather than being additional to them. Developers should be encouraged to meet some of their open space requirement/contribution by providing some of it in the form of natural accessible greenspace.	
Quality Standard	
All natural accessible greenspaces should achieve a 'Fair' rating using the quality assessment criteria.	

6.7.1 Cost Components

Warwickshire County Council and Natural England have provided indicative estimations for the maintenance of different types of natural greenspace, based upon best practice and research undertaken in Wales and Dudley, which will be used to inform the emerging sub-regional Green Infrastructure SPD (Table 6.16).

Table 6.16 UK Priority Habitat Summary Costings²⁵

Habitat	Maintenance	Creation/ restoration
Arable field margins	£350/ha/yr	£354/ha/yr
Blue mussel beds on sediment	No data	No data
Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh	£135/ha/yr	£135/ha/yr plus capital costs
Coastal saltmarsh	£70/ha/yr	£250/ha/yr, plus capital costs
Coastal sand dunes	£70/ha/yr	Capital costs
Coastal vegetated shingle	£50/ha/yr	Capital costs
Eutrophic standing waters	No data	Capital costs
Hedgerows	£3/m/yr	£5/m
Intertidal mudflats	No data	Capital costs
Intertidal underboulder communities	No data	No data
Lowland calcareous grassland	£140/ha/yr	£195/ha/yr plus capital costs
Lowland dry acid grassland	£55/ha/yr	£120/ha/yr plus capital costs
Lowland Fens	£45/ha/yr	£330/ha/yr plus capital costs
Lowland heathland	£95/ha/yr	£250/ha/yr plus capital costs
Lowland meadows	£100/ha/yr	£485/ha capital costs plus £140/ha/yr until established
Lowland mixed deciduous woodland	£110/ha/yr	Creation: £1,700/ha capital costs plus £150/ha/yr. Restoration: £1,000/ha
Lowland raised bog	£45/ha/yr	£330/ha/yr plus capital costs
Maritime cliff and slopes	£85/ha/yr	£110/ha/yr plus capital costs
Mesotrophic lakes	No data	Capital costs
Peat and clay exposures with Piddocks	No data	No data
Ponds	Capital costs	Capital costs, typically £4/m ²
Purple moor grass and rush pastures	£90/ha/yr	£140/ha/yr plus capital costs
Reedbeds	£60/ha/yr	£310/ha/yr plus capital costs
Rivers and streams	Capital costs	Capital costs
<i>Sabellaria alveolata</i> reefs	No data	No data
Saline lagoons	No data	Capital costs
Subtidal sands and gravels	No data	No data
Tide-swept channels	No data	No data
Traditional orchards	£80/ha/yr	Capital costs, typically £250/ha
Wood-pasture and parkland	£80/ha/yr	Capital costs

²⁵ Vale of Glamorgan Priority Habitat Costing, 2010

Habitat	Maintenance	Creation/ restoration
Built environment - buildings and other urban structures	No data	No data
Churchyards, cemeteries and burial grounds	No data	No data
Coniferous woodland	£80/ha/yr	£2,000/ha/yr (for conversion to broad-leaved woodland)
Drainage ditches	£2.15/m	New ditch creation: £3.60/m ² Ditch restoration: £2.90/m
Gardens and allotments	No data	No data
Golf courses	No data	No data
Quarries, mines and gravel pits	No data	No data
School grounds (incl. playing fields and playgrounds)	No data	No data
Transport corridors (incl. road verges/ railway linesides/ green lanes/ cycleways)	No data	No data
Urban - brownfield/ wastelands/ derelict sites	No data	No data
Urban - managed greenspaces	No data	No data
Veteran and street trees	£25/tree/yr	No data

Dudley Developer Contributions towards Nature Conservation

Contribution = £.50p x (total area of development – area existing semi natural vegetation retained on site following development)

Prioritisation of Delivery

1. Buffering designated nature conservation sites.
2. Creating/ Strengthening strategic wildlife corridors.
3. Creation of site/ features to progress the Birmingham and Black Country Biodiversity Action Plan and/or the Black Country Geodiversity Action Plan.

6.7.2 Design Guidelines

The following design guidelines should be taken into consideration to help maximise the community and recreational value of natural accessible greenspaces in the District

- Natural greenspaces should be located close to the communities that they serve, to maximise their access, use and enjoyment.
- Consideration should be given to the connectivity between natural greenspaces, which should be enhanced, both to allow species migration and improve access and enjoyment of greenspaces by local residents.
- There should be greater provision of natural accessible greenspace within other open space typologies – particularly parks, gardens and amenity greenspace; Natural England are keen to emphasise that ANGst should be complementary to other open space provision, rather than additional to it.
- Existing open spaces should be managed to improve their ‘naturalness’ – by for example opening culverts, naturalising streams, creating meadow areas,

wild flower planting and differential mowing. Further guidance can be found in 'How to encourage biodiversity in Urban Parks, published by CABI Space, and found in Biodiversity by Design – a guide for Sustainable Communities (TCPA, 2004)²⁶.

- Consideration should be given to achieving accreditation for the District's Country Parks under Natural England's Country Parks Accreditation Scheme, which was launched in 2009 (accreditation is free).
- A greater proportion of natural accessible greenspaces should be designed and managed with local residents and communities in mind. Areas that should be addressed as part of this include:
 - Access by all members of the community
 - Opportunities for education and learning
 - Provision of signage and information about nature conservation
 - Opportunities for informal relaxation – e.g. seating and shelter
 - Opportunities for informal recreation
- Natural England is currently revising its guidance on the declaration of Local Nature Reserves, which will include recommended service standards for visitors.

Minimum acceptable size component

Natural England²⁷ provides the following guidelines on minimum site sizes for natural accessible greenspace:

- **Is there an area below which a site cannot offer experience of nature to the visitor?** On this basis, it has not proved possible to identify a single universal threshold; the ability of a small site to provide a natural experience is dependent on its surroundings, the structure of the site itself and the perception of visitors to it. These factors are so variable that the performance of such sites can only usually be assessed individually.
- **Are there operational factors that suggest an area below which local authorities will have practical difficulties surveying, mapping or managing a site?** There are practical operational factors which might suggest a minimum site size. These include existing limits for identifying sites in a local development plan; adopting sites for local authority management; and for grant-aided urban forestry schemes.

For practical reasons, the ANGst standard is based on a minimum site size of 0.25ha, although local authorities may wish to adopt a different limit, dependent on local circumstances.

²⁶ Where natural greenspace is provided within existing open spaces, consideration must however be given to the cost of maintaining these areas, and whether it is financially viable over the long term.

²⁷ Natural England, Research Report 526: Providing Natural accessible greenspace in Towns and Cities

6.7.3 Conclusions and Recommendations

Although there is a considerable supply of natural greenspace across the District, the supply of unrestricted accessible greenspace is relatively limited. Despite the fact that the majority of District residents live in close proximity to the countryside, evidence suggests that there is a need to improve accessibility to natural greenspace in order to improve both emotional and physical connectivity, as promoted by Natural England. Improved provision of sites that are intentionally accessible to the public and managed for that purpose will improve visitor experiences and the recreational value of natural greenspace as an open space resource that complements other forms of provision.

In the short term, actions and resources should therefore focus on improving access to conditionally accessible sites where nature conservation and biodiversity considerations allow. This is particular priority in more urban areas where existing provision is inevitably limited, and will help in achieving some of the objectives of the Warwickshire Habitat Action Plan for urban areas.

Analysis has revealed that the presence of natural accessible greenspace within other open space typologies – such as Parks and Gardens, is generally limited. Encouragement of small areas for biodiversity within other open spaces will both improve their diversity and interest whilst improving access to natural greenspace amongst local communities. There is also a need to improve provision of Local Nature Reserves in the District to meet Natural England's standards.

Provision of natural accessible greenspaces – such as wildlife conservation areas and local nature reserves should be encouraged in new developments as an alternative to traditional forms of open space. Natural England are keen to emphasise that standards encouraging the provision of additional natural accessible greenspace should be incorporated into overarching standards for open space, rather than being additional to them.

Natural greenspace in performs a particularly diverse role, being important for a number of reasons, including wildlife conservation and biodiversity, education, recreation, climate change mitigation, and local food production. Existing and new natural greenspaces will need to be carefully managed to ensure that an appropriate balance is struck between these objectives.

7 Provision for Children and Young People

7.1 Introduction

Primary Purpose

Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, including equipped play areas, MUGAs, ball courts, skateboard areas, BMX tracks and teenage shelters.

This chapter considers the provision of facilities for children and young people across the District, in terms of accessibility, quantity and quality. National guidelines and standards for provision of facilities for children and young people such as those provided by Fields in Trust (FIT) have been considered, although standards proposed reflect the specific characteristics and circumstances of Stratford District. The quality assessment is based upon Play England's local play indicators and guide for evaluating local play provision. Key drivers or trends influencing the use and type of play provision in the future are also considered. The chapter concludes with priorities and recommendations for future provision, including design guidelines.

It is recognised that other open spaces, including parks, natural accessible greenspace and sports facilities can also provide opportunities for informal play and social interaction. This chapter deals primarily with **equipped** provision specifically aimed at children and young people, although analysis is supplemented by consideration of the role that other types of open space can play in providing recreational opportunities for children and young people.

Map 12 shows the distribution of children and young people's facilities across the District.

7.2 Accessibility Assessment

7.2.1 Defining Effective Catchment Areas & Accessibility Standard

Fields in Trust (recommends a hierarchy of provision and accessibility, based on walking times. Their document *Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play*²⁸ suggests accessibility standards of between 60m walking distance for Local Areas for Play (LAP) and 1,000m for Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAP). There are no locally adopted standards for accessibility to children's play areas or facilities for young people.

Local consultation revealed that there is a clear emphasis in favour of walking to facilities for children and young people, both in terms of current travel patterns and expectations. Stratford's residents are more likely to walk to a play facility than any other type of open space. Although teenagers could potentially travel to facilities unaccompanied via public transport, this was not recognised as a

²⁸ Fields in Trust, 2008

preferred mode of transport by residents – particularly given the level of public transport coverage in the District.

Questionnaire analysis revealed that 58% of respondents currently travel up to 10 minutes to access a play space or teenage facility; this increases to 80% within 15 minutes. This level of accessibility was considered to be either Very Good or Good by 55% respondents in respect of children's play facilities and 69% for teenage facilities.

A review of distance thresholds in comparative local authority areas indicates that a travel time of between 5 and 10 minutes is generally acceptable for children's play facilities; rising to around 15 minutes for teenage facilities.

Taking these factors into consideration, Effective Catchments of 5 minutes travel time for children's play areas and 15 minutes for teenage facilities are proposed.

The proposed 5 minute (240m) Effective Catchment for children's play areas is in line with national best practice (FIT). The standard should be applied to all children's play facilities with a target audience aged 2 to 12 years. Although 5 minutes is a relatively low distance threshold – particularly for a rural District, it reflects the distance that a child of a young age would feasibly be expected to walk, and an acceptable distance for slightly older children to travel safely from home unaccompanied. Given the nature of children's play facilities in the District (most cater for a range of age groups rather than just young children) and the rural nature of the District, it is not considered appropriate to adopt a lower threshold (FIT recommends 60m) for facilities catering for young children.

The Effective Catchment for facilities for teenagers should be applied to all facilities catering for young people aged 12 to 19 years. The proposed standard reflects the upper distance threshold that 80% respondents to the online questionnaire currently travel to access a facility and consider to be acceptable. It also reflects standards set in comparable local authority areas, whilst taking into consideration the size of most settlements and rural nature of the District which means that young people will generally have to travel further to access a range of facilities.

It is not proposed that any distinction should be made between rural and urban areas. Whilst recognising that those living in rural cannot always expect to have the same level of access to the range of different types of facilities normally available in more densely populated areas, Fields in Trust do however emphasise that a child's need to play is "*universal regardless of location*"²⁹.

Further details of factors contributing to the proposed Accessibility Standard are provided in Appendix C.

²⁹ Fields in Trust, 2008. Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play

Accessibility Standard	
Children's play facilities	5 minutes walking time 240m Effective Catchment
Facilities for young people	15 minutes walking time 720m Effective Catchment

7.2.2 Identifying Accessibility Deficiencies

Maps 13 and 14 illustrate the 240m Effective Catchment and 720m Effective Catchments of equipped facilities for children and young people across the District. Table 7.1 summarises the proportion of each Sub Area falling within the Effective Catchments. Given the rural nature of the District, its overall size (97,900ha) and the concentration of play areas in larger settlements, it is not surprising that overall accessibility to children's play areas for the District as a whole is only 2%, rising to 7% for young people's facilities.

Table 7.1 Coverage of Effective Catchments by Sub Area

Sub Area	% Sub Area	
	240m	720m
Alcester & Bidford	2.1%	7.8%
Shipston	1.4%	6.3%
Southam	1.9%	7%
Stratford upon Avon	8.7%	16.4%
Studley & Henley	1.8%	3.8%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	2.3%	10.4%
District Wide	2%	7%

Table 7.2 sets out the total proportion of Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements that are within a 5 minute walking distance of a children's play facility and 15 minutes walk of a teenage facility within each of the Sub Areas. In terms of accessibility to children's play areas, total coverage ranges from 34.4% in Southam to 21.1% in Stratford upon Avon Sub Area. Accessibility to facilities for young people is generally higher, ranging from 75.6% in Shipston to 43.4% in Studley and Henley.

Table 7.2 Combined coverage of Effective Catchments in Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements by Sub Area

Sub Area	% combined settlement coverage	
	240m	720m
Alcester & Bidford	30%	62%
Shipston	32.2%	75.6%
Southam	34.3%	68.2%
Stratford upon Avon	21.1%	38.6%
Studley & Henley	27.1%	43.4%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	27%	65%
District Wide	28%	57%

Table 7.3 sets out the proportion of each Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlement currently within a 5 minute Effective Catchment of a children's play facility and 15 minute Effective Catchment of a facility for young people.

Table 7.3 Coverage of Effective Catchment by individual settlement

Settlement	% settlement coverage	
	240m	720m
Stratford upon Avon	21.3%	39.6%
Alcester	35.5%	84.1%
Bidford on Avon	34.2%	82.3%
Bishops Itchington	29%	0%
Harbury	26.4%	89.8%
Henley in Arden	34.1%	82%
Kineton	18.6%	82.2%
Long Itchington	66.8%	95.4%
Quinton	47.5%	77.8%
Shipston on Stour	41.7%	84.4%
Southam	36.4%	74.5%
Studley	13.8%	83%
Wellesbourne	24.8%	70%
Brailes	17.6%	66%
Bearley	55.5%	0%
Claverdon	50.1%	0%
Earlswood	15.2%	0%
Ettington	43.1%	0%

Fenny Compton	15.9%	64.2%
Ilmington	16.5%	89.3%
Lighthorne Heath	65%	100%
Long Compton	19%	78.1%
Napton on the Hill	22%	44.4%
Salford Priors	16.7%	94.3%
Snitterfield	51.7%	0%
Stockton	26.4%	96.1%
Temple Herdewycke	37.1%	0%
Tiddington	27.4%	0%
Tysoe	30.1%	96.6%
Welford on Avon	13.3%	0%
Wootton Wawen	0%	0%

Accessibility to children's play areas is generally quite poor, with no settlements achieving over 70% accessibility. Settlements achieving over 50% accessibility include:

- Long Itchington (Category 2)
- Bearley
- Claverdon
- Lighthorne Heath
- Snitterfield

Settlements achieving less than 20% accessibility include:

Category 2 Settlements:

- Kineton
- Studley
- Wellesbourne
- Brailes
- Earlswood
- Fenny Compton
- Ilmington
- Long Compton
- Salford Priors
- Welford on Avon
- Wootton Wawen

Accessibility to children's play areas in Stratford upon Avon town is 21.3%. There is a particularly marked difference between provision and access to

facilities in relatively newly developed areas which are generally well served, and older parts of the town where provision is much sparser.

Accessibility to facilities for young people is considerably better, with the majority of Category 2 Settlements achieving over 70% accessibility.

There are however several settlements without any accessibility to facilities for young people. These include:

- Bishops Itchington (Category 2)
- Bearley
- Claverdon
- Earlswood
- Ettington
- Snitterfield
- Temple Herdewycke
- Tiddington
- Welford on Avon
- Wootton Wawen

Accessibility to facilities for young people in Stratford upon Avon and Napton on the Hill is also relatively low at 39.6% and 44.4% respectively.

It is important to note however that in some areas where accessibility to facilities specifically provided for children and young people is particularly low, there are other types of open space that will help to compensate for this deficiency by providing opportunities for informal recreation and ball games – in particular Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces. Box 7.1 lists those settlements where parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces have specifically been identified as providing some form of outdoor sport amenity (e.g. a goal post) that would complement other forms of provision for children and young people; although all parks, gardens and amenity greenspaces will provide some value for children and young people.

Box 7.1 Open Spaces providing additional value for young people

Category 1, 2 & 3 Settlements	
Alcester	Studley
Henley in Arden	Quinton
Bidford on Avon	Shipston on Stour
Claverdon*	Salford Priors
Harbury	Long Compton
Lighthorne Heath	Fenny Compton
Long Itchington	Ilmington
Snitterfield	Kineton
Stratford upon Avon	
Category 4 Settlements	
Loxley	Ullenhall
Tanworth in Arden	Radway
Clifford Chambers	Moreton Morrell
Ratley	Hampton Lucy
Little Compton	Stourton
Wilmcote	Whichford

Figure 7.1 provides a visual illustration of the extent of 240m and 720m Effective Catchments in Category 1 and 2 Settlements.

Figure 7.1 240m and 720m Effective Catchments in Category 1 and 2 Settlements



Stratford upon Avon



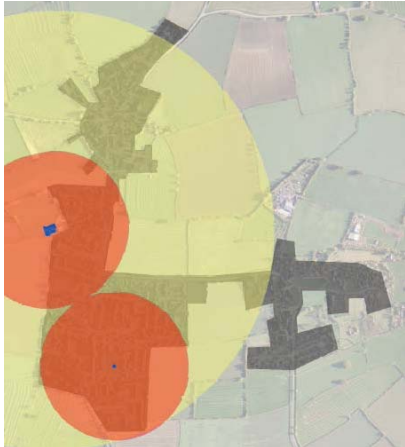
Alcester



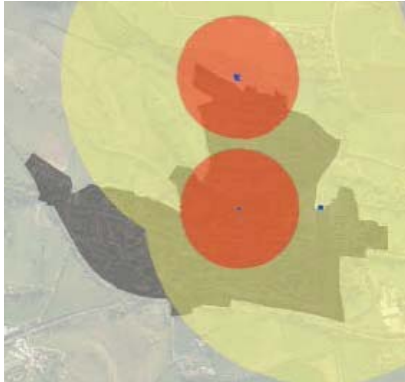
Bishops Cleece



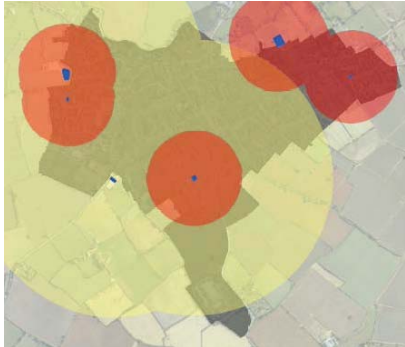
Studley



Quinton



Henley in Arden



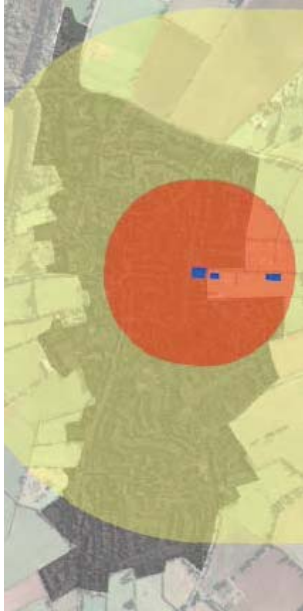
Shipston



Southam



Wellesbourne



Harbury



Long Itchington



Bidford on Avon

7.2.3 Other Factors Influencing Accessibility

Feedback from Community Forums has identified the lack of regular public transport services and their current frequency (i.e. one every 2-3 hours or less), particularly in rural areas where they are needed most, as a key issue for teenagers wishing to travel to make use of existing facilities. For example, there is a late night bus between Shipston and Stratford but it is not well used because it is infrequent and does not accept bus passes for the outward and return journeys.

In a rural district like Stratford where facilities such as Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA) are likely only to be located in larger towns and villages, access to these facilities by means other than walking or cycling needs to be improved in order that young people from rural areas can also benefit from them.

Young people have also reported that access to MUGAs is often limited to times when they can be supervised by an adult, which restricts their informal recreational value. Residents have also commented about the inaccessibility of other forms of open space provision to young people – particularly outdoor sports facilities, which could help to improve levels of accessibility by supplementing other forms local provision.

Barriers to the provision of new facilities for young people (and therefore improvements to accessibility) have also been identified – in particular resistance from local residents to having facilities close to their homes due to problems with anti social behaviour, and the relatively high cost of providing and maintaining facilities such as skate parks.



Facilities for teenagers can be expensive to maintain, and perceived as bad neighbours



MUGAs can have restricted opening times

7.3 Quantity Assessment

7.3.1 Baseline Provision

In total there are 128 facilities for children and young people in the District. Of these 74 are targeted at 2 to 12 year olds, 29 are for teenagers and the remaining 25 are suitable for use by all ages (Table 7.5). There is a generally even spread of facilities across the Sub Areas, although the Stratford upon Avon area has relatively lower provision for older children/ teenagers.

Table 7.5 Quantitative provision of Children and Young People's Facilities by Sub Area

Sub Area	Number of sites by target age group			
	2-12 yrs	12-19 yrs	2-19 yrs	Total
Alcester & Bidford	10	4	7	21
Shipston	11	3	9	23
Southam	12	7	3	22
Stratford upon Avon	14	2	1	17
Studley & Henley	13	5	1	19
Wellesbourne & Kington	14	7	5	26
District Wide	74	28	26	128

The size of sites varies considerably; the smallest site is Long Itchington Recreation Ground which is just 0.005ha, which falls well below even the smallest size threshold as set by FIT for a Local Area for Play (100sq m). There are four sites larger than 0.3ha and these are all facilities suitable for use by all age ranges (Coronation Lane in Shotteswell, Oak Tree Close in Moreton Morrell, Kings Lane in Broom and Park Lane Recreation Ground in Southam).

Fields in Trust classify children's play facilities as follows:

- Local Area of Play (LAP) – minimum activity zone 100 sqm. intended primarily for children up to the age of 6.
- Locally Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) - minimum activity zone 400 sqm. intended primarily for children who are beginning to go out and play independently
- Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP) - minimum activity zone 1,000 sqm. intended primarily for use by older children of relative independence, who have the freedom to range further from home.

Provision in Stratford District does not however fall particularly neatly into these categories. Table 7.6 provides an indication of the approximate number of LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs based on the following categorisations:

LAP

- site under 100sqm and/or
- catering primarily for children under 5 years and/ or
- with less than 6 pieces of equipment

LEAP

- site size over 400 sqm and/or
- catering for a wider range, largely up to 12 years and/or
- sites with more than 6 pieces of equipment

NEAP

- sites over 1,000 sqm and/ or
- catering for a wide range of ages, including 12-19 years olds and/or
- sites with over 11 pieces of equipment

Multi Use Games Areas – providing sufficient space for 5 a side football or basketball.

Other teenage facilities – largely comprising basketball hoops, youth shelters, skate parks/ ramps and BMX tracks.

Table 7.6 Quantitative provision of Children and Young People's Facilities by Sub Area and FIT Classification

Sub Area	Number of sites				
	LAP	LEAP	NEAP	MUGA	Teen
Alcester & Bidford	1	14	2	2	2
Shipston	4	13	3	1	2
Southam	7	6	2	2	5
Stratford upon Avon	9	5	1	0	2
Studley & Henley	5	9	0	2	3
Wellesbourne & Kineton	5	11	3	4	3
District Wide	31	58	11	11	17

Table 7.7 provides an indication of provision for children and young people amongst each of the Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements.

Table 7.7 Quantitative provision of Children and Young People's Facilities by individual settlement

Settlement	Number of sites					
	LAP	LEAP	NEAP	MUGA	Teen	Total
Stratford upon Avon	9	4	1	0	2	17
Alcester	0	6	1	1	0	8
Bidford on Avon	1	2	0	1	1	5
Shipston on Stour	0	5	0	0	1	6
Quinton	1	1	0	1	0	3
Southam	4	1	1	0	1	7
Bishops Itchington	0	1	0	0	0	1
Harbury	0	1	0	1	2	4
Long Itchington	1	1	1	1	1	5

Studley	0	1	0	1	1	3
Henley in Arden	1	1	0	0	1	3
Wellesbourne	1	2	0	0	1	4
Kineton	1	0	0	1	0	2
Salford Priors	0	1	0	0	1	2
Welford on Avon	0	1	0	0	0	1
Wootton Wawen	0	0	0	0	0	0
Ilmington	0	0	1	0	0	1
Brailes	0	0	1	0	0	1
Ettington	0	1	0	0	0	1
Long Compton	0	1	0	0	1	2
Tysoe	0	1	0	0	0	1
Napton on the Hill	0	1	0	0	1	2
Stockton	0	1	0	0	1	2
Temple Herdewyke	0	1	0	0	0	1
Tiddington	0	1	0	0	0	1
Bearley	0	1	0	0	0	1
Claverdon	1	1	0	0	0	2
Earlswood	0	1	0	0	0	1
Fenny Compton	0	1	0	1	0	2
Lighthorne Heath	1	1	0	1	1	4
Snitterfield	1	2	0	0	0	3

As would be expected, Stratford upon Avon town has the greatest amount of provision in a single settlement. Much of this however is in the form of small equipped play spaces catering for younger children (LAPs), which is reflective of the nature of the majority of play provision in new developments. There is a corresponding lack of freely accessible, equipped provision for young people in the town (Stratford Recreation Ground NEAP, Hodgson Road basketball hoop & teenage shelter and the Leisure Centre skatepark), although several of the town's local open spaces provide particular recreational value for teenagers.



Provision in new development has tended to be small LAPs



There is limited provision for young people in Stratford upon Avon

Provision in Category 2 Settlements is variable. Alcester and Southam have the greatest amount of provision with 8 and 7 sites respectively. Harbury Recreation Ground has a particularly good range of facilities for children and young people, including a LEAP, BMX track, skate park and MUGA. Lowest levels of provision are in Bishops Itchington (1 LEAP, no provision for teenagers) and Kineton (2 sites comprising LAP and MUGA). All Category 2 settlements have some form of provision for teenagers with the exception of Bishops Itchington.

Most Category 3 Settlements have 1 or 2 facilities, with the exception of Lighthorne Heath (4 sites), Snitterfield (3 sites) - and Wootton Wawen, which is the only settlement without any provision for children or young people. The following Category 3 settlements do not however have any equipped provision for teenagers:

- Welford on Avon
- Ettington
- Temple Herdewycke
- Tiddington
- Bearley
- Claverdon
- Earlswood
- Snitterfield

A full list of equipped sites for children and young people is provided in Appendix F.

7.3.2 Developing a Quantitative Provision Standard

Fields in Trust suggests a national standard for play provision comprising 0.25ha per 1,000 population of Designated Equipped Playing Space and 0.55ha of Informal Playing Space (totalling 0.8 ha per 1,000 population). Adopted local standards for Stratford upon Avon and the Main Rural Centres reflect this standard, and Officers have reported that this standard has been successful in improving levels of provision in new developments.

Overall provision of equipped children's and young people's facilities in the District is 0.08ha per 1,000, which falls significantly below FIT's recommendations.

Consultation feedback did however suggest that the current level of children's play provision across the District is about right, with 67% of responses to the online questionnaire indicating that there is Enough or More than Enough, although this is perhaps reflective of the older demographic amongst questionnaire respondents. More qualitative feedback did however also suggest that there is a paucity of children's play areas in the District – particularly in smaller settlements which have sufficient children to justify provision of some form of play area. Consultation clearly indicated that residents do not consider there to be enough provision for teenagers; 87% of respondents to the online questionnaire considered there to be Less than Enough provision – a sentiment that was echoed at all the Community and Parish Council Forums.

Comparison with the level of provision in other similar local authority areas is difficult due to the varying definitions of play space and whether or not this comprises only equipped play space.

On the basis of the accessibility assessment, national best practice and consultation feedback, it is suggested that a quantitative provision standard of 0.25ha equipped play space per 1,000 is adopted. Although this standard is challenging, it reflects national best practice and existing local standards which have been reported to be achievable in practice where they have been applied to new developments. The standard also reflects the fact that accessibility to children's play areas in particular is currently poor across most of the District. Around 1/3 of the District (28%) is currently within an Effective Catchment of a children's play area. On the basis of improving this to 100%, a District wide standard of 0.25ha/1,000 would need to be adopted³⁰.

It is not suggested that a different standard is adopted for urban areas, since, on the basis of FIT's principles, accessibility to children and young people's facilities should be more equitable between urban and rural areas. This is also reflective of consultation feedback which indicates that there are several Category 4 Settlements where there is currently an unmet demand for children's play areas.

A specific breakdown or allocation of the proposed standard between children and young people's facilities is not suggested. The nature of provision should instead reflect the characteristics of demand and existing deficiencies in specific locations. It is however suggested that all Category 2 and 3 Settlements have some form of deliberate provision for young people. Provision for young people should also focus on improving access to existing facilities in the District – such as football pitches and tennis courts, before providing new facilities.

³⁰ Existing provision 0.08ha ÷ 28% (existing accessibility) = 0.002 x 100% (target accessibility) = 0.25ha

Given the comparative Effective Catchment sizes for children's and young people's facilities; the comparatively poor accessibility of children's play facilities; and the demographics of the District's population (children aged 2-12 years currently comprise 12% total population as opposed to 8% aged 13-19 years) it is however likely that a greater proportion of new provision will need to be for children aged 2-12 years.

Quantitative Provision Standard	
District wide	0.25ha equipped children and young people's play space per 1,000 population

7.3.3 Identifying Quantitative Deficiencies and Surpluses

Table 7.8 sets out provision per 1,000 population within each of the individual Sub Areas. Areas of greatest quantitative provision for children (2-12 years) are Shipston and Wellesbourne and Kineton. Lowest levels of provision are in Stratford upon Avon and Studley and Henley Sub Areas. The same is true of provision for young people (12-19 years).

In terms of overall combined provision, the lowest levels are in Stratford upon Avon (0.92ha/1,000) and Studley and Henley (0.86ha/1,000), although provision across all the Sub Areas falls short of the recommended standard.

Table 7.8 Quantitative provision of Children and Young People's Facilities per 1,000 population by Sub Area

Sub Area	Area (ha)	ha per 1,000 population
Facilities for 2-12 years		
Alcester & Bidford	1.5	0.07
Shipston	1.7	0.09
Southam	1.2	0.07
Stratford upon Avon	0.8	0.03
Studley & Henley	0.6	0.03
Wellesbourne & Kington	1.8	0.11
District Wide	7.5	0.06
Facilities for 12-19 years		
Alcester & Bidford	1.1	0.05
Shipston	1.2	0.06
Southam	0.9	0.05
Stratford upon Avon	0.3	0.01
Studley & Henley	0.3	0.01
Wellesbourne & Kington	1.3	0.08
District Wide	5.0	0.04
Combined Provision		
Alcester & Bidford	1.58	0.07
Shipston	1.83	0.10
Southam	1.55	0.09
Stratford upon Avon	0.92	0.03
Studley & Henley	0.86	0.05
Wellesbourne & Kington	2.12	0.13
District Wide	8.88	0.08

Table 7.9 sets out quantitative provision of children's and young people's facilities on an individual settlement basis. There are a considerable number of settlements whose provision falls below the District average.

Table 7.9 Quantitative provision of Children and Young People's Facilities per 1,000 population by individual settlement

Settlement	Facilities for 2-12 years (ha)		Facilities for 12-19 years (ha)	
	Total Area	per 1,000	Total Area	per 1,000
Stratford upon Avon	0.75	0.03	0.31	0.01
Alcester	0.45	0.06	0.29	0.04
Bidford	0.21	0.05	0.09	0.02
Shipston on Stour	0.51	0.11	0.29	0.06
Quinton	0.10	0.06	0.02	0.01
Southam	0.67	0.11	0.57	0.09
Bishops Itchington	0.09	0.04	0.00	0.00
Harbury	0.10	0.04	0.10	0.04
Long Itchington	0.18	0.10	0.20	0.11
Studley	0.07	0.01	0.09	0.02
Henley in Arden	0.10	0.03	0.12	0.04
Wellesbourne	0.24	0.04	0.10	0.02
Kineton	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01
Salford Priors	0.05	0.04	0.06	0.06
Welford on Avon	0.03	0.02	0.00	0.00
Wootton Wawen	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ilmington	0.09	0.12	0.09	0.12
Brailes	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17
Ettington	0.08	0.07	0.00	0.00
Long Compton	0.03	0.04	0.02	0.03
Tysoe	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11
Napton on the Hill	0.10	0.10	0.03	0.03
Stockton	0.12	0.09	0.03	0.02
Temple Herdewyke	0.10	0.12	0.00	0.00
Tiddington	0.04	0.03	0.00	0.00
Bearley	0.05	0.06	0.00	0.00
Claverdon	0.05	0.06	0.00	0.00
Earlswood	0.06	0.06	0.00	0.00
Fenny Compton	0.08	0.10	0.03	0.04
Lighthorne Heath	0.04	0.05	0.09	0.12
Snitterfield	0.20	0.18	0.00	0.00

Table 7.10 sets out the levels of combined quantitative provision for children and young people on an individual settlement basis.

Table 7.10 Combined Quantitative Provision for children and young people

Settlement	Total Area (ha)	Provision per 1,000
Stratford upon Avon	0.88	0.04
Alcester	0.47	0.06
Bidford on Avon	0.30	0.06
Shipston on Stour	0.56	0.12
Quinton	0.12	0.07
Southam	0.85	0.14
Bishops Itchington	0.09	0.04
Harbury	0.19	0.09
Long Itchington	0.22	0.12
Studley	0.16	0.03
Henley in Arden	0.08	0.03
Wellesbourne	0.25	0.05
Kineton	0.03	0.01
Salford Priors	0.06	0.06
Welford on Avon	0.03	0.02
Wootton Wawen	0.00	0.00
Ilmington	0.09	0.12
Brailes	0.17	0.17
Ettington	0.08	0.07
Long Compton	0.05	0.06
Tysoe	0.11	0.11
Napton on the Hill	0.13	0.13
Stockton	0.15	0.12
Temple Herdewyke	0.10	0.12
Tiddington	0.04	0.03
Bearley	0.05	0.06
Claverdon	0.05	0.06
Earlswood	0.06	0.06
Fenny Compton	0.11	0.14
Lighthorne Heath	0.13	0.16
Snitterfield	0.20	0.18

None of the settlements meet the proposed quantitative provision standard of 0.25ha per 1,000. The following also fall below the current District average of 0.08ha per 1,000:

- Stratford upon Avon

Category 2 Settlements:

- Alcester
- Bidford
- Quinton
- Bishops Itchington
- Studley
- Henley in Arden
- Wellesbourne
- Kineton

Category 3 Settlements:

- Salford Priors
- Wootton Wawen
- Welford on Avon
- Ettington
- Long Compton
- Tiddington
- Bearley
- Claverdon
- Earlswood

Table 7.11 sets out the quantity of additional provision for children and young people required to meet the proposed standards across all the Sub Areas. Total required provision across the District as a whole comprises 20.9ha.

Table 7.11 Additional Children and Young People's Facilities requirements by Sub Area

Sub Area	Current provision (ha)	Provision required to meet standard (ha)	Current deficit / surplus (ha)
Alcester & Bidford	1.58	5.3	-3.7
Shipston	1.83	4.7	-2.9
Southam	1.55	4.4	-2.8
Stratford upon Avon	0.92	6.6	-5.7
Studley & Henley	0.86	4.8	-3.9
Wellesbourne & Kineton	2.12	4.0	-1.9
District Wide Deficit	8.88	29.7	-20.9

Table 7.12 summarises additional requirements for each settlement to meet the proposed quantitative standard. The greatest requirement is in Stratford upon Avon, where an additional 6ha is required. Requirements amongst Category 2 Settlements range from 1.8ha (Alcester) to 0.3ha in Long Itchington and Quinton.

Table 7.12 Additional Children and Young People's Facilities requirements by individual settlement

Settlement	Current provision (ha)	Provision required to meet standard (ha)	Current deficit / surplus (ha)
Stratford upon Avon	0.88	6.05	-5.17
Alcester	0.47	1.84	-1.37
Bidford	0.30	1.19	-0.88
Shipston on Stour	0.56	1.21	-0.65
Quinton	0.12	0.42	-0.30
Southam	0.85	1.56	-0.72
Bishops Itchington	0.09	0.55	-0.46
Harbury	0.19	0.57	-0.38
Long Itchington	0.22	0.46	-0.24
Studley	0.16	1.50	-1.34
Henley in Arden	0.08	0.74	-0.65
Wellesbourne	0.25	1.38	-1.13
Kineton	0.03	0.60	-0.56
Salford Priors	0.06	0.27	-0.21
Welford on Avon	0.03	0.33	-0.30
Wootton Wawen	0.00	0.26	-0.26
Ilmington	0.09	0.19	-0.10
Brailes	0.17	0.26	-0.08
Ettington	0.08	0.27	-0.19
Long Compton	0.05	0.20	-0.15
Tysoe	0.11	0.24	-0.14
Napton on the Hill	0.13	0.25	-0.12
Stockton	0.15	0.33	-0.17
Temple Herdewycke	0.10	0.20	-0.10
Tiddington	0.04	0.36	-0.32
Bearley	0.05	0.20	-0.15
Claverdon	0.05	0.21	-0.16
Earlswood	0.06	0.25	-0.19
Fenny Compton	0.11	0.20	-0.09
Lighthorne Heath	0.13	0.20	-0.07
Snitterfield	0.20	0.27	-0.07

In Category 4 areas, settlements that have specifically reported that they would like some form of provision for children or young people – either during consultation or in their Parish Plan, include:

- Alderminster
- Avon Dassett
- Binton
- Coughton
- Long Marston

Given the size of some Category 4 Settlements – some have up to 550 residents, there is a case for providing children and young people’s facilities in these areas. Table 7.13 sets out approximate provision requirements for a range of smaller settlement sizes, based on the standard of 0.25ha per 1,000 population. On the basis of FIT’s recommended sizes for children’s play areas and the recommended quantitative provision standard, even settlements as small as 100 residents would qualify for a Local Area of Play.

Table 7.13 Children and Young People’s Facilities provision requirements for Category 4 Settlements

Population size	Provision requirement		Equivalent provision
	ha	sqm	
500	0.13	1,250	NEAP
400	0.1	1000	NEAP
300	0.08	750	LEAP
200	0.05	500	LEAP
100	0.03	250	LAP

7.4 Quality Assessment

7.4.1 Assessment Framework

The assessment of the quality of provision for children and young people is based on guidance from Children's Play Council and Play England, who recently devised a set of play indicators are part of a pilot for local authorities³¹.

Feedback from public and stakeholder consultation about what factors contribute towards making high quality facilities for children and young people have also been incorporated into the quality assessment. Consultation revealed that the overall quality of a play space is broadly dependent on the following factors:

- Provision of a range of activities and opportunities for play and interaction;
- Clean and well maintained facilities that do not suffer from litter, vandalism and antisocial behaviour;
- Provision for a range of abilities and ages;
- Well designed sites that allow younger children to play without feeling intimidated by older users; and
- Maintaining play equipment in good condition.

³¹ Play England and the Children’s Play Council, 2010. Play Indicators Project: DRAFT guidance for the pilot local authorities

The assessment focuses on three major aspects of children and young people's outdoor play facilities:

Location - proximity to housing, informal oversight, access, feeling of personal safety, security and lighting, physical/mobility access to the site and opportunities for interacting with other children.

Play value - enticing to children to play, range and quality of play features, opportunities for movement, ball games and access to natural environment, seating, opportunities for disabled children and added play value.

Care and maintenance – well maintained, health and safety requirements, seating for adults, litter bins, dog free zones, presence of trusted adults and toilets.

Sites catering solely for teenagers have been assessed separately since the nature of provision (e.g. skate ramp or basketball hoop) is not directly comparable with other forms of children's play provision. Further information about the breakdown of points for each category is contained in the Appendix E.

The quality assessment is primarily based upon information gathered during the site audits, which has been supplemented with consultation feedback and baseline information provided by Stratford District and Warwickshire County Council.

The scores for each component of the assessment have been translated into overall site ratings as per the quality assessment for Parks, Gardens and Amenity Greenspaces:

Excellent	scoring over 80% available points
Good	scoring 65-70% available points
Fair	scoring 50-64% available points
Poor	scoring 25-49% available points
Very Poor	scoring less than 25% available points

7.4.2 Quality Assessment: Children's Play Facilities

Generally, there is a high standard of play provision across the District. Overall 5% of children's play facilities have been assessed as Excellent; 60% as Good; 30% as Fair; and just 5% as Poor.

Location

Quality Rating	Number of sites	% total no. sites
Excellent	32	32%
Good	41	41%
Fair	21	21%
Poor	5	5%
Very Poor	nil	-

The range of quality assessment scores for location are variable. Sites in the Stratford upon Avon Sub Area scored particularly highly; possibly due to the fact that this is the most built up of the Sub Areas, where play areas are consequently

located closer to houses and demonstrate a high level of safety. Play areas are most well used when they are located where children can see and be seen.

Disabled children and parents/carers with buggies should be able to access the play areas as much as non-disabled children. Sites on average scored reasonably well in terms of physical mobility, although the following sites were awarded the lowest possible score:

- Kinwarton Park, Alcester
- Lighthorne Village Hall
- Coronation Lane, Shotteswell
- Stretton on Fosse play area
- Mountford Sports Ground, Wellesbourne

Play Value

Quality Rating	Number of sites	% total no. sites
Excellent	7	7%
Good	23	23%
Fair	44	44%
Poor	23	23%
Very Poor	2	2%

The assessment of Play Value recommended by the Children's Play Council and Play England incorporates a range of considerations that focus on more than just the number of pieces of equipment. It includes an assessment of the range of experiences and sensations offered by a particular play area, as well as opportunities within the wider context for access to nature, ball games and movement.

Two sites in the District were awarded a score of Very Poor for Play Value: Queens Avenue, Shipston on Stour and Hammond Green, Wellesbourne. These sites were found to have an extremely limited range of facilities and opportunities for play and interaction with other children. The quality of the equipment was also found to be in poor condition and in need of replacement.

Given the range of components that contribute to the Play Value of a particular facility, the setting of children's play facilities was found to be particularly important. Those sites located within a larger open space - such as a recreation ground, were found to offer enhanced Play Value due to the opportunities afforded by the site's surroundings for movement, ball games and access to nature.

40% respondents to the online questionnaire considered the range of existing provision for children and young people to be Very or Fairly Good, indicating that there is some scope for improvement. The limited Play Value of some sites is also an issue which was raised at Community Forums and by Council officers. It has been identified as a particular problem in connection to equipped play areas provided as part of new developments, where both the size of provision and range of equipment provided combine to offer limited Play Value. The pooling of resources from several new developments to provide a single larger shared facility

could be a means of addressing this issue, although this is dependent on the location of new development and the potential for identifying a mutually convenient location for a new play area. The attachment of planning conditions relating to the quality of children's play provision could also help to improve Play Value.



Several sites in the District have limited play value



The surrounding environment is an important element of enhanced play value

Care and Maintenance

Quality Rating	Number of sites	% total no. sites
Excellent	28	28%
Good	40	40%
Fair	17	17%
Poor	12	12%
Very Poor	0	Nil

All children's play areas should provide space where children can play free from hazards. Children's play areas across the District scored well in terms of care and maintenance. Sites in the Stratford Sub Area scored particularly well, with two thirds being categorised as Excellent. Sites scoring poorly in this respect were spread across the District although there is a particular concentration in the Alcester and Bidford and Shipston Sub Areas. Officers at Stratford District Council have commented that the quality of play areas and their maintenance is generally dependent on who is responsible for managing the play area. Stratford District Council has adopted a significant number of play areas which it maintains; others are provided and maintained by Town/ Parish Councils; and some are the responsibility of developers; the latter category are most likely to fall into disrepair and decline in quality.

Sites generally do not have provision of seating for adults, which should be provided for parents and carers to encourage them to relax, linger and allow their children to play for extended periods if they want. Very few of the sites contained toilets, unless they were located within a larger open space which offered a wider range of convenience facilities. Many of the sites were well managed in terms of maintaining a dog free zone. Those sites without any boundaries or fencing were most likely to have issues, although the majority of sites did have some form of signage indicating that dogs should be kept out.

Feedback from consultation echoed the site audit results with regards to care and maintenance. 42% of respondents to the online questionnaire considered the existing level of management of maintenance at children's play facilities to be Very Good or Fairly Good; only 13% considered it to be Poor. Other issues which were raised during the course of consultation are summarised in Box 7.2.



Sites should be properly enclosed and provide some form of adult seating



There is a concentration of poorly maintained sites in the Shipston area



Children's play areas generally scored well in terms of care and maintenance

Box 7.2 Issues relating to the quality of children's play areas identified during consultation

Children's play areas in Alcester have issues with glass, chewing gum and graffiti
 There are some issues with drinking, rubbish and graffiti in Bidford on Avon
 Play equipment in Avon Dassett needs upgrading
 Play equipment in Wellesbourne needs upgrading – on some sites the swings are broken
 Existing facilities for Children in Wellesbourne are very poor.
 Sambourne recreation ground needs the children's play and teenage facilities improved.
 The range of play equipment at Shipston Sports Club is disappointing for young children when compared with others in smaller settlements outside the District.
 Shipston play areas lack excitement/ interest and need to be better maintained
 Shipston play areas need to be better maintained
 Children's play areas in Bishops Itchington could be better maintained – there are issues with broken glass and maintenance of areas for under 5s

Table 7.14 sets out the overall quality assessment results for each Sub Area. The majority of children's play areas in each Sub Area have been classified as Good. There are no particular concentrations of Poor sites; Alcester and Bidford and Stratford upon Avon are the only Sub Areas that do not contain any Poor sites. Children's play areas in Stratford upon Avon scored particularly well, although interestingly, the Sub Area contains few of the Districts top scoring sites. Play areas in Stratford upon Avon scored particularly well in terms of location, but less well in terms of Play Value; although Play Value has been identified as an issue across the whole District.

Table 7.14 Quality Analysis Scores for Children's Play Areas by Sub Area

Sub Area	Location		Play Value		Care and maintenance		Overall Score	
	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites
Alcester & Bidford	Excellent	5	Excellent	1	Excellent	3	Excellent	1
	Good	6	Good	4	Good	6	Good	8
	Fair	3	Fair	8	Fair	3	Fair	7
	Poor	2	Poor	3	Poor	4	Poor	0
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0
Shipston	Excellent	5	Excellent	1	Excellent	5	Excellent	0
	Good	7	Good	4	Good	7	Good	11
	Fair	5	Fair	8	Fair	3	Fair	6
	Poor	2	Poor	5	Poor	4	Poor	2
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	1	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0
Southam	Excellent	7	Excellent	1	Excellent	3	Excellent	0
	Good	5	Good	7	Good	7	Good	10
	Fair	2	Fair	3	Fair	3	Fair	3
	Poor	0	Poor	3	Poor	1	Poor	1
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0
Stratford upon Avon	Excellent	8	Excellent	0	Excellent	10	Excellent	0
	Good	6	Good	1	Good	4	Good	13
	Fair	1	Fair	9	Fair	1	Fair	2
	Poor	0	Poor	5	Poor	0	Poor	0
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0
Studley & Henley	Excellent	2	Excellent	0	Excellent	1	Excellent	0
	Good	8	Good	3	Good	10	Good	8
	Fair	4	Fair	8	Fair	2	Fair	5
	Poor	0	Poor	3	Poor	1	Poor	1
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0

Wellesbourne & Kineton	Excellent	4	Excellent	4	Excellent	6	Excellent	3
	Good	9	Good	4	Good	3	Good	9
	Fair	5	Fair	7	Fair	5	Fair	6
	Poor	1	Poor	3	Poor	2	Poor	1
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	1	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0

Table 7.15 considers the quality of the District's Play areas on an individual settlement basis. There is no discernable correlation between settlement hierarchy and quality of play provision. Amongst the Category 2 Settlements, Wellesbourne has the poorest quality of provision. Of the Category 3 Settlements, Ettington has the worst provision, its only site having been rated as poor.

Table 7.15 Quality of Children's Play Areas in Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements

Settlement	Overall Quality Score				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Stratford upon Avon		12	2		
Alcester	1	2	3		
Bidford on Avon		1	2		
Shipston on Stour		3		1	
Quinton		1	1		
Southam		4	1		
Bishops Itchington		1			
Harbury		1			
Long Itchington		1	1	1	
Studley		1			
Henley in Arden		2			
Wellesbourne			2	1	
Kineton		1			
Salford Priors		1			
Welford on Avon			1		
Wootton Wawen					
Ilmington		1			
Brailes			1		
Ettington				1	
Long Compton		1			

Tysoe			1		
Napton on the Hill		1			
Stockton		1			
Temple Herdewycke		1			
Tiddington		1			
Bearley			1		
Claverdon		2			
Earlswood		1			
Fenny Compton		1			
Lighthorne Heath			2		
Snitterfield		1	2		

Appendix G sets out the quality assessment scores for each individual site. Across the District the top ten scoring sites in order of quality are:

- Conway Fields (Alcester & Bidford)
- Oak Tree Close (Wellesbourne & Kineton)
- Avon Dassett Playing Field (Wellesbourne & Kineton)
- Ducketts Lane (Wellesbourne & Kineton)
- Stratford Recreation Ground (Stratford upon Avon)
- Moorfields (Alcester & Bidford)
- Shepherds Hill (Southam)
- Earlswood Leisure Park (Studley & Henley)
- Harbury Recreation Ground (Southam)
- Loxley Playing Field (Shipston)

There are only five sites in the District rated as Poor. These are:

- Hammond Green (Wellesbourne & Kineton)
- Queens Avenue (Shipston)
- Ettington Recreation Ground (Shipston)
- Leigh Crescent (Southam)
- Abbeyfields Drive (Studley & Henley)

7.4.3 Quality Assessment: Facilities for Young People

The District's facilities for young people have generally been found to be of a lower quality than other children's play areas in the District. Overall 4% of facilities have been rated as Excellent; 25% as Good; 54% as Fair; 14% as Poor and 4% as Very Poor.

Location

Quality Rating	Number of sites	% total no. sites
Excellent	1	4%
Good	6	21%
Fair	15	54%
Poor	6	21%
Very Poor	nil	-

Almost all the facilities for young people scored highly for how well used they are, which reflects their recreational value and popularity amongst young people living in the District.

Sites generally scored worst on personal safety; many of them are located a considerable distance from residential areas, although this is often intentional given bad neighbour issues that have been raised in connection with them. Most sites scored well in terms of the opportunities they provide to meet and interact with other teenagers.



Facilities for young people are well used

Play Value

Quality Rating	Number of sites	% total no. sites
Excellent	4	14%
Good	6	21%
Fair	10	36%
Poor	7	25%
Very Poor	1	4%

All sites scored poorly in terms of the opportunities they offer disabled children, although this is inevitable given the nature of the majority of facilities. There was also a lack of suitable seating provision for teenagers and children, with many sites not having any seating at all. Sites were generally considered to be attractive to young people, although the range of experiences and activities offered by individual sites is limited; most of the sites comprise only one or two pieces of equipment. Across the District as a whole there is evidence of a limited range of equipment/ facilities for young people, the majority comprising a skate ramp or basketball hoop. Feedback from consultation also indicated that there is a need to improve the range of activities provided for young people; only 11% respondents to the online questionnaire considered existing provision to be Very or Fairly Good. Examples of more imaginative and varied provision include the zip wire and assault course in Farnborough, Lighthorne Heath BMX, roller blade and skateboard area and Harbury Recreation Ground which contains a skate ramp, BMX facility and MUGA. Parish Councils have however commented about the cost of providing facilities for teenagers, which tends to limit the range of provision.



The majority of provision for young people comprises basketball hoops and skate ramps

Care and Maintenance

Quality Rating	Number of sites	% total no. sites
Excellent	2	7%
Good	5	19%
Fair	11	41%
Poor	8	30%
Very Poor	1	4%

A considerable proportion of sites (34%) across the District have been rated as Poor or Very Poor in terms of care and maintenance. These findings are also reflected in consultation feedback; only 8% respondents to the online questionnaire rated the overall quality of facilities for teenagers as Very or Fairly Good, rising to 17% for management and maintenance. Parish Councils have however highlighted the cost of regular maintenance as a key issue. Box 7.3 lists other issues that were raised during consultation. Sites also scored poorly in terms of the provision of ancillary facilities such as seating, bins and toilets.



Care and maintenance of some facilities could be improved



Maintenance of some facilities can be costly

Box 7.3 Issues relating to the quality of facilities for young people identified during consultation

Bidford Park has recently been redone, but it is not a very good facility for teenagers

There are problems of teenagers hanging around in Wellesbourne; but they have nowhere to go. Redevelopment of the sports club should include youth facilities both for organised groups like cubs/guides, and a youth cafe

Sambourne recreation needs both the children's play and teenage facilities improved

St James Churchyard is an open area with two public footpaths - being in the centre of Southam it has always been a gathering place for teenagers/youth, causing problems after consuming drink/drugs

Table 7.16 sets out the overall quality assessment results for each Sub Area. Neither the Southam nor Studley and Henley Sub Areas contain any facilities for young people that have been rated either Excellent or Good. Facilities in Southam scored particularly poorly in terms of the management and maintenance of sites; all sites except one were classified as Poor in this respect. The Wellesbourne and Kineton Sub Area contains the biggest range of scores, containing both Excellent sites (Oak Tree Close, Moreton Morrell) and Very Poor sites (Mountford Sports Ground basketball hoop and youth shelter).

Table 7.16 Quality Analysis Scores for Facilities for Young People by Sub Area

Sub Area	Location		Play Value		Care and maintenance		Overall Score	
	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites	Score	No. sites
Alcester & Bidford	Excellent	1	Excellent	1	Excellent	1	Excellent	1
	Good	1	Good	1	Good	1	Good	1
	Fair	0	Fair	1	Fair	2	Fair	1
	Poor	2	Poor	0	Poor	0	Poor	1
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0
Shipston	Excellent	0	Excellent	1	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	0	Good	0	Good	1	Good	1
	Fair	1	Fair	0	Fair	2	Fair	2
	Poor	2	Poor	2	Poor	0	Poor	0
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0

Southam	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	1	Good	3	Good	0	Good	0
	Fair	5	Fair	2	Fair	0	Fair	4
	Poor	0	Poor	1	Poor	7	Poor	2
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0
Stratford upon Avon	Excellent	0	Excellent	1	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	1	Good	0	Good	0	Good	1
	Fair	1	Fair	1	Fair	2	Fair	1
	Poor	0	Poor	0	Poor	0	Poor	0
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0
Studley & Henley	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0	Excellent	0
	Good	0	Good	0	Good	1	Good	0
	Fair	5	Fair	2	Fair	3	Fair	4
	Poor	0	Poor	3	Poor	1	Poor	1
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	0
Wellesbourne & Kineton	Excellent	0	Excellent	1	Excellent	2	Excellent	0
	Good	3	Good	2	Good	2	Good	4
	Fair	3	Fair	3	Fair	2	Fair	2
	Poor	1	Poor	0	Poor	0	Poor	0
	Very Poor	0	Very Poor	1	Very Poor	1	Very Poor	1

Appendix G sets out the quality assessment scores for each individual site. Across the District the top five highest scoring sites are:

- Conway Fields MUGA, Alcester (Alcester & Bidford)
- Long Compton Recreation Ground (Shipston)
- Ducketts Lane, Farnborough (Wellesbourne & Kineton)
- Cromwell Place skate ramp, Lighthorne Heath (Wellesbourne and Kineton)
- Lighthorne Heath MUGA (Wellesbourne and Kineton)

The five lowest scoring sites are spread across the District are as follows:

- Bidford youth shelter (Alcester & Bidford)
- Harbury Recreation Ground (Southam)
- Dog Lane Skate Ramp, Napton on the Hill (Southam)
- Crooks Lane Skate Ramp, Studley (Studley & Henley)
- Mountford Sports Ground, Wellesbourne (Wellesbourne & Kineton)

Table 7.17 considers the quality of the District's facilities for teenagers on an individual settlement basis.

Table 7.17: Quality of Facilities for Teenagers in Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements

Settlement	Overall Quality Score				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Very Poor
Stratford upon Avon		1	1		
Alcester	1				
Bidford on Avon		1		1	
Shipston on Stour			1		
Quinton			1		
Southam			1		
Bishops Itchington					
Harbury			2	1	
Long Itchington			2		
Studley			1	1	
Henley in Arden			1		
Wellesbourne					1
Kineton			1		
Salford Priors		1			
Welford on Avon					
Wootton Wawen					
Ilmington					
Brailes					
Ettington					
Long Compton		1			
Tysoe					
Napton on the Hill				1	
Stockton			1		

Temple Herdewycke					
Tiddington					
Bearley					
Claverdon					
Earlswood					
Fenny Compton		1			
Lighthorne Heath		2			
Snitterfield					

7.4.4 Developing a Quality Standard

Site assessments and feedback from consultation indicates that there is scope to improve the quality of existing provision for children and young people, particularly in terms of the range of activities and Play Value offered to all ages, and the care and maintenance of facilities for young people.

It is proposed that the quality standard for children and young people's provision should seek to bring all children's play areas and facilities for young people in the District up to a 'Fair' standard as determined by the quality assessment scoring methodology. In the longer term there is an aspiration for all sites to reach a 'Good' standard. A considerable number of sites in the District already achieve or exceed this standard and the focus in the short term should therefore be to improve the sites currently classified as Poor or Very Poor (Box 7.4).

Consideration should also be given to setting Play Value or quality standards for new developments as a way of improving the quality of future provision (see Section x for Design Guidelines).

Box 7.4 Facilities for children and young people classified as Poor and Very Poor

Shipston	Alcester & Bidford
Ettington Recreation Ground (poor)	Bidford youth shelter (poor)
Queens Avenue (poor)	Kings Lane (poor)
Brailes Playing Field (poor)	Wellesbourne & Kineton
Tysoe Recreation Ground (poor)	Hammond Green (poor)
Southam	Mountford Sports Ground basketball hoop and youth shelter (very poor)
Leigh Crescent (poor)	Studley & Henley
Harbury Recreation Ground skate ramp (poor)	Abbeyfields Drive (poor)
Leigh Crescent (poor)	Crooks Lane Skate Park (poor)
Dog Lane skate ramp and zip wire (poor)	

Quality Standard	
District wide	All equipped facilities for children and young people should achieve a 'Fair' rating using the quality assessment criteria.

7.5 Summary of Spatial Distribution of Unmet Needs

All settlements have **accessibility deficiencies** in relation to children's play areas. With the exception of Long Itchington, Bearley, Claverdon, Lighthorne Heath and Snitterfield, they all achieve less than 50% accessibility. Settlements with the most acute accessibility deficiencies (20% or less) include:

- Stratford upon Avon (21.3%)

Category 2 Settlements:

- Kineton
- Studley
- Wellesbourne

Category 3 Settlements:

- Brailes
- Earlswood
- Fenny Compton
- Ilmington
- Long Compton
- Salford Priors
- Welford on Avon
- Wootton Waven

Accessibility to young people's facilities is considerably better. Settlements without any or less than 50% accessibility to facilities for young people include:

0% accessibility:

- Bishops Itchington (Category 2)
- Bearley
- Claverdon
- Earlswood
- Ettington
- Snitterfield
- Temple Herdewycke
- Tiddington
- Welford on Avon
- Wootton Waven

Limited accessibility:

- Stratford upon Avon
- Napton on the Hill

In terms of **quantitative provision**, all settlements fall short of the proposed quantitative provision standard for children and young people's facilities. Settlements achieving less than the current District average for provision of children's play and young people's facilities include:

- Stratford upon Avon

Category 2 Settlements:

- Alcester
- Bidford
- Quinton
- Bishops Itchington
- Studley
- Henley in Arden
- Wellesbourne
- Kineton

Category 3 Settlements:

- Salford Priors
- Wootton Wawen
- Welford on Avon
- Ettington
- Long Compton
- Tiddington
- Bearley
- Claverdon
- Earlswood

Sites failing to meet the proposed **quality standard** are listed in Box 7.5.

Box 7.5 Facilities for children and young people classified as Poor and Very Poor

Shipston	Alcester & Bidford
Ettington Recreation Ground (poor)	Bidford youth shelter (poor)
Queens Avenue (poor)	Kings Lane (poor)
Brailes Playing Field (poor)	Wellesbourne & Kineton
Tysoe Recreation Ground (poor)	Hammond Green (poor)
Southam	Mountford Sports Ground basketball hoop and youth shelter (very poor)
Leigh Crescent (poor)	Studley & Henley
Harbury Recreation Ground skate ramp (poor)	Abbeyfields Drive (poor)
Leigh Crescent (poor)	Crooks Lane Skate Park (poor)
Dog Lane skate ramp and zip wire (poor)	

7.5.1 Forecasting Future Need

On the basis of the proposed quantitative provision standard of 0.25ha per 1,000 population, future requirements to meet population growth in the District up to 2023 range from 1.8ha (low growth scenario) to 4.2ha (trend based scenario) (Table 7.18).

Table 7.18 Future Children and Young People's Facilities requirements to meet population growth up to 2023

Growth Scenario	% growth	Population 2023	Additional population from 2009	Additional requirement (ha)
Policy constrained low growth	6%	126,200	7,334	1.8
Policy constrained medium growth	9%	129,000	10,134	2.5
Trend based demand-led growth	14%	135,800	16,934	4.2

Local Trends that may impact on future open space provision requirements

Trends and issues that may impact on future demand and requirements for children and young people's facilities are summarised below.

- Play England have recently launched their Manifesto for Children's Play³², which calls for policy makers to make children's play a priority by:
 - Making all residential neighbourhoods child-friendly places where children can play outside
 - Giving all children the time and opportunity to play throughout childhood
 - Giving all children somewhere to play - in freedom and safety - after school and in the holidays
- The links between good physical and emotional health and outdoor play are well documented. Recent trends show however that children are leading increasingly sedentary lives – preferring indoor activities such as computer games to outdoor exercise. Combined with unhealthy diets, this is leading to an increase in childhood obesity. There is evidence to suggest that childhood obesity in Stratford District is increasing, although it remains below the county average. There is however a need to address this risk by providing safe, convenient and attractive opportunities for children and young people to return to playing outside.
- There are however concerns amongst those who are responsible for providing and maintaining children and young people's facilities in Stratford District that cuts in Government funding, smaller budgets and limited availability of grants will prevent them from being able to provide additional facilities – particularly since they are quite costly to establish and maintain. Play England have also commented that at the national level, children's play has been earmarked as one of the first in line for government cutbacks.

³² Play England, 2010. A Manifesto for Children's Play

- Population projections indicate that the majority of population growth in Stratford District will be seen amongst the older age groups; those aged 65 or over are projected to increase by over 50% up to 2033. Population growth amongst younger age groups (5 to 14 year olds) is expected to comprise only 13% overall growth.

Whilst organisations such as Play England continue to emphasise the importance and benefits of providing opportunities for outdoor play, consideration of potential trends impacting on participation indicate that there is unlikely to be a significant increase in demand for children and young people's facilities in the future. This is likely to be compounded by a potential lack of financial resources in the short to medium term. Where increases in demand are experienced, the existing quantitative provision standard is considered to provide sufficient scope to accommodate this.

7.6 Standards and Recommendations

Accessibility Standard	
District wide, children's play facilities	5 minutes walking time 240m Effective Catchment
District wide, facilities for young people	15 minutes walking time 720m Effective Catchment
Quantity Standard	
District wide	0.25ha per 1,000 population (refers to equipped play areas and facilities for young people)
The breakdown of this standard between children and young people's facilities should be determined on an individual settlement basis, dependent on existing provision and the nature of unmet demand. It is however suggested that all Category 2 and 3 Settlements have some form of deliberate provision for young people.	
Quality Standard	
All equipped facilities for children and young people should achieve a 'Fair' rating using the quality assessment criteria. Consideration should also be given to setting Play Value or quality standards for new developments as a way of improving the quality of future provision	

7.6.1 Design Guidelines

Given feedback in relation to the quality and play value of new children's play areas recently provided in the District, it is recommended that any standards or planning policies for provision of children's play facilities in the District comprise a qualitative element aimed at improving the design quality and value of new provision.

Play England (2004) *Design for Play: A Guide to Creating Successful Play Space* outlines best practice guidelines in relation to designing for children's play and teenagers. A good play facility should be:

- Bespoke
- Well located
- Make use of natural elements
- Provide a wide range of play experiences
- Accessible to disabled and non disabled children
- Meet community needs
- Allow children of different ages to play together
- Build in opportunities for risk and challenge
- Sustainably and appropriately maintained
- Allow for change and evolution

The guidance also provides advice on the following:

Designing for flexible use

- Designers of play spaces should focus on providing for abilities, rather than for ages. It is not necessary to be prescriptive about the usage of play spaces, for example a play space aimed at teenagers can also be very attractive to and usable by much younger children when the teenagers are not around, and vice versa. Therefore through careful design, play spaces can include elements for both younger and older children, without being prescriptive about who uses what.
- Spaces need to be carefully designed if they are to be used by a range of ages together, as younger children can feel intimidated by older users who are playing and interacting at a higher level.
- Comfortable seating and shelter should be included for parents and carers to encourage them to relax, linger and allow their children to play for extended periods if they want.

Location and boundaries

- Play spaces in hidden and inaccessible places will not be well used by children, and are most likely to be vandalised. In general play provision is best placed close to other facilities where other people are about. Two key criteria for locating successful play spaces are that children want to 'see and be seen' and 'be where it's at' (Wheway and Millward, 1997).
- Locating play spaces beside community facilities, such as libraries, adds value to these facilities and can increase usage of the play space. In larger parks or open spaces, it can be helpful to locate play spaces close to cafés or toilets, which help bring people into the park and make it feel safer and more sociable.
- It is important to think carefully about the use of fencing, which is often installed partly to keep out dogs. Parents with young children may value fencing around play areas, but older children may be discouraged from usage, and assume that the fenced area is not for them. The treatment of the boundary

to a play space is an important design issue, which needs careful consideration; a boundary hedge, perhaps some mounding, or no demarcated boundary at all, may work better in some location

Provision for teenagers

- Play England argue that one of the most important factors in teenage provision is the need for an attitudinal change to young people, and a far greater recognition of their right to occupy the public domain.
- Teenage provision tends to be dominated by wheeled play and ball games areas. Though popular, these areas are almost exclusively used by boys and cater less for girls. For teenage girls specifically areas and seating to hang out may be more appealing.
- Shelters designed with the young people who will use them can be particularly successful.
- Shelters and seating to hang out work best when sensitively located, close to other facilities, rather than being placed in isolated or exposed positions where they – and the occupants – can be overly conspicuous.
- More and better quality provision is also urgently required specifically for older children and teenagers. Ball games areas and wheel parks are the most common form of teenage provision but these tend to cater less well for girls. For teenage girls specifically areas and seating to hang out may be more appealing.

Designing for inclusive play

- Successful play spaces should, as far as is reasonably possible, offer the same quality and extent of play experience to disabled children and young people as is available to those who are not disabled, whilst accepting that not all equipment can be completely accessible to everyone (The 1995 Disability Discrimination Act).

Designing for sustainability

- Using reclaimed or recycled materials should be considered along with energy consumption throughout the life of the equipment or material, especially where materials not normally used in play spaces are proposed. For example, reclaimed or FSC-approved wood should be used.
- Whole life environmental impact of materials – sourcing, manufacture, recycled content, toxic material content, carbon emissions, disposal/reuse of materials;
- Conservation, and ideally enhancement, of wildlife habitats in and around the play space; and
- Minimisation of energy and water use during construction/refurbishment and ongoing management of the play space.

Making other spaces more ‘playable’

- The idea of playable space is that areas should be shared and allow for play in places other than defined play areas, one of the most important locations for playable space are where children and young people would naturally want to play – on their local street, or the local green. In parks and green spaces, trees, bushes and streams may give children and young people the chance to invent

their own play. Urban areas such as streets, town centres, public squares and fountains may also provide play opportunities. Play England's Design for Play Guidance (2004) recommends that the use of signs such as 'No ball games' and 'Keep off the grass' should be routinely questioned and avoided unless there are strong safety reasons for their use. In addition the assumption that most structures should be designed with anti-skate features might also be questioned.

Enhancing Play Value

Best Play³³ provides some guidelines and criteria for an enriched play environment, including:

- A varied and interesting physical environment
- Challenge in relation to the physical environment
- Playing with natural elements – earth, water, fire, air
- Movement such as running, jumping, rolling, climbing, balancing
- Manipulating natural and fabricated materials
- Stimulation of the five senses
- Experiencing change in the natural and built environment
- Social interaction
- Playing with identity
- Experiencing a range of emotions.

Minimum acceptable size component

Play England suggest that the smallest form of children's play provision – Local Areas for Play (LAP) should have a minimum activity zone of 100 sqm. This rises to 400sqm for Locally Equipped Areas of Play (LEAP) and 1,000sqm for Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play (NEAP). It is recommended that these standards are adopted as minimum acceptable size components. However, given the nature of more recent provision for children's play areas in the District, which has largely comprised relatively small play areas in new developments with limited play value for older children and young people, it is recommended that provision of larger play areas catering for a wider range of age groups is encouraged. This may necessitate the pooling of resources across several new developments to provide larger facilities.

7.6.2 Conclusions and Recommendations

Analysis has revealed that there is a District wide shortage of provision of equipped play areas for both children and young people. The cost of establishing and maintaining new facilities is however a particular concern.

Existing planning policy standards have been successful in securing new play areas across the District, although the size of new developments has meant that the pattern of new provision has generally taken the form of small play areas that offer limited play value and few facilities for children / young people over 5 years

³³ FIT, the Children's Play Council and PLAYLINK (and also supported by Playboard Northern Ireland, Play Scotland and Play Wales), 2000. Best Play.

old. Options for pooling resources to provide larger play spaces that are shared between developments and communities should also be considered, although this should not be at the expense of the needs of young children or local residents.

The proposed standard does not specify a particular breakdown between children and young people's facilities. The exact form of provision should be determined on a case by case basis, dependent on the range and type of existing provision and the nature of unmet demand.

Although an accessibility standard for young children / LAPs has not been suggested as part of this assessment, developers should nonetheless be encouraged to consider the needs of younger children when planning new provision. In considering access to existing play areas, they should be particularly mindful of whether or not these play areas are likely to serve the needs of and be accessible to young children. Where a new development site falls within the catchment of an existing play area (240m), developers should consider whether or not there are any particular severance lines or accessibility barriers (such as busy roads) that are likely to limit access to these facilities by young or unaccompanied children. Where this is the case, it may be necessary to provide some form of onsite provision to overcome this issue.

Where new development is not proposed, Parish Plans represent a key mechanism for securing a commitment to the provision of new facilities.

The quality of the majority of play areas in the District is generally good. However, there are concerns over the play value of existing facilities, which tend to provide only standard equipment and a limited variety of facilities for young people. Future standards and policies should give greater weight to the encouragement and securement of improved quality and 'play value' of facilities for a range of age groups. For young people, improving access to other recreational facilities – such as football pitches and tennis courts, may provide a low cost and more sustainable solution.

8 Outdoor Sport

8.1 Introduction

Primary Purpose

To provide opportunities for, and encourage participation in outdoor sport and physical recreation.

This chapter considers provision of outdoor sports facilities across the District. It covers the following sports:

- Football
- Cricket
- Rugby Union
- Hockey
- Tennis
- Netball
- Bowls
- Athletics

Assessment of the quantity of provision across the District is based upon Sport England's Playing Pitch Strategy methodology; this chapter provides a summary of key findings, full details of which are provided in the accompanying Playing Pitch Strategy for Stratford on Avon District. The quality assessment is based upon Sport England's pitch assessment framework, which has been supplemented with feedback from Sports Clubs, Parish Councils and local community consultation.

Map 15 illustrates the distribution of outdoor sports facilities across the District.

8.2 Accessibility Assessment

8.2.1 Defining Effective Catchment Areas and Accessibility Standards

Fields In Trust (FIT) recommend that playing pitches should be available within 1.2 kilometres of all dwellings in major residential areas. FIT emphasise the importance of outdoor sports facilities being accessible on foot, bicycle or public transport in preference to the private car. However, they acknowledge that time travelled is more important to users than distance travelled which means that travel by motorised private transport will remain an important measure, particularly in more rural areas.

FIT also suggest that community tennis courts should be within 20 minutes travel time (walking in urban areas, by car in rural areas), and that there should be one bowling green within 20 minutes travel time (walking in urban areas, by car in

rural areas). They also suggest an accessibility standard for synthetic athletics tracks of 30 minutes travel time, rising to 45 minutes in rural areas.

There are currently no local accessibility standards for outdoor sports. 82% respondents to the online questionnaire currently travel up to 15 minutes to access an outdoor sports facility. However, there is clearly some room for improvement in relation to current levels of accessibility to outdoor sports facilities in the District; only 52% online questionnaire respondents considered accessibility to be Good or Very Good, rising to 66% for Average or better. This is perhaps reflective of the fact that 44% respondents considered there to be less than enough provision of outdoor sports facilities in the District.

A review of comparable R-80 local authorities indicates that there is considerable variation in acceptable distance thresholds for outdoor sports pitches, which range from 8 to 15 minutes. Some authorities have adopted the FIT standard of 1.2km. Several of the standards are expressed in terms of walking and driving, in acknowledgement that people are more likely to drive to outdoor sports facilities than some other types of open space.

On the basis of national best practice and consultation feedback, it is suggested that two tiers of Effective Catchments are modelled for outdoor sports facilities, based upon a baseline and aspirational distance threshold. The baseline thresholds reflect national best practice and FIT recommendations. However, on the basis of consultation feedback, it is considered appropriate to adopt a more aspirational standard that aims to significantly improve existing levels of accessibility to outdoor sports facilities across the District. This is also important in terms of encouraging increased participation in sport and delivering the District's Vision for Open Space.

The Effective Catchments are based on travel times rather than travel mode. At the District wide level, they have been converted into driving distances to reflect the distribution of outdoor sports facilities across the District, and the fact that a significant proportion of residents likely to travel by car to access them. However, in line with FIT's recommendations, in urban areas (Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements) the Effective Catchments (with the exception of athletics) have also been converted into walking distances, which should be the preferred mode of travel. Given the more strategic nature and general distribution of facilities, and the fact that they often draw users from a much wider catchment, effective catchments for athletics are based on driving only.

Accessibility Standard		
Facility	Baseline Standard	Aspirational Standard
Grass pitches	15 minutes travel time Urban areas: 720m ³⁴ walking District wide: 7.2km driving	10 minutes travel time Urban areas: 480m walking District wide: 4.8km driving
Bowls & Tennis	20 minutes travel time Urban areas: 960m walking	15 minutes travel time Urban areas: 720m walking

³⁴ Equivalent to 1.2km FIT standard when converted into a straight line distance.

	District wide: 9.6km driving	District wide: 7.2km driving
Athletics	45 minutes travel time District wide: 21.6km driving	30 minutes travel time District wide: 14.4km driving

8.2.2 Identifying Accessibility Deficiencies

Grass Pitches

Maps 16 and 17 show the Baseline and Aspirational Effective Catchments for grass pitches. On the basis of the 7.2km Effective Catchment, every part of the District is within an Effective Catchment of a grass sports pitch. Accessibility levels are also very high on the basis of the Aspirational 4.8km Effective Catchment; 99% of the District is within a 10 minute driving distance of a grass pitch (Table 8.1).

Table 8.1 Effective Catchment coverage by Sub Area for grass pitches

Sub Area	% Sub Area	
	7.2km	4.8km
Alcester & Bidford	100%	100%
Shipston	100%	99.5%
Southam	100%	99.8%
Stratford upon Avon	100%	100%
Studley & Henley	100%	100%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	100%	98.5%
District Wide	100%	99%

Table 8.2 sets out the combined percentage area of Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements that are within the Baseline and Aspirational Effective Catchments based on walking distances. On the basis of the Baseline Effective Catchment (720m) which is equivalent to FIT's 1.2km Effective Catchment (15 minute travel time) for urban areas, accessibility across all Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements at the District level is over 90%. The Wellesbourne and Kineton Sub Area has the lowest accessibility, although this is still relatively high at 86.5%. On the basis of the Aspirational Catchment (480m/ 10 minutes walking distance), District wide accessibility is 77%. The Southam Sub Area has the highest accessibility amongst Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements at 84.3%. Wellesbourne and Kineton again has the lowest, although this is still above 70%.

Table 8.2 Combined Effective Catchment coverage for Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements for grass pitches

Sub Area	% combined settlement coverage	
	7.2km	4.8km
Alcester & Bidford	91%	76.4%
Shipston	93%	81%
Southam	94%	84.3%
Stratford upon Avon	93%	71.8%
Studley & Henley	95.6%	77.2%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	86.5%	71.4%
District Wide	92%	77%

Table 8.3 details accessibility at the individual settlement level.

Table 8.3 Effective Catchment coverage at the individual settlement level for grass pitches

Settlement	% settlement coverage	
	720m	480m
Stratford upon Avon	88.7%	66.6%
Alcester	97.1%	80.7%
Bidford on Avon	100%	98.2%
Bishops Itchington	100%	98.7%
Harbury	97.1%	83.9%
Henley	99.3%	75.4%
Kineton	99.4%	95%
Long Itchington	100%	100%
Quinton	86%	70.1%
Shipston on Stour	100%	96.3%
Southam	93.6%	82.8%
Studley	98%	91.8%
Wellesbourne	96.4%	72.6%
Brailes	71.2%	51.7%
Bearley	84%	41.8%
Claverdon	100%	100%
Earlswood	92.3%	62.4%
Ettington	100%	98.1%

Fenny Compton	100%	100%
Ilmington	100%	81.4%
Lighthorne Heath	100%	92.2%
Long Compton	84.3%	64.1%
Napton on the Hill	84.2%	64.5%
Salford Priors	94.1%	55.7%
Snitterfield	94%	82.6%
Stockton	100%	100%
Temple Herdewycke	0%	0%
Tiddington	100%	100%
Tysoe	99.8%	83.4%
Welford-on-Avon	89.3%	66.7%
Wootton Wawen	84.6%	54.1

On the basis of the 720m Baseline Catchment, all settlements achieve over 70% accessibility. Accessibility is over 85% in all Category 1 and 2 Settlements, the lowest being Quinton (86%) and Stratford upon Avon (88.7%). In Quinton, the village's pitches are located to the north of the built up area and the majority of Lower Quinton is consequently outside the Effective Catchment. In Stratford upon Avon the main residential area that falls outside the 720m Effective Catchment is in the north, around Bishopton. There are also some pockets of inaccessibility on the fringes of new developments such as Trinity Mead and Wetherby Way in the south and south western parts of the town.

The following settlements achieve 100% accessibility for the 720m Effective Catchment:

- Bidford on Avon
- Bishops Itchington
- Long Itchington
- Shipston

Accessibility amongst Category 3 Settlements is similarly high, with the exception of Temple Herdewycke which has no sports pitches and a corresponding 0% accessibility. Brailes is the only other Category 3 Settlement to achieve less than 80% accessibility at 71.2%. There are several settlements that achieve 100% accessibility:

- Claverdon
- Ettington
- Fenny Compton
- Ilmington
- Lighthorne Heath
- Stockton

- Tiddington

On the basis of the Aspirational Effective Catchment (480m), accessibility levels are inevitably lower. Stratford upon Avon achieves 66.6% accessibility (Figure 8.1). Areas of lowest accessibility include:

- Southern areas of Trinity Mead
- Area to the south of Evesham Road
- North western Stratford upon Avon, between the Alcester Road and the Ridgeway
- Northern Stratford upon Avon, between the railway line and Birmingham Road/ A3400

For the most part, these areas comprise relatively new developments which indicates that there has been little new provision of outdoor sports pitches to accompany these developments – largely because their size has not warranted it, and financial contributions have consequently been directed towards existing facilities instead.

Figure 8.1 480m Effective Catchment in Stratford upon Avon



Amongst the Category 2 Settlements, accessibility ranges from 100% in Long Itchington to 70.1% in Quinton. Other Category 2 Settlements achieving less than 80% accessibility are Wellesbourne and Henley in Arden (Figure 8.2). In Wellesbourne, areas of lowest accessibility are on the fringes of the built up area. The main residential areas outside the Effective Catchment are west of Warwick Road and Hammond Green in the north west and Dovehouse Drive in the south. Sports pitch provision in Henley in Arden is concentrated on the edge of the built up area and largely to the south of the village. Residential areas with lowest accessibility are consequently located in the north of the village. There is a similar situation in Quinton where the lack of pitches in Lower Quinton has limited accessibility.

There is considerable variation in accessibility on the basis of the 480m Aspirational Effective Catchment amongst the Category 3 Settlements. Fenny Compton, Claverdon, Stockton and Tiddington all achieve 100% accessibility.

However, accessibility is less than 60% in several villages, including Brailes, Bearley, Salford Priors and Wootton Wawen.

Figure 8.2 480m Effective Catchments in Quinton, Wellesbourne and Henley in Arden



Bowling Greens

Maps 18 and 19 show the Baseline and Aspirational Effective Catchments for bowling greens. On the basis of the 9.6km Baseline Effective Catchment, 99.7% of the District is within the catchment of a bowling green (Table 8.4). Accessibility is similarly high for the 4.8km Aspirational Catchment at 96%. Sub Areas failing with lowest accessibility are Shipston (96%) and Southam (87.7%). In Shipston, the most easterly parts of Brailes, Compton Wynyates, Tysoe and Whichford parishes fall outside the catchment area. In Southam, a small part of Chesterton and Kingston parish and significant proportions of Priors Marston and Upper and Lower Shuckborough parishes fall outside the catchment area.

Table 8.4 Effective Catchment coverage by Sub Area for bowling greens

Sub Area	% Sub Area	
	9.6km	7.2km
Alcester & Bidford	100%	100%
Shipston	100%	96%
Southam	99.2%	87.7%
Stratford upon Avon	100%	100%
Studley & Henley	100%	100%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	100%	99%
District Wide	99.7%	96%

Table 8.5 sets out combined accessibility levels for Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements at the Sub Area level. Accessibility is quite variable between Sub Areas. Wellesbourne and Kineton has the best accessibility, with 72% coverage for the Baseline Effective Catchment (960m) and 57.5% for the Aspirational Effective Catchment. Accessibility is similarly high in Alcester and Bidford. Southam has the lowest levels of accessibility with 20.3% accessibility for the Baseline Effective Catchment and just 15.1% for the Aspirational Catchment.

Table 8.5 Combined Effective Catchment coverage for Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements for bowling greens

Sub Area	% combined settlement coverage	
	9.6km	7.2km
Alcester & Bidford	70.7%	50.2%
Shipston	44.8%	39.5%
Southam	20.3%	15.1%
Stratford upon Avon	39.1%	24.3%
Studley & Henley	49.6%	37%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	72%	57.5%
District wide	48%	35%

Table 8.6 details accessibility at the individual settlement level. Not all settlements have bowling greens, which means that accessibility to these facilities by foot is limited in a significant number of settlements. Whether or not there is scope to address these deficiencies will depend on the level of demand for bowling greens in villages that do not currently have one.

Settlements achieving the best levels of accessibility include:

- Kineton
- Shipston on Stour
- Fenny Compton
- Ilmington

- Snitterfield
- Tiddington
- Welford on Avon
- Wootton Wawen

Table 8.6 Effective Catchment coverage at the individual settlement level for bowling greens

Settlement	% settlement coverage	
	960m	720m
Stratford upon Avon	33%	18.5%
Alcester	73.6%	47.8%
Bidford on Avon	74.7%	54.4%
Bishops Itchington	0%	0%
Harbury	0%	0%
Henley in Arden	37.5%	12.5%
Kineton	100%	80.3%
Long Itchington	0%	0%
Quinton	0%	0%
Shipston on Stour	97.4%	86.9%
Southam	50.6%	37.8%
Studley	83.8%	61.8%
Wellesbourne	81.7%	62.1%
Brailes	0%	0%
Bearley	0%	0%
Claverdon	0%	0%
Earlswood	0%	0%
Ettington	0%	0%
Fenny Compton	100%	100%
Ilmington	100%	85.5%
Lighthorne Heath	0%	0%
Long Compton	0%	0%
Napton on the Hill	0%	0%
Salford Priors	0%	0%
Snitterfield	98.4%	91.8%
Stockton	0%	0%

Temple Herdewycke	0%	0%
Tiddington	100%	91.7%
Tysoe	0%	0%
Welford-on-Avon	94.4%	75%
Wootton Wawen	100%	100%

Tennis Courts

Maps 20 and 21 show the Baseline and Aspirational Effective Catchments for tennis courts. On the basis of the 9.6km Baseline Effective Catchment, 99% of the District is within the catchment area of a tennis court. Accessibility is only marginally lower for the Aspirational Effective Catchment at 95% (Table 8.7).

Table 8.7 Effective Catchment coverage by Sub Area for tennis courts

Sub Area	% Sub Area	
	9.6km	7.2km
Alcester & Bidford	100%	100%
Shipston	98.7%	90.2%
Southam	100%	100%
Stratford upon Avon	100%	100%
Studley & Henley	100%	100%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	99.7%	88.8%
District Wide	99%	95%

Table 8.8 sets out combined accessibility levels for Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements at the Sub Area level. Settlements in Wellesbourne and Kineton have significantly lower accessibility, largely attributable to the fact that Wellesbourne does not have any tennis courts within an Effective Catchment of the built up area. On the basis of the 960m Baseline Effective Catchment, all other Sub Areas achieve over 60% combined accessibility amongst Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements. Using the 720m Aspirational Catchment, accessibility is below 65% for all Sub Areas.

Table 8.8 Combined Effective Catchment coverage for Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements for tennis courts

Sub Area	% combined settlement coverage	
	960m	720m
Alcester & Bidford	64.7%	55.7%
Shipston	63.9%	58.7%
Southam	72.9%	62.2%
Stratford upon Avon	70.2%	46.9%
Studley & Henley	69.2%	61.4%

Wellesbourne & Kineton	15.2%	11.4%
District wide	62%	50%

Table 8.9 details accessibility at the individual settlement level. On the basis of FIT's recommended 20 minute catchment area (960m), accessibility amongst Category 1 and 2 Settlements is generally good. The main exceptions to this are Quinton and Wellesbourne, neither of which have any tennis courts. There are also several Category 3 Settlements which achieve 0% accessibility:

- Brailes
- Bearley
- Earlswood
- Fenny Compton
- Long Compton
- Salford Priors
- Temple Herdewycke

On the basis of the Aspirational 720m Effective Catchment, accessibility is particularly limited in Stratford upon Avon, Long Itchington, Southam and Tiddington, all of which achieve less than 50% accessibility.

Table 8.9 Effective Catchment coverage at the individual settlement level for tennis courts

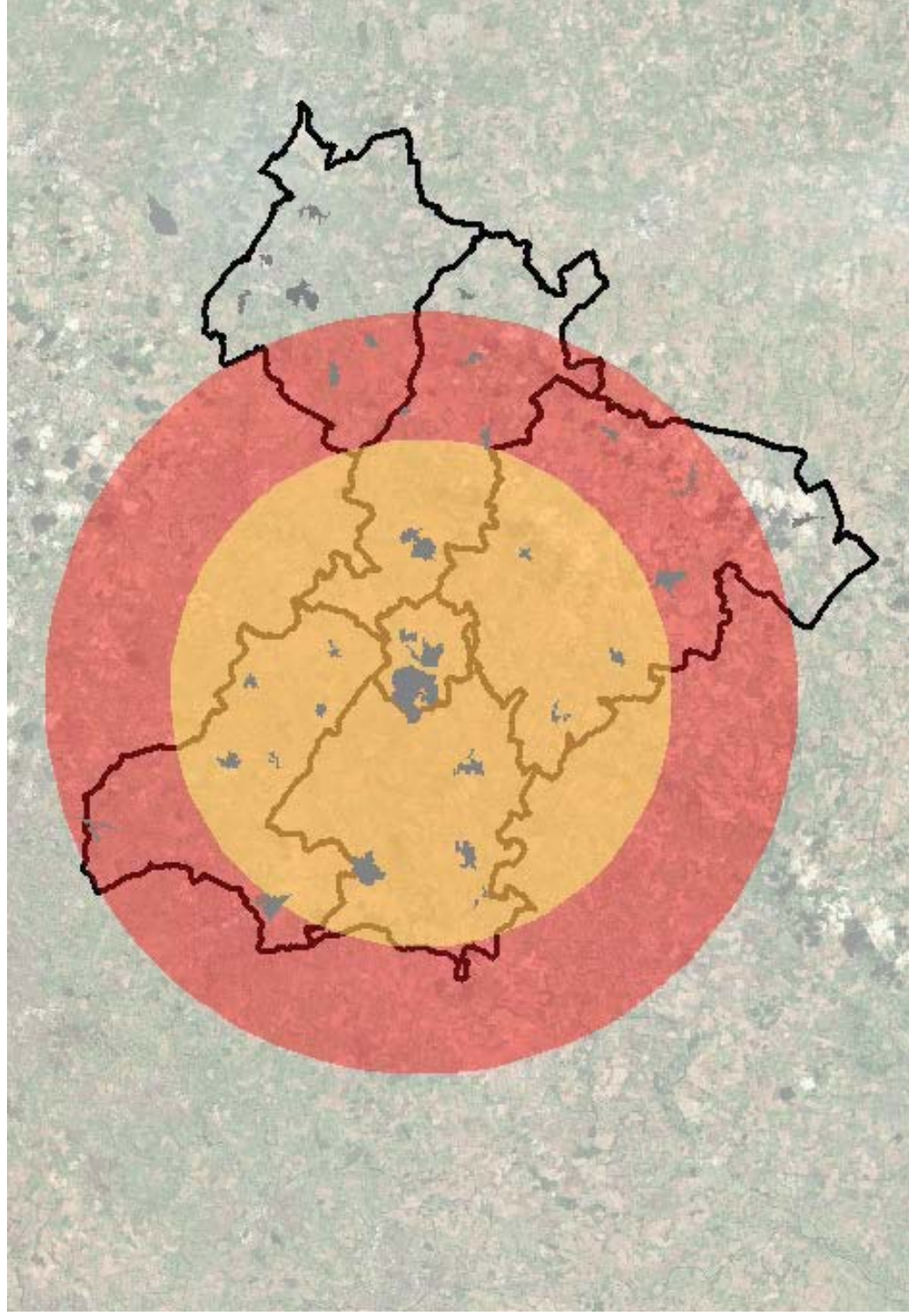
Settlement	% settlement coverage	
	960m	720m
Stratford upon Avon	72.5%	48.9%
Alcester	98.7%	90.4%
Bidford on Avon	75.9%	55.7%
Bishops Itchington	100%	100%
Harbury	99.8%	89.3%
Henley	89%	73.6%
Kineton	89.4%	75.8%
Long Itchington	63.5%	46.3%
Quinton	0%	0%
Shipston on Stour	99.2%	92.6%
Southam	50.3%	38.7%
Studley	98.1%	90.2%
Wellesbourne	0%	0%
Brailes	0%	0%
Bearley	0%	0%

Claverdon	100%	99.3%
Earlswood	0%	0%
Ettington	100%	100%
Fenny Compton	0%	0%
Ilmington	100%	78.9%
Lighthorne Heath	28.5%	0%
Long Compton	0%	0%
Napton on the Hill	84.2%	69.4%
Salford Priors	0%	0%
Snitterfield	97.8%	90%
Stockton	100%	100%
Temple Herdewycke	0%	0%
Tiddington	30.8%	5.6%
Tysoe	100%	95.8%
Welford-on-Avon	0%	0%
Wootton Wawen	0%	0%

Athletics

There is only one synthetic athletics track in the District, which is located in Stratford upon Avon town. Figure 8.3 shows the effective catchment of this facility on the basis of the baseline and aspirational catchments.

Figure 8.3 Effective Catchments for Synthetic Athletics Tracks



On the basis of the aspirational catchment, 52% of the District is within the effective catchment. This rises to 80% under the baseline catchment, which is more reflective of the rural nature of the District (Table 8.10). Given the location of the existing athletics track in the District, Sub Areas to the south and east have poorest accessibility - in particular Southam, which only achieves 29% accessibility under the baseline catchment.

Table 8.10 Effective Catchment coverage by Sub Area for athletics tracks

Sub Area	% Sub Area	
	21.6km	14.4km
Alcester & Bidford	100%	97%
Shipston	84%	47%
Southam	29%	0%
Stratford upon Avon	100%	100%
Studley & Henley	100%	67%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	79%	43%
District wide	80%	52%

Table 8.11 sets out the effective catchment coverage for each of the Sub Areas and combined accessibility levels for Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements. On the basis of the baseline catchment, there is good accessibility across the majority of settlements, with the exception of those in Southam where accessibility is only 24%.

Table 8.11 Combined Effective Catchment coverage for Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements for athletics tracks

Sub Area	% combined settlement coverage	
	21.6km	14.4km
Alcester & Bidford	100%	100%
Shipston	86%	28%
Southam	24%	0%
Stratford upon Avon	100%	100%
Studley & Henley	100%	61%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	91%	60%
District wide	85%	64%

Table 8.12 details accessibility at the individual settlement level. The majority of settlements are within the baseline effective catchment, with the exception of:

- Long Itchington
- Southam
- Fenny Compton

- Long Compton
- Napton on the Hill
- Southam

Table 8.12 Effective Catchment coverage at the individual settlement level for athletics tracks

Settlement	% settlement coverage	
	21.6km	14.4km
Stratford upon Avon	100%	100%
Alcester	100%	100%
Bidford on Avon	100%	100%
Bishops Itchington	100%	0%
Harbury	100%	0%
Henley in Arden	100%	100%
Kineton	100%	6%
Long Itchington	0%	0%
Quinton	100%	100%
Shipston on Stour	100%	0%
Southam	0%	0%
Studley	100%	27%
Wellesbourne	100%	100%
Brailes	100%	0%
Bearley	100%	100%
Claverdon	100%	100%
Earlswood	100%	0%
Ettington	100%	100%
Fenny Compton	0%	0%
Ilmington	100%	100%
Lighthorne Heath	100%	0%
Long Compton	0%	0%
Napton on the Hill	0%	0%
Salford Priors	100%	100%
Snitterfield	100%	100%
Stockton	0%	0%
Temple Herdewycke	100%	0%
Tiddington	100%	100%

Tysoe	100%	0%
Welford-on-Avon	100%	100%
Wootton Wawen	100%	100%

Given the distance threshold for athletics, residents in the District can also take advantage of facilities in adjoining areas. Table 8.12 lists synthetic athletics tracks outside the District that are within a 45 minute travel distance of the District. Facilities in Banbury and Leamington Spa are particularly well positioned to compensate for the accessibility deficiencies identified within the District

Table 8.13 Out of District athletics tracks

Facility	Details	Location
University of Warwick Athletics Track	8 Lane Floodlit Mondo track Available for club & public hire Coventry Godiva Harriers AC	Westwood, Coventry
Edmonstone Athletics Track	8 lanes Available for public hire Leamington Cycling & Athletic Club	River Close, Leamington Spa
Abbey Stadium Sports Centre	8 lanes Available for public hire Bromsgrove & Redditch AC	Birmingham Road, Redditch
Norman Green Athletics Centre	8 lanes Available for public hire Solihull & Small Heath AC	Blossomfield Road, Solihull
Drayton School Athletics Track	8 lanes Available for public hire Banbury Harriers AC Hook Norton Harriers AC	Drayton Road, Banbury

8.2.3 Other Factors Influencing Accessibility

Feedback from public consultation indicates that there is a general lack of publicly accessible sports facilities which are available on a pay per play or free basis – particularly the latter. The availability of sports pitches and tennis courts to members of the local community has been identified as particularly important in terms of improving provision and activities for young people. With regards to providing improved public facilities, Parish Councils have however highlighted the cost of maintaining (and providing) sports facilities.

Residents and Parish Councils have requested that school facilities should be made more available for public use. Table 8.10 and Box 8.1 detail educational facilities at secondary schools, colleges and primary schools that are currently

known to be available for public use/hire. It appears that a significant number of outdoor sports facilities are in fact available to the public, although very few of them currently have formal Community Use Agreements in place. Several schools who do not currently hire out their facilities have also indicated that they would consider doing so in the future.

Table 8.10 Public Access Arrangements at Secondary Schools and Colleges

School/ College	Facility access arrangements	Formal community use agreement
Henley High School	Senior football pitch hired to Aston Villa Soccer School; all facilities are available for hire	No
Kineton High School	Facilities available for hire	Yes
King Edward VI High School	Pitches available for hire subject to availability and CRB Facilities currently hired by Stratford Rugby Club and Stratford Cricket Club	No
St Benedicts Catholic High School, Alcester	All facilities available for hire	No
Stratford High School	All facilities available for hire	Yes
Studley High School	No public or club use (facilities subject to 7pm curfew)	No
Shipston High School	No facilities available for hire	No
Alcester High School	Football pitches hired out to Alcester Town FC at weekends	No
Alcester Grammar School	No facilities available for hire	No
Southam College	All facilities available for hire	Yes
Warwickshire College	All facilities available for hire	No, but facilities are available for public use as a matter of policy

Box 8.1 Primary Schools with public/ club access outdoor sports facilities

Dasnett CofE Primary School, Southam *

Harbury CofE Primary School*

Haselor Primary School

Henley in Arden Community Primary School

Long Itchington Primary School

Welford on Avon Primary School*

Wootton Wawen Primary School*

Shipston on Stour Primary School
 Bishopton Primary School
 Bridgetown Primary School
 The Croft Preparatory School
 Wellesbourne CofE Primary School
 St Lawrence CofE Primary School, Southam

*formal Community Use Agreement

Although there do appear to be a significant number of facilities in the District that are publicly accessible, the cost of hiring some of these facilities may be prohibitively expensive for some members of the community. There are no tennis courts in the District that can be played on free of charge. Access fees range from £3 in some of the smaller villages to £9.60 at Stratford Leisure Centre. Stratford Tennis Club has reported that over subscription at the club means that the facilities are not available for public hire at all.

Sports pitches located within public open spaces – such as Stratford Recreation Ground, Conway Fields, The Big Meadow and Long Compton Recreation Ground can generally be used free of charge by the local community on an informal basis. Where these pitches are used regularly by a particular Club or team however, informal use by the community is often discouraged due to issues over pitch quality and maintenance.

FIT strongly recommends that that every rural settlement should have its own area of open space, which should provide for the specific sport, recreation and play needs of its local community. Settlements without an outdoor sports pitch located within a freely accessible public open space are listed below:

- Bishops Itchington
- Bearley
- Henley in Arden
- Napton on the Hill
- Tysoe
- Wootton Wawen
- Tiddington
- Temple Herdewycke

Bearley, Tysoe and Bishop's Itchington both have sports pitches located on separate sites that are available for public use free of charge. Facilities at Henley in Arden Sports and Social Club are available for hire at a cost. Napton on the Hill also has a sports field, but this has been identified as being private and for club use only, with no hiring arrangements. Temple Herdewycke is the only settlement where there are no publicly accessible sports pitches – either within an open space or available to hire. Provision in Wootton Wawen and Tiddington is also limited as residents would have to hire Wootton Wawen primary school's junior football pitch or the Tiddington NFU sports facilities if they wanted to play outdoor sport.

8.3 Quantity Assessment

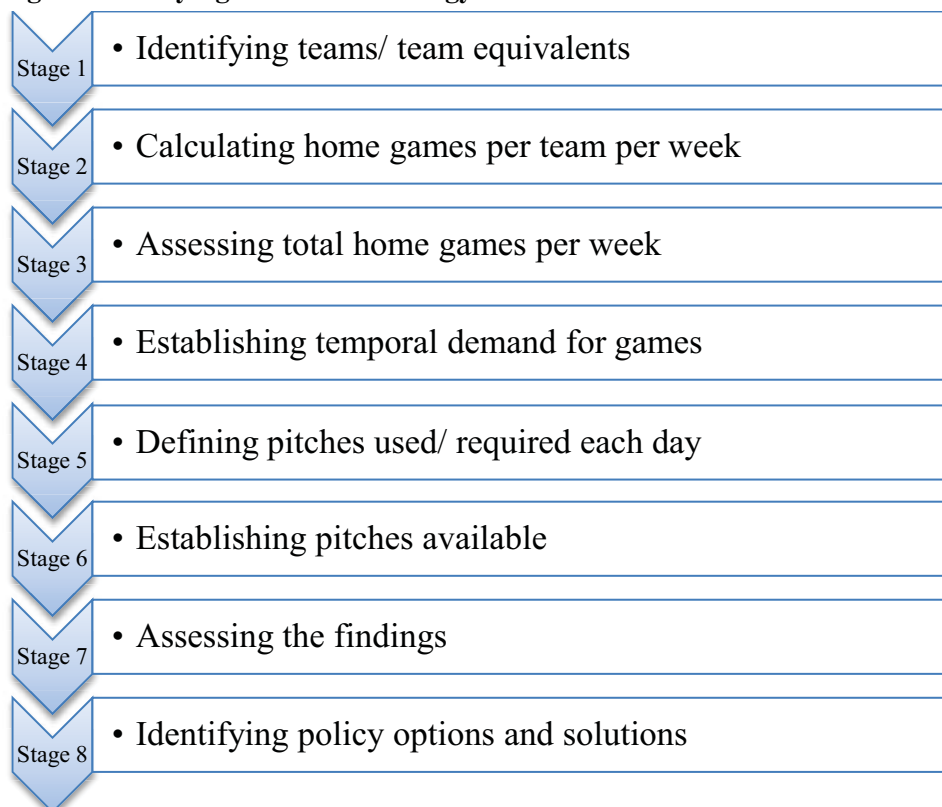
8.3.1 Assessment Framework

Assessment of the adequacy of the current supply of outdoor sports facilities has been undertaken using the methodology outlined in *Towards a Level Playing Field* and accompanying Playing Pitch Model (PPM). The PPM provides a mechanism for determining the number of pitches required for each sport based on demand in an actual predicted set of circumstances. The model measures demands at peak times and then compares this with the number of pitches available.

The Playing Pitch Strategy methodology comprises eight stages. Stages 1 to 6 involve numerical calculations, whilst Stages 7 and 8 develop issues and solutions (Figure 8.1). The methodology is employed to analyse the adequacy of current provision and to assess possible future situations, in order that latent and future demand (identified through Team Generation Rates), and the problems with quality, use and capacity of existing pitches can be taken into account.

The following sections provide a summary of key findings – full details of the assessment can be found in the Playing Pitch Strategy.

Figure 8.1 Playing Pitch Methodology



8.3.2 Baseline Provision

Football

Table 8.11 summarises the total number of grass football pitches across the District which are currently, or have previously (i.e. in the last 5 years) been in use for football. There are 104 sites in total, comprising 87 adult football pitches; 64 junior pitches; and 33 mini pitches. There is a fairly even distribution of pitches across the District's Sub Areas, with the exception of the following:

- Studley and Henley which has a particularly high number of senior football pitches;
- Southam which has a higher number of junior pitches;
- Alcester & Bidford which has a greater number of mini pitches (Dugdale Avenue in Bidford has 7); and
- Wellesbourne & Kineton, which has a lower number of junior and mini pitches.

There are also 4 full size artificial grass pitches (AGP) in the District, as well as 8 5 a-side AGP facilities.

Table 8.11 Total Number of grass football pitches

Sub Area	No. of sites	No. of pitches			
		Senior	Junior	Mini	Total
Alcester & Bidford	20	13	11	14	38
Shipston	17	13	12	2	27
Southam	17	13	17	4	34
Stratford on Avon	13	11	12	4	28
Studley & Henley	23	21	8	5	35
Wellesbourne & Kineton	14	16	4	4	24
District Wide	104	87	64	33	184

In terms of the quantity of pitches per 1,000 population, there are 1.6 pitches per 1,000 population across the District (Table 8.12). Shipston, Wellesbourne & Kineton and Stratford on Avon Sub Areas have below average provision for the District as a whole.

Table 8.12 Football pitch provision per 1,000 population

Sub Area	Population	Pitches per 1,000 population			
		Senior	Junior	Mini	Total
Alcester & Bidford	21,144	0.6	0.5	0.7	1.8
Shipston	18,770	0.7	0.6	0.1	1.4
Southam	17,484	0.7	1.0	0.2	1.9
Stratford on Avon	26,357	0.4	0.5	0.2	1.0
Studley & Henley	19,133	1.1	0.4	0.3	1.8

Wellesbourne & Kineton	15,978	1.0	0.3	0.3	1.5
District	118,866	0.7	0.5	0.3	1.5

Cricket

There are 46 cricket pitches across the District (Table 8.13). With the exception of the Croft Preparatory School and King Edward VI Grammar School (both in the Stratford on Avon Sub Area), all sites contain 1 pitch.

Table 8.13 Total number of cricket pitches

Sub Area	Number of sites	Number of pitches
Alcester & Bidford	9	9
Shipston	4	4
Southam	9	9
Stratford on Avon	5	7
Studley & Henley	9	9
Wellesbourne & Kineton	8	8
District Wide	44	46

In terms of the quantity of pitches per 1,000 population, there are 0.4 cricket pitches per 1,000 population across the District (Table 8.14). Shipston Sub Area has the lowest level of provision (0.2 pitches per 1,000 population); provision in Stratford on Avon is also below average for the District.

Table 8.14 Cricket pitch provision per 1,000 population

Sub Area	Population	Pitches per 1,000 population
Alcester & Bidford	21,144	0.4
Shipston	18,770	0.2
Southam	17,484	0.5
Stratford on Avon	26,357	0.3
Studley & Henley	19,133	0.5
Wellesbourne & Kineton	15,978	0.5
District wide	118,866	0.4

Rugby

Table 8.15 summarises the total number of rugby pitches across the District which are currently, or have previously (i.e. in the last 5 years) been in use for rugby. There are 20 sites in total, comprising 35 adult rugby pitches and 5 junior pitches. Southam and Stratford on Avon Sub Areas have the largest number of adult pitches; neither Shipston nor Alcester & Bidford or Studley & Henley have any junior rugby pitches, although adult pitches can be used for the same purpose.

With the exception of Shottery Fields rugby pitch, all pitches are located at either club or school sites. Shottery Fields is the only local authority owned pitch in the District. Stratford District Council grounds maintenance team have reported that it is not currently in use as there has been little demand for it for the last few years.

Table 8.15 Total number of rugby pitches

Sub Area	Number of sites	Number of Pitches		
		Senior	Junior	Total
Alcester & Bidford	4	5		5
Shipston	1	3		3
Southam	3	10	1	11
Stratford on Avon	6	10	2	12
Studley & Henley	3	4		4
Wellesbourne & Kineton	3	3	2	5
District Wide	20	35	5	40

In terms of the quantity of pitches per 1,000 population, there are 0.3 pitches per 1,000 population across the District (Table 8.16). The Shipston, Studley & Henley, Wellesbourne & Kineton and Alcester & Bidford Sub Areas all have below average provision.

Table 8.16 Rugby pitch provision per 1,000 population

Sub Area	Population	Pitches per 1,000 population		
		Senior	Junior	Total
Alcester & Bidford	21,144	0.24	0.00	0.24
Shipston	18,770	0.16	0.00	0.16
Southam	17,484	0.57	0.06	0.63
Stratford on Avon	26,357	0.38	0.08	0.46
Studley & Henley	19,133	0.21	0.00	0.21
Wellesbourne & Kineton	15,978	0.19	0.13	0.31
District wide	118,866	0.29	0.04	0.34

Hockey

There are 16 hockey pitches in Stratford District, which equates to 0.13 pitches per 1,000 population (Table 8.17). A full inventory of hockey pitches can be found in Appendix F. The greatest concentration of pitches is in Stratford on Avon Sub Area, where there are 5 pitches. Although grass pitches are suitable for school use and practices, they are not suitable for league matches. The Hockey Association have stated that they do not support the use of grass pitches and do not intend to encourage use of this type of pitch in the future. There are only 2 Artificial Grass Pitches (AGP) in the District - located at Warwickshire College, Henley in Arden and Stratford High School.

Table 8.17 Total number of hockey pitches

Sub Area	Number of sites	Number of pitches		
		Grass	AGP	Total
Alcester & Bidford	2	3	-	3
Shipston	-	2	-	-
Southam	1	3	-	3
Stratford on Avon	4	4	1	5
Studley & Henley	1		1	1
Wellesbourne & Kineton	2	2	-	2
District Wide	10	14	2	16

Tennis

There are 123 tennis courts in Stratford District spread across 46 sites, which equates to 1 court per 1,000 population (Table 8.18). All of the courts are hard courts with the exception of 3 grass courts at Studley Sports Club. 36 sites comprise more than one court.

There is a noticeable shortage of tennis courts in the Wellesbourne & Kineton Sub Area; most significantly, Wellesbourne, which is one of the largest settlements in the District, does not have any tennis courts. The greatest concentration is in Studley & Henley (34 courts), and Alcester & Bidford (23 courts).

Table 8.18 Total number of tennis courts

Sub Area	Number of sites	Number of courts
Alcester & Bidford	9	23
Shipston	9	18
Southam	6	15
Stratford on Avon	7	26
Studley & Henley	11	34
Wellesbourne & Kineton	4	7
District Wide	46	123

Netball

There are 65 tarmac netball courts in Stratford District spread across 31 sites, which equates to 0.50 courts per 1,000 population. 18 sites comprise more than one court. Noticeably, the Shipston and Wellesbourne & Kineton Sub Areas have a comparative lack of netball courts. The greatest concentration is in Alcester & Bidford (16 courts), and Southam (17 courts).

Table 8.19 Total Number of netball courts

Sub Area	Number of sites	Number of courts
Alcester & Bidford	5	16
Shipston	2	4
Southam	9	17
Stratford on Avon	7	13
Studley & Henley	6	10
Wellesbourne & Kineton	2	5
District Wide	31	65

Bowls

There are 21 bowling greens in the District (Table 8.20). There is a concentration of greens in Shipston, and a relative lack of greens in Wellesbourne & Kineton and Southam.

Table 8.20 Total number of bowling greens

Sub Area	No. greens
Alcester & Bidford	4
Shipston	6
Southam	1
Stratford on Avon	3
Studley & Henley	5
Wellesbourne & Kineton	2
District Wide	21

Athletics

There is one synthetic athletics track in the District, which is located at Stratford on Avon High School/ Community Sports Centre.

A full inventory of outdoor sports facilities can be found in Appendix F.

8.3.3 Assessment of Supply and Demand

Table 8.21 provides a summary of the findings from the Playing Pitch Strategy in relation to the current and future supply and demand for outdoor sports facilities; full details can be found in the accompanying Playing Pitch Strategy. At the District wide level, there is sufficient supply of all outdoor sports facilities, with the exception of mini football and junior rugby.

Table 8.21 Summary of outdoor sports provision

Sub Area	Current Pitch Provision ³⁵	2023 Pitch Provision
Alcester & Bidford	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adult football pitches (8.4) junior football pitches (2.2) mini football pitches (4.3) adult rugby pitches (0.4) tennis courts <p>Undersupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> junior rugby (-1.4) cricket (-0.6). 	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adult football pitches (7.3) junior football pitches (0.4) mini football pitches (3.4) adult rugby pitches (0.1) tennis courts <p>Undersupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> junior rugby (-3.3) cricket (-0.2).
Shipston	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adult football pitches (8.4) adult rugby pitches (1.1) tennis courts <p>Undersupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> junior rugby (-1.3) junior football pitches (-0.1) mini football pitches (-2.5) cricket (-1.8) hockey pitches 	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adult football pitches (8.3) junior football pitches (0.1) tennis courts <p>Undersupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> junior rugby (-2.8) mini football pitches (-3.6) cricket (-2.3) adult rugby pitches (-0.4) hockey pitches
Southam	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> junior football (10.5) adult football (12.0) senior rugby (7.1) junior rugby (0.2) cricket (2.8) tennis courts <p>Undersupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mini football (-4.1) 	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> junior football (9.0) adult football (11.6) senior rugby (6.5) cricket (3.6) tennis courts <p>Undersupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> mini football (-1.8) junior rugby (-1.9)
Stratford on Avon	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adult football (11.3) cricket (2.7) tennis courts <p>Undersupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> junior football pitches (-4.2) mini football pitches (-4.3) 	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adult football (10.8) senior rugby (1.0) tennis courts <p>Undersupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> junior football pitches (-3.8) mini football pitches (-5.4) junior rugby (-4.2)

³⁵ This represents maximum temporal deficit and minimum temporal surplus.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • junior rugby (-2.5) • senior rugby (0.0) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cricket (-2.9)
Studley & Henley	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adult football pitches (16.2) • mini football pitches (0.8) • cricket pitches (2.5) • tennis courts <p>Undersupply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • junior rugby (-0.4) • junior football pitches (-2.9) • senior rugby (-0.1) 	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adult football pitches (17.5) • cricket pitches (1.8) • tennis courts <p>Undersupply</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adult rugby pitches (-0.3) • junior rugby (-2.8) • mini football pitches (-1.6) • junior football pitches (-2.9)
Wellesbourne & Kineton	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adult football pitches (10.6) • adult rugby pitches (0.4) • junior rugby (1.2) <p>Undersupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • junior football pitches (-1.3) • cricket (-1.6) • mini football pitches (-0.7) • Tennis courts (3) 	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adult football pitches (10.7) • adult rugby pitches (0) • cricket (3.3) <p>Undersupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • junior football pitches (-2.5) • mini football pitches (-2.1) • junior rugby (-0.5) • Tennis courts
District Wide	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • junior football (4.2) • adult football (66.9) • adult rugby (8.9) • cricket (7.6) <p>Undersupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • junior rugby (-4.2) • mini football (-6.5) 	<p>Oversupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adult football (66.3) • junior football 0.1) • adult rugby (6.9) • cricket (3.3) <p>Undersupply of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • junior rugby (-5.0) • mini football (-10.9)

8.4 Quality Assessment

8.4.1 Assessment Framework

An assessment of the quality of outdoor sports facilities in Stratford on Avon District has been undertaken in line with Sport England guidance and the Sport England Pitch Quality Assessment method. This method provides a standard approach to assessing the quality of pitches. It is a non-technical visual quality assessment, and is based predominately on the audit data gathered during the site visit surveys of each pitch. The pitch audits ranked each playing pitch according to a number of criterion under the following 4 key themes:

- **Accessibility**, including disabled access, car parking, cycle parking and public transport access
- **Changing facilities**, including availability of changing accommodation, its overall quality, provision of showers, toilets, parking and segregated changing, security arrangements and evidence of vandalism.
- **Pitch quality** - including grass cover and length, quality of hard surface (where applicable), safety margins, pitch slope and evenness and evidence of damage and unofficial use.
- **Equipment** - quality of equipment, line markings and training areas.

As part of the assessment an overall quality score has been generated for each sports facility which combines pitch performance against a number of criteria into a single overall score. The points allocated to each pitch have been totalled and converted to a percentage, based on the maximum scores available for that pitch type. This percentage is then converted to an overall quality ranking in accordance with the Sport England overall pitch classifications. Table 8.22 sets out the percentage bands for each overall quality ranking.

Further details of the overall quality assessment criteria can be found in Appendix E.

Table 8.22 Overall Quality Rankings

Score	Ranking
90%+	An excellent pitch
64-90%	A good pitch
55-64%	An average pitch
30-54%	A below average pitch
Less than 30	A poor pitch

The following sections present the overall quality rankings for each outdoor sport; further details of the individual elements of the quality assessment (ie accessibility, changing facilities, pitch quality and equipment) are provided in the Playing Pitch Strategy.

8.4.2 Quality Assessment: Outdoor Sport

Football

Table 8.23 summarises the overall quality scores for the District's football pitches by Sub Area.

Table 8.23 Overall quality scores for football pitches

Sub Area	Number of pitches			
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average
Alcester and Bidford	3	31	3	1
Shipston	0	23	3	1
Southam	12	18	2	2
Stratford on Avon	1	24	0	0
Studley and Henley	5	24	5	0
Wellesbourne and Kineton	7	16	0	0
District Wide	28	136	13	4

The majority of pitches have been ranked as either Excellent or Good; the following facilities pitches were ranked with the highest overall quality scores:

Facility	Pitch Number/Type	Sub Area	Score
Stratford Town Football Club Grass Pitch	Senior Pitch	Stratford on Avon	100%
Warwickshire College Football Pitch	Senior Pitch 3	Studley and Henley	98%
Kineton Sports and Social Club Football Pitches	Senior Pitches 1 and 2 and 1 Junior Pitch	Wellesbourne and Kineton	96%

Only 4 pitches were ranked as below average:

Facility	Pitch Number/Type	Sub Area	Score
Kings Lane Football Pitch	Mini pitch	Bidford on Avon	51%
Whichford Football Pitch	Junior pitch	Shipston	53%
Ploughman's Holt Football Pitches	Junior pitches 1 and 2	Southam	47%

These pitches scored below average mainly due to having no provision of available changing facilities and poor pitch equipment in terms of goal posts and line markings. More specifically; Kings Lane Football Pitch received a lower score for having inadequate safety margins; Whichford Football Pitch had poor grass length and evenness of pitch; and Ploughman's Holt pitches also had

inadequate safety margins and poor ground quality in terms of slope and evenness of pitch.

Cricket

Table 8.24 summarises the overall quality scores for the District's cricket pitches by Sub Area.

Table 8.24 Overall quality scores for cricket pitches

Sub Area	Number of pitches			
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average
Alcester and Bidford	1	8	0	0
Shipston	0	4		0
Southam	3	6	0	0
Stratford on Avon	0	7	0	0
Studley and Henley	1	6	0	0
Wellesbourne and Kineton	1	5	0	0
District Wide	6	36	0	0

The District has an excellent provision of high quality cricket grounds with no pitches considered to be average or below. Pitches that scored highest in terms of overall quality were:

- Big Meadow Cricket Pitch in Alcester and Bidford – 92%;
- Long Itchington Cricket Club in Southam – 92%
- Southam High School Cricket Pitch – 96%
- Stockton Sports Pitches Cricket Pitch in Southam – 98%

Those pitches that received the lowest scores, although still considered of good quality were:

- Alscot Park Cricket Pitch in Shipston – 69%;
- Ilmington Playing Field Cricket Pitch in Shipston – 69%;
- Shipston High School Cricket Pitch – 67%; and
- Chapel Street Playing Fields Cricket Pitch in Southam – 65%.

Rugby

Table 8.25 provides a breakdown of the rugby pitch quality assessment scores by Sub Area.

Table 8.25 Overall quality scores for rugby pitches

Sub Area	Number of pitches			
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average
Alcester and Bidford	5	1	1	0
Shipston	0	3	0	0
Southam	9	2	0	0
Stratford on Avon		12	0	0
Studley and Henley	0	4		0
Wellesbourne and Kineton	0	5	0	0
District Wide	14	27	1	0

The general quality of the District's rugby pitches is very good, with the majority being ranked as either Excellent or Good. Those pitches that scored Excellent are listed below:

Facility	Pitch Number/Type	Sub Area	Score
Alcester Rugby Club Pitches	3	Alcester and Bidford	92%
Birmingham Road Playing Fields Rugby Pitches	2	Alcester and Bidford	96%
Harbury Rugby Football Club	3	Southam	92%
Southam College Sports Pitches	Pitch 1 and 2	Southam	92%
Southam Rugby Football Club	4	Southam	92%

The Salford Priors Recreation Ground Rugby Pitch was the only pitch ranked average, and scored 59%. This was mainly because the pitch does not have access to changing facilities and evidence of general litter, surface damage and poor goal equipment and line markings was recorded.

Hockey

Table 8.26 provides a breakdown of the hockey pitch quality assessment scores by Sub Area.

Table 8.26 Overall quality scores for hockey pitches

Ranking	Number of pitches	
	Grass	AGP
Excellent	6	2
Good	8	

Average	0	
Below Average	0	
Total	14	2

Both of the District's AGP hockey pitches (Stratford High School

and Warwickshire College) were ranked as excellent. Kineton Sports and Social Club hockey pitch and Alcester Grammar School hockey pitch also scored very highly.

Tennis

Table 8.27 provides a breakdown of overall quality rankings for tennis courts by Sub Area.

Table 8.27 Overall quality scores for tennis courts

Sub Area	Number of courts			
	Excellent	Good	Average	Below Average
Alcester and Bidford	5	4	0	0
Shipston	3	6	0	1
Southam	2	4	1	0
Stratford on Avon	3	3	0	0
Studley and Henley	9	3	0	0
Wellesbourne and Kineton	1	2	0	0
District Wide	23	22	1	1

Overall, the District has an excellent provision of tennis courts, with just 1 facility classified as average and 1 below average. Of those courts that were ranked as Excellent, the following received a score of 100%:

- Bidford Tennis Club
- Shipston High School Tennis Courts
- Shipston Tennis Club
- Napton Tennis Club
- Stratford High School Tennis Courts
- Tanworth in Arden Tennis Courts
- Henley in Arden Tennis Club
- Menzies Welcombe Hotel Tennis Court

Bishops Itchington Tennis Courts in Southam were ranked as Average, and this was mainly because the courts are not supported by available changing facilities and the quality of hard surface, tennis net and line markings did not score very well. The Norgren Social Club Tennis Club in Shipston was ranked as Below Average and is not currently in a usable state.

Netball

Table 8.28 provides a breakdown of overall quality rankings for netball courts.

Table 8.28 Overall quality scores for netball courts

Ranking	Number of courts
Excellent	11
Good	19
Average	2
Below Average	0
Total	32

Those courts that have been ranked excellent and received the top five scores are listed below:

'Excellent Courts'	Score
Napton Tennis Club netball courts	100%
Warwickshire College netball courts	98%
Stratford High School tennis and netball courts	93%
St Gregory's Primary School netball court	93%
Bidford Primary School netball courts	93%

Just 2 courts in the District were ranked as Average. This included Bishops Itchington netball courts, which scored 63%. This was mainly due to the courts having no available changing facilities, a poor quality of hard surface and some evidence of general litter and surface damage. St Marys Catholic Primary School in Studley and Henley was also ranked Average and scored 59%. This was mainly due to the quality of netball hoops and line markings, and the lack of changing facilities.

8.4.3 Bowls

All of the District's bowling greens have been assessed as being Excellent (11) or Good (10). The following facilities received an overall quality score of 100%:

- Bidford Bowls Club;
- Norgren Social Club;
- Shipston Bowls Club;
- Snitterfield Bowls Club;
- Southam United Bowls Club;
- Studley Bowling Green; and
- Tanworth in Arden Bowls Club.

Whilst none of the Bowling facilities were ranked as Average or below, Wootton Wawen Bowling Green (68%) and Henley Bowling Green (65%) received a lower score although still classified overall as 'Good.'

Athletics

The Stratford Athletics Track is an excellent facility, which has been approved by UK Athletics. The site assessment and consultation feedback shows that the facility is of an excellent quality, as demonstrated by consistent scores of ‘excellent’ for pitch quality, changing facilities and equipment. In particular, track and field equipment, line markings, quality of hard surface and evenness were all scored as excellent. There was also no evidence of litter, surface damage or unofficial use at the facility.

8.5 Standards and Recommendations

Accessibility Standard		
Facility	Baseline Standard	Aspirational Standard
Grass pitches	15 minutes travel time Urban areas: 720m ³⁶ walking District wide: 7.2km driving	10 minutes travel time Urban areas: 480m walking District wide: 4.8km driving
Bowls & Tennis	20 minutes travel time Urban areas: 960m walking District wide: 9.6km driving	15 minutes travel time Urban areas: 720m walking District wide: 7.2km driving
Athletics	45 minutes travel time District wide: 21.6km driving	30 minutes travel time District wide: 14.4km driving
Quantity Standard		
District wide	Refer to Playing Pitch Strategy	
Quality Standard		
Stratford District Council, together with local clubs and Parish Councils, should seek to improve the quality of the poorest outdoor sports facilities in the District, taking into account the location of existing deficits in provision where improvements to pitch carrying capacity would be most beneficial.		

8.5.1 Cost Components

Sport England’s publication Natural Turf for Sport³⁷ provides some cost indications for constructing and maintaining hockey, rugby and football pitches (Table 8.28). The figures are however from 1999 and are likely to have risen in the interim, although they still provide a good indication of the scale of the cost.

³⁶ Equivalent to 1.2km FIT standard when converted into a straight line distance.

³⁷ Sport England, 1999. Natural Turf for Sport

Table 8.28 Construction and Maintenance Costs for Turf Sports Pitches

Pitch Type	Adult weekly use	Construction cost per pitch	Annual maintenance costs
Undrained	Under 2	Under £5,000	£5-7,000
Pipe drained	2-3	£5-10,000	£5-7,000
Pipe and silt drained	3-6	£20-30,000	£7-10,000
Suspended water table	4-6	£10-15,000	£10-15,000

In terms of developer contributions towards new and existing sports facilities, Sport England has developed a Planning Contributions Kitbag which defines the scope of planning obligations and how they link with the Governments policies for sport and recreation and sustainable communities. The Kitbag includes Good Practice and local authority examples, including pooled contributions, rural service centres and villages, small and medium sized sites and gains through non residential development. Further information can be found at http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/planning_tools_and_guidance/planning_kitbag.aspx

8.5.2 Design Guidelines

Sport England have provided a comprehensive range of Design Guidance Notes, which provide generic best practice design advice and requirements for building types and sporting activities through their Facilities and Planning Centre of Excellence. These have been developed in partnership with National Governing Bodies for Sport to ensure that information is current, innovation is recognised and current trends incorporated. The Design Guidance Notes can be downloaded from http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/design_guidance_notes.aspx?sortBy=alpha&pageNum=2 and include the following:

- Designing for Sport on School Sites
- Multi Use Games Areas
- Natural Turf for Sport (broad requirements for design, construction and maintenance of natural turf sports)
- NGB Technical Guidance Database
- Pavilions and Clubhouses
- Synthetic Turf Sports Pitch layouts

Minimum Acceptable Size Component

Sport England has issued guidance on Comparative Sizes for Pitches and Courts³⁸. Minimum standard club/ recreational pitch sizes for the outdoors sports considered as part of this Audit are summarised in Table 8.29. Minimum Site Area Multipliers based on typical pitch sizes and ancillary facilities are also provided.

³⁸ Sport England, 2009 Comparative Sizes of Sports Pitches & Courts

Table 8.29 Comparative Sizes and Site Area Multipliers for Outdoor Sports Pitches and Courts

Sport	Pitch Size (lxw)	Pitch size + safety margins	Pavilion	Car parking ³⁹	Total area (sqm)	Site Area Multiplier ⁴⁰	Notes
Football							
Mini	45.75 x 27.45m	47.75 x 29.45m	180 sqm ⁴¹	270sqm ⁴²	1,857	1.42	For multiple pitches there should be 5 m between pitches
Junior (U11-12)	68.25 x 42m min 82 x 50.77m max	71.91 x 45.66m min 88 x 56.77m max	180 sqm	270sqm	3,735 min 5,449 max	1.3	Multiple pitches require 3m run off to all sides
Junior (U13-14)	72.8 x 45.5m min 91 x 56m max	76.46 x 49.16m min 97 x 62m max	180 sqm	270sqm	4,213 min 6,469 max	1.27	Multiple pitches require 3m run off to all sides
Junior (U15-U16)	82.3 x 45.5m min 100.6 x 64m max	85.96 x 49.16m min 106.6 x 70m max	180 sqm	270sqm	4,682 min 7,919 max	1.24	Multiple pitches require 3m run off to all sides
Senior	90 x 45.5m min 120 x 90m max	93.66 x 49.16m min 126 x 96m max	180 sqm	270sqm	5,062 min 12,555 max	1.16	Multiple pitches require 3m run off to all sides
Rugby Union							
Mini (U11 &12)	70 x 43m ⁴³	80 x 53m	180 sqm	270sqm	4,701	1.56	All sizes are maximum – NGB does not specify minimums. 5m clear margin recommended around pitch where possible
Senior	144 x 70m	154 x 80m	180 sqm	270sqm	12,782	1.27	

³⁹ Sport England Design Guidance Note: Car Park and Landscape Design.⁴⁰ Site Area Multipliers convert pitch sizes into land requirements, taking into account other associated facilities, such as car parking and pavilions. The Site Area Multipliers presented in this table represent typical land requirements. In practice, specific sites may require more/ less land depending on specific circumstances such as the number of pitches, size of pavilion etc. Landscaping and access requirements have not been included.⁴¹ Based on the approximate size of a small, two team pavilion similar to the Stratford Recreation Ground pavilion, which was provided in partnership with Sport England. Exact pavilion requirements will however depend on number and type of outdoor sports facility. Please refer to Sport England's Design Guidance Note for Pavilions and Clubhouses (1999) for more information.⁴² Based on Sport England recommendation of 20 car parking spaces (inc. 5 disabled parking bays). Standard parking spaces 5 x 2.4m; disabled spaces 5 x 3.6m. Parking requirements will however depend on number and type of pitches.⁴³ Includes In Goal Area

Hockey							
Mini (7 a side)	55 x 43m	63 x 50.7m	180 sqm	270sqm	3,658	1.55	
Senior	91.44 x 55m	101.4 x 63m	180 sqm	270sqm	6,853	1.36	
Cricket							
Junior (U13)	19.2 x 18.3m ⁴⁴	92.36 x 88.41m	180 sqm	270sqm	8,633	24.57	
Senior	20.12 x 18.3m	111.56 x 106.69m	180 sqm	270sqm	12,370	33.60	
Bowls							
Flat Green	34 x 34m min 40 x 40m pref	34.4 x 34.4m (inc ditch) 40.76 x 40.76 (inc ditch)	180 sqm	270sqm	1,653 min 2,132 pref	1.43 min 1.33 pref	
Tennis							
	23.77 x 10.97m	34.75 x 17.07m min 36.57 x 18.29m pref	180 sqm	270sqm	1,066 min 1,143 pref	4.09 min 4.38 pref	Side run off between courts not separately enclosed 3.66m min or 4.27m pref
Netball							
	30.5 x 15.25m	36.6 x 21.35m	80 sqm	270sqm	1,256	2.7	Where courts are side by side, common run off is 4m
Athletics	400m track All athletics tracks up to national standard covered by UK Athletics are to be designed in accordance with the 'Code of Practice for the Construction and Maintenance of Athletics Tracks with Synthetic Surfaces' published by the Sports and Play Construction Association (SAPCA) and downloadable from www.sapca.org.uk Athletics tracks for International competition are to be designed to meet the requirements of the 'Track and Field Facilities Manual' published by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF). Sport England's Athletics design guidance is available from http://www.sportengland.org						

⁴⁴ Based on a 6 Pitch Square

8.5.3 Conclusions and Recommendations

Findings from the Playing Pitch Strategy indicate that the District generally has an adequate provision of high quality outdoor sports facilities to meet the needs of residents in respect of all sports with the exception of mini football and junior rugby where there is a relative lack of provision. Physical accessibility levels are also generally good when compared to Fields in Trust's recommended standards, although there is a need to improve informal access to sports facilities for those members of the community who are not members of a particular club.

As a whole, the District's needs are met for adult rugby, adult and junior football and cricket, however there are localised shortfalls in provision of junior football pitches and cricket pitches. There is also an identified need for more Artificial Grass Pitches and netball courts. The key current deficits in provision are as follows:

- Lack of junior football pitches in Shipston, Stratford on Avon and Wellesbourne & Kineton;
- Lack of mini pitches across the District as a whole and in particular Shipston, Southam, Stratford on Avon and Wellesbourne & Kineton;
- Shortfall of junior rugby pitches in Alcester & Bidford, Shipston, Stratford upon Avon and Studley & Henley;
- Shortfall of cricket pitches in Alcester & Bidford, Shipston and Wellesbourne & Kineton;
- Shortfall of tennis courts in Wellesbourne and Kineton
- District wide shortfall of Artificial Grass pitches; and
- District wide shortfall of netball courts.

Detailed policy options will need to be developed to deal with the existing and forecast deficits in the District. The Playing Pitch Strategy sets out several recommendations and policy options for addressing identified issues relating to:

- Quantitative deficiencies
 - Protecting existing provision
 - Overcoming sport specific deficiencies and issues
- Qualitative deficiencies
- Underused/unused provision
- Funding

9 Indoor Sport

9.1 Introduction

Primary Purpose

To provide opportunities for indoor sport and recreation, including badminton, squash, gymnastics and swimming.

This chapter considers the provision of indoor sports facilities in terms of sports halls and swimming pools across the District. The methodology for the accessibility and quantitative provision assessment of indoor facilities is slightly different to other PPG17 typologies in that it is based upon Sport England's National Facilities Analysis Forecasts for 2009 and 2019⁴⁵. This has however been supplemented with feedback from consultation undertaken as part of the PPG17 Audit. The qualitative assessment comprises feedback from consultation.

9.2 Accessibility Assessment

Sport England suggests that that all residents should be within a 20 minute drive time of a swimming pool and a sports hall. Their research has found that nationally almost 90% of all visits to sports centres and swimming pools are within this catchment time (for both car borne and walking journeys). This Effective Catchment has therefore been used as the basis for considering indoor sports facility provision in Stratford District.

Sports Halls

The spatial distribution of unmet demand for sports halls across the District is illustrated on the maps contained in Appendix H⁴⁶. On the basis that a relatively low proportion of the District's residents that do not have access to a car (8.3%), Sport England comment that the population is relatively mobile in terms of accessing sports halls. Unmet demand for sports halls in Stratford upon Avon is correspondingly limited, with no specific location standing out as having significant unmet demand. The total level of provision meets 93% of total demand in the weekly peak period, which is above the regional figure (89.5%) and England wide figure (89.9%). Car travel is clearly the dominant transport mode; 93.4% of demand is satisfied by car travel, whereas only 6.6% of demand is satisfied by foot.

⁴⁵ Sport England re-run their Forecasts every year. The information provided in this assessment therefore represents a particular snapshot in time. Those using this report should refer to the latest Forecasts for the most up to date information.

⁴⁶ Mapped unmet demand for both sports halls and swimming pools illustrates areas that are outside the 20 minute catchment, although it also includes demand that is not met because it exceeds supply.

Swimming Pools

The spatial distribution of unmet demand for swimming pools across the District is illustrated on the maps contained in Appendix H. Sport England have identified that there is a very low level of unmet demand for swimming pools across the District. Overall 91.1% of demand for swimming pools within the district is met, which is slightly above the national average (90.8%). This suggests that the location and distribution of swimming pools has a very high level of accessibility, with virtually all the demand being located inside one of the six catchments areas for swimming pools. As for sports halls, the vast majority of demand is met by car travel (93.1%).

Findings from PPG17 Audit Consultation

Findings from the online questionnaire for the PPG17 Audit reflect Sport England's assumptions. 69% of online questionnaire respondents reported that they are able to access indoor sports facilities within 15 minutes, rising to 89% within 20 minutes. Those travelling furthest typically live in settlement Categories 3 and 4. 61% respondents reported that they currently travel to indoor sports facilities by car; although 45% did indicate that they would prefer to travel by foot.

Respondents to the online questionnaire generally felt that the current level of accessibility is acceptable. 56% respondents to the online questionnaire considered access to be Very or Fairly Good, with only 10% rating it as Fairly or Very Poor. Feedback from the Citizen's Panel indicated that 71% respondents rated accessibility to their nearest indoor sports facilities was either very or fairly good.

Rural residents generally consider access to indoor sports facilities to be more limited due to the travel distances involved. However, the size of the District's population and the nature and size of its settlements does mean that the capacity to provide any additional large indoor facilities – such as a swimming pool or leisure centre is potentially limited.

In terms of other barriers to accessibility, residents have commented that Leisure Centre facilities and car park charges in the District are quite high and can discourage users, particularly young people. The distance that users currently have to travel was also considered to be a particular barrier for older people.

9.2.1 Quantity Assessment

Sports Halls

Stratford upon Avon has 10 sports hall sites containing 12 sports halls in total (Table 9.1).

Table 9.1 Quantitative Provision of Indoor Sports Halls

Facility	No. badminton courts
Alcester Grammar School	4
Greig Centre, Alcester	3
Kineton High School Sports College	4
King Edward VI Grammar School, Stratford upon Avon	4
Stratford Community Sports Centre	4
Stratford Leisure Centre	8
Studley Leisure Centre	4
Southam College	4
Warwickshire College, Henley in Arden	3
Warwickshire College, Moreton Morrell	3

Demand modelling is based on the number of badminton courts at each site. The District has a total supply of 45 badminton courts or 40 when scaled by hours, which accounts for 23% of Warwickshire County's supply. Overall, the District has 3.8 badminton courts per 10,000 people which is equivalent to the national average, and slightly above the regional average of 3.6 courts/10,000 population.

The level of quantitative demand for sports hall facilities has been determined by applying accepted sports participation rate standards (by age and gender) and peak usage parameters to the catchment population. The number of total visits during peak times is used to calculate the size of a sports hall (in badminton court units) needed to serve this demand at any one time. Stratford District has a total demand for sports halls in the weekly period of 5,101 visits which equates to 31 badminton courts. There is therefore currently a surplus of 9 courts (Table 9.2).

Table 9.2 Demand for Sports Halls

Year	Calculated demand	Current supply	Surplus/Deficiency
2009	31 badminton courts (with comfort factor included)	40 badminton courts	Surplus of 9 badminton courts

Despite this surplus, not all the demand is currently met because some demand is located outside of a catchment area of existing facilities. Sport England calculates that an additional 2 courts are required in order to satisfy current unmet demand. There are potentially other sites in the District – such as primary and secondary schools not currently available for public use that could help to meet this demand.

Not all of the demand for sports halls from Stratford residents will be met by sports halls located in the District since some residents will be closer to facilities in neighbouring districts, where demand will consequently be exported sports halls that are located outside the District. Conversely some demand from neighbouring districts will be imported into Stratford. Sport England has calculated that overall Stratford upon Avon is a net importer by 26.7% and net exporter by 25.4%.

In terms of the local demand for these facilities, consultation undertaken as part of the PPG17 Audit revealed that only 34% of respondents to the online questionnaire visit an indoor sports facility at least once or twice a week. A significant proportion (43%) reported that they rarely or never visit such facilities.

Approximately half of sports halls in the District are working above their full working capacity (based on comfort factor). The level of used capacity in Stratford upon Avon is however 59.2%, which is below the regional (68.2%) and national average (65.9%). The sports halls where demand is greatest include the Greig Centre and Studley Leisure Centre. The PPG17 Audit consultation process also highlighted the Greig Centre as one of the key indoor sports facilities used by local community groups (Box 9.1). The facility is however currently threatened with closure and the implications of closing one of the District's existing facilities must be fully considered with regards to any discussions with developers about replacement provision. Facilities with the lowest demand include Warwickshire College (Henley-in-Arden Campus), Southam College and Warwickshire College (Moreton Morrell Campus).

Box 9.1 Most frequently visited Indoor Sports Facilities

Greig Centre	Alcester Grammar School
Stratford Leisure Centre	Southam Leisure Centre
Studley Leisure Centres	Shipston Leisure Centre
King Edward VI School sports hall	

Swimming Pools

Stratford District contains seven swimming pools located at six different sites (Table 9.3). One of the pools is based at a school (Shipston High School), four are owned by the Local Authority and two are commercially run. Overall, Stratford upon Avon provides 23% of Warwickshire's supply of water space.

Table 9.3 Quantitative Provision of Swimming Pools

Facility	Capacity (m²)
Shipston Leisure Centre	250
Southam Leisure Centre	250
Stratford Leisure Centre	516
Studley Leisure Centre	180
Alveston Manor	162
Wildmoor Spa & Health Club	160

The overall provision of water space (12.7m² per 1,000 population) is slightly higher than the regional average (12.3m²) but below the national average (12.9m²).

The demand of water space is currently 1,116m². In terms of quantity of provision overall, this results in a surplus of 318m² of water space in the District (Table 9.4). However not all of the District is currently within a catchment area of a swimming pool. Sport England has therefore estimated that there is an need for an additional 99m² to meet current demand. There are a number of private swimming pools in the District (largely associated with Hotels and Leisure Clubs) that could potentially be opened up for public use to address this deficit.

Table 9.4 Demand for Swimming Pools

Year	Calculated demand	Current supply	Surplus/Deficiency
2009	1116m ²	1434m ² (scaled by hours)	318m ²

Overall, Sport England consider Stratford to have a reasonable supply of water space. The District's swimming pools are operating at 57% capacity, which is below the level at which pools start to feel busy (70%). It is particularly noted that Shipston and Southam Leisure Centres which have recently been refurbished to cater for a higher demand. Stratford Leisure Centre has the least demand which is likely to be due to its age and lack of refurbishment (an issue that was also raised during consultation), although refurbishment plans are currently underway.

Findings from PPG17 Audit Consultation

Despite the high level of satisfied demand for both sports halls and swimming pool indicated by the Sport England data, consultation undertaken as part of the PPG17 Audit indicated that residents generally do not consider there to be enough indoor sports provision; 42% respondents to the online questionnaire indicated that the current level of provision in the District is not enough. This is perhaps however more a reflection of proximity and accessibility to existing facilities, rather than a quantitative deficiency. In particular residents consider that more indoor fitness centres are needed. Other consultation comments relating to the quantity of indoor sports provision in the District are summarised in Box 9.2.

Box 9.2 Consultation Feedback on the Quantity of Indoor Sports Provision

Alcester needs a swimming pool

Wellesbourne needs an indoor sports centre; a Sports and Leisure centre was supposed to be provided for Wellesbourne but funds were cut

An indoor sports facility is needed in Shipston on Stour

Stratford Leisure centre gym facilities need upgrading and extending

A managed arts and community centre is needed to cater for the high level of local interest in performing, visual and literary arts

Redevelopment of the Greig Centre is needed to improve community facility provision in the town

9.2.2 Quality Assessment

The overall quality of the District's indoor sports facilities was considered by 66% respondents to the online questionnaire to be Average or better, although there is room for improvement in terms of the range of activities on offer and the management and maintenance of facilities (Table 9.5). The Citizen's Panel revealed similar findings (Box 9.3).

Table 9.5 Quality ratings from online questionnaire respondents

Rating	Overall quality % responses	Range of activities % responses	Management % responses
Very Good	14%	17%	13%
Fairly Good	32%	25%	24%
Average	20%	19%	20%
Fairly Poor	8%	9%	12%
Very Poor	10%	8%	7%
Don't know	16%	21%	24%

Box 9.3 Feedback from Citizen's Panel

58% respondents considered facilities to be either very or fairly good in terms of overall quality

57% considered the range of facilities to be either very or fairly good

53% thought that the cleanliness of indoor sports facilities was either very or fairly good

Just over half of all respondents considered that the amount of information available at their nearby indoor sports facility is either very or fairly good

53% of those surveyed claimed the range of activities on offer was either very or fairly good

61% of residents felt parking at their nearest indoor sports facilities was either very or fairly good

Other issues relating to the quality of indoor sports facilities are set out in Box 9.4.

Box 9.4 Consultation Feedback on the Quality of Indoor Sports Provision

The quality of leisure centre changing rooms needs to be improved

The cleanliness of indoor sports facilities across the District needs to be improved, particularly in Stratford upon Avon

Stratford Leisure Centre is in need of refurbishment and an upgrade

The Greig centre is outdated and in need of refurbishment

9.3 Identifying Quantitative Deficiencies and Surpluses

According to Sport England's analysis there are no significant deficiencies in existing provision of sports halls and swimming pools. In order to satisfy currently unmet demand and accessibility deficiencies, Sport England has indicated that the following are required:

- 99m² swimming pools
- 2 x badminton courts

9.4 Forecasting Future Need

Sport England has undertaken analysis of future requirements for swimming pools and indoor halls. These are summarised in Table 9.6.

Table 9.6 Future indoor sports provision requirements

Year	Calculated demand	Current supply	Surplus/Deficiency
Indoor Halls			
2019	34 badminton courts (with comfort factor included)	40 badminton courts	Surplus of 6 badminton courts
Swimming Pools			
2019	1,199m ²	1,434m ² (scaled by hours)	235m ²

9.5 Standards and Recommendations

No quantitative standards have been suggested for Indoor Sports provision. It is however recommended that steps are taken to address existing and projected deficits of indoor halls and swimming pools based on Sport England's findings. These deficits should, in the first instance be addressed by improving public access to existing facilities, rather than providing new ones. Where new facilities are required, options for pooling funds and developer contributions may need to be considered. On the basis of consultation feedback, there are also issues relating to the quality of existing provision which should be addressed – in particular the cleanliness and quality of the District's leisure centres.

9.5.1 Cost Components

The total cost of providing a sports hall or swimming pool will depend on the size of sports facility, site specific factors, the scope of external works and regional cost variations. On the basis of their Optimum Sports Hall Project, Sport England have provided indicative costs in their Pre Release package, which is available in hard copy to local authorities and community organisations at a cost of £90.

9.5.2 Design Guidelines

As part of their Facilities and Planning for Excellence, Sport England has produced a range of documents and design guidelines relating to the design and specification of indoor sports halls and swimming pools. This includes:

- Optimum Sports Hall Design, which provides standard off the peg design specifications for a 4 court sports hall and ancillary accommodation.
- Sports Halls, Designs and Layouts provides advice on multi sports hall facilities
- Swimming Pool Design
- Swimming Pools Checklist

These and other publications are available from

Minimum Site Size Component

Table 9.7 sets out minimum size requirements for indoor sports halls. The site areas listed only include the space requirements for the courts/ halls themselves, not any ancillary facilities which would typically be provided for free standing sports halls. In practice, the scale of each facility and support accommodation will depend upon the size of the sports hall and the extent of other activities to be included as part of the facility. Each project will have its own requirements, although Sport England recommend that every freestanding sports hall should have a foyer and reception, refreshment area, changing & toilet accommodation, facilities for disabled people, office accommodation, equipment storage, hall viewing with seating, provision for first aid, plant room and cleaners store⁴⁷. Typical design specifications for indoor halls are provided in Sport England's Optimum Sports Hall Design Pre Release package.

Table 9.7 Minimum site sizes for indoor sports halls

Hall size	Size (lxwxh)
Basic badminton court size (inc run off area)	17.4 x 9.1 x 7.6m
4 court indoor hall	33 x 18 x 7.6m
5 court indoor hall	40 x 20 x 7.6/9.1m
6 court indoor hall	33/34 x 27 x 7.6/9.1m

Table 9.8 outlines typical swimming pool sizes. Provision of new pools will also need to comply with minimum sanitary appliances for swimming pools (toilets, showers etc), as set out in British Standard 6465. Further ancillary accommodation, including reception, viewing/ refreshment area, offices, cleaners store, equipment store, first aid room, service yard and parking will also be required⁴⁸.

⁴⁷ Sport England, 2010. Sports Halls Design and Layouts

⁴⁸ For more details, please see Sport England, 2008 Swimming Pool Design

Table 9.8 Typical Swimming Pool Sizes

Pool type	Length (m)	Width (m)	No. lanes	Lane width	Side margin	Depth
Learner	10-20	7	2	2.0	n/a	0.6-0.9
Community (20m)	20	8.5 10.5	4 5	2.0	0.25	0.8-1
Community (25m)	25	8.5 10.5 12.5	4 5 6	2.0	0.25	0.9-1.25 min 1-2 pref
Competition	25.01	13	6	2.0	0.5	1-1.8 min

9.5.3 Conclusions and Recommendations

Analysis suggests that there is a minor shortfall in indoor sports halls and pool space across the District, although the situation is not acute. There may be capacity to improve access to other indoor sports facilities within the District to address this issue, and the situation should be kept under review via updated Sport England forecasts. In the meantime, there is scope to respond to consultation feedback relating to the quality of existing indoor facilities.

10 Allotments and Community Gardens

10.1 Introduction

Primary Purpose

To provide opportunities for local residents to grow their own produce and support initiatives to promote sustainability, health living and community cohesion.

This chapter considers provision of allotments and community gardens across the District. Quantitative assessments are based on recommendations from the National Society for Leisure and Allotment Gardeners and recognition of the growing importance of allotments and other local food initiatives in promoting healthy living and reducing food miles. Site visits were not undertaken for allotments; the qualitative assessment is therefore based upon feedback from consultation and a review of Parish Plans.

Map 22 shows the location of all allotment sites across the District.

10.2 Accessibility Assessment

10.2.1 Defining Effective Catchments and Accessibility Standards

There are currently no national or local accessibility standards for allotments. Feedback from public consultation indicated that residents would be happy to walk or travel by car to an allotment, and a travel time of 10 minutes by either mode was considered to be acceptable. This is in line with standards set for several comparable local authorities.

Given these considerations, it is suggested that an Effective Catchment of 10 minutes travel time is adopted for allotments. This has been converted into both a walking and driving distance to reflect the fact that residents are prepared to drive to access an allotment, both due to the distribution of allotments across the District and the need to transport equipment and produce to and from the allotments. Within Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements consideration should however also be given to accessibility by foot. Effective Catchments should be applied as a guide only, as the provision of allotments is demand led, and it will not therefore always be appropriate to have allotments within these Catchments.

Accessibility Standard	
District wide	10 minute driving time 4.8km Effective Catchment
Category 1,2 and 3 Settlements	10 minute walking time 480m Effective Catchment

10.2.2 Identification of Accessibility Deficiencies

Maps 23 and 24 show the spatial extent of the Effective Catchments for allotments across the District. Based on the 10 minute driving threshold, almost the entire District is within the Effective Catchment, with the exception of some limited areas, including:

- South western corner of Tanworth in Arden Parish/ northern area of Oldberrow Parish;
- North eastern section of Claverdon Parish;
- Western most part of Salford Priors Parish;
- Majority of Wormleighton Parish;
- Entirety of Stoneton Parish;
- Most southerly parts of Chapel Ascote and Radbourn Parishes;
- Southern portions of Priors Hardwick and Priors Marston Parishes;
- Eastern portions of Shotteswell and Farnborough Parishes; and
- Parts of Whatcote, Idlicote and Honington Parishes.

Proportional coverage across each Sub Area on the basis of the 480m Effective Catchment is summarised in Table 10.1. On the basis of a 10 minute walking distance (480m), around 4% of the District is within the Effective Catchment area (Table 10.1).

Table 10.1 480m Effective Catchment coverage by Sub Area

Sub Area	% Sub Area
Alcester & Bidford	4%
Shipston	3%
Southam	4.5%
Stratford upon Avon	13%
Studley & Henley	3%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	4.6%
District Wide	4%

Table 10.2 sets out the combined proportion of Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements covered by the walking and driving Effective Catchments by Sub Area. Settlements in Alcester and Bidford achieve the greatest coverage within the 480m Effective Catchment at 46%. Wellesbourne and Kineton and Stratford upon Avon Sub Areas achieve the lowest coverage at 22% and 24% respectively.

Table 10.2 Effective Catchment coverage of combined Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements by Sub Area

Sub Area	% combined settlement coverage	
	480m	4.8km
Alcester & Bidford	46%	100%
Shipston	42%	100%
Southam	37%	100%
Stratford upon Avon	24%	100%
Studley & Henley	43.4%	100%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	22%	100%
District Wide	35%	100%

The majority of allotments in the District are managed and administered by Town and Parish Councils. On that basis, it is unlikely that residents within the Effective Catchment of an allotment that is outside their Parish boundary will be able to rent it. Box 10.1 lists those Parishes which currently have allotments; clearly the majority do not, although residents in more rural parishes areas may be less likely to want/ expect an allotment given the relative size of gardens in rural areas vs more urban areas. Map 25 provides a visual illustration of the distribution of Parishes with/ without allotments across the District.

Box 10.1 Parishes with allotments

Studley & Henley Sub Area Tanworth in Arden Henley in Arden Studley Snitterfield Alcester & Bidford Sub Area Wootton Wawen Bidford on Avon Welford on Avon Alcester Shipston Sub Area Quinton Ilmington Tredington Stretton on Fosse Shipston on Stour Brailes Tysoe Long Compton Whichford	Wellesbourne & Kineton Sub Area Ratley and Upton Kineton Burton Dassett Wellesbourne Moreton Morrell Lighthorne Southam Sub Area Newbold Pacey Bishops Itchington Harbury Ufton Southam Long Itchington Napton on the Hill Stratford Sub Area Stratford upon Avon Tiddington
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Table 10.3 summarises accessibility at the individual settlement level.

Table 10.3 Effective Catchment coverage by individual settlement

Settlement	% settlement coverage	
	480m	4.8km
Stratford upon Avon	23.3%	100%
Alcester	54.1%	100%
Bidford on Avon	34%	100%
Shipston on Stour	42.5%	100%
Quinton	36.8%	100%
Southam	22.8%	100%
Bishops Itchington	0%	100%
Harbury	81%	100%
Long Itchington	62.6%	100%
Studley	58.3%	100%
Henley in Arden	48%	100%
Wellesbourne	19.5%	100%
Kineton	69.2%	100%
Salford Priors	0%	100%
Welford on Avon	54%	100%
Wootton Wawen	57.7%	100%
Ilmington	80.7%	100%
Brailes	38.4%	100%
Ettington	0%	100%
Long Compton	19.4%	100%
Tysoe	65.3%	100%
Napton on the Hill	50.3%	100%
Stockton	0%	100%
Temple Herdewycke	0%	100%
Tiddington	33.7%	100%
Bearley	0%	100%
Claverdon	0%	100%
Earlswood	43%	100%
Fenny Compton	0%	100%
Lighthorne Heath	0%	100%
Snitterfield	62.1%	100%

On the basis of the 480m Effective Catchment, accessibility ranges from 81% in Harbury to 0% in several settlements.

0% accessibility is achieved in:

- Bishops Itchington
- Salford Priors
- Ettington
- Stockton
- Temple Herdewycke
- Bearley
- Claverdon
- Fenny Compton
- Lighthorne Heath

Settlements with less than 50% coverage include:

Category 1 & 2 Settlements:

- Stratford upon Avon
- Bidford on Avon
- Shipston on Stour
- Quinton
- Southam
- Henley in Arden
- Wellesbourne

Category 3 Settlements:

- Brailes
- Long Compton
- Tiddington
- Earlswood

All settlements are however within the 4.8km Effective Catchment for Allotments.

10.2.3 Other Factors Affecting Accessibility

A key factor impacting on the accessibility of allotments is the availability / number of allotments in the District. There are long waiting lists for allotments in several areas; most Parish Councils represented at the Parish Council Forum reported that they had several people on waiting lists for allotments. Alcester has more than 100 allotments and over 30 people on the waiting list. Bidford on Avon Parish Council has also reported an undersupply of allotments, which has been compounded by the lack of availability of suitable sites. In Stratford upon Avon the Town Council have reported that over 100 people were waiting for an

allotment in March 2010. The ability of Parish and Town Councils to respond to rising demand is however hampered by the lack of availability of suitable land which can be acquired at an affordable price. Parish Councils have also commented that some allotments are in private ownership, which raises issues about security of their supply over the long term, as well as accessibility for local residents.

10.3 Quantitative Assessment

10.3.1 Baseline Provision

Tables 10.4 and 10.5 summarise allotment provision across the Sub Areas and Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements. Shipston and Southam have the largest number of sites and correspondingly, the greatest number of plots. The Stratford upon Avon Sub Area has the smallest number of plots and sites.

At the settlement level however, Stratford upon Avon town has a comparatively high number of allotment plots (113). Southam and Studley have the greatest number, with 196 and 178 respectively. All Category 2 Settlements contain at least one allotment site, although the number of plots varies considerably between settlements. Bishops Itchington, Long Itchington, Henley in Arden and Shipston on Stour all have less than approximately 50 plots.

Provision of allotments amongst Category 3 Settlements also varies considerably, the greatest provision being in Brailes (77 plots), although a considerable number have no allotments at all.

Table 10.4 Quantitative provision of allotments by Sub Area

Sub Area	No allotment sites	Approximate no. plots
Alcester & Bidford	8	228
Shipston	10	268
Southam	10	302
Stratford upon Avon	4	159
Studley & Henley	6	217
Wellesbourne & Kineton	9	249
District Wide	47	1,422

Table 10.5 Quantitative provision of allotments by individual settlement

Settlement	No allotment sites	Approximate no. plots
Stratford upon Avon	3	113
Alcester	4	67
Bidford on Avon	1	98
Shipston on Stour	2	39
Quinton	1	60
Southam	2	167
Bishops Itchington	1	25

Harbury	3	51
Long Itchington	2	24
Studley	2	151
Henley in Arden	1	29
Wellesbourne	1	94
Kineton	1	59
Salford Priors	0	
Welford on Avon	1	44
Wootton Wawen	1	22
Ilmington	1	5
Brailes	1	65
Ettington		
Long Compton	1	29
Tysoe	1	24
Napton on the Hill	1	13
Stockton		
Temple Herdewycke		
Tiddington	1	46
Bearley		
Claverdon		
Earlswood	1	2
Fenny Compton		
Lighthorne Heath		
Snitterfield	1	13

There are also three community gardens in the District, two of which are located in Stratford upon Avon (Bordon Place and the Lifeways Centre, Albany Road). The other was established as part of Transition Shipston, and is located on the Darlingscote Road, Shipston.

A full list of allotment sites is provided in Appendix F.

10.3.2 Developing a Quantitative Provision Standard

The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners recommend a standard of 20 allotment plots per 1,000 households (or 1 allotment plot per 200 people or 0.125ha per 1,000 population). There are currently no local standards for provision of allotments in the District, although Section 23 of the Small Holdings and Allotments Act refers to an evidenced demand for allotments (when 6 parliamentary electors make written representations to the municipal authority) which activates mandatory provision and letting of allotments on a local authority.

Existing provision at the District wide, level is just above the standard suggested by NSALG at 0.36ha per 1,000 population (2.39 plots/200 population). This is

also reflected at the Sub Area and settlement level. However, General feedback from community and Parish Council forums is that there is insufficient provision of allotments across the District, with demand exceeding supply in most locations. Indeed, online questionnaire responses revealed that most the commonly cited reasons for why those wishing to have an allotment do not currently have one related to over subscription and limited supply.

Levels of provision in Stratford District are relatively high when compared with existing provision in comparative local authority areas which ranges from 0.15ha per 1,000 to 0.38ha/1,000. Quantitative provision standards in comparative authority areas generally reflect existing provision or represent a very small increase of up to 0.05ha/1,000 population.

Given demand for allotments in the District, the growing popularity of grow your own food initiatives and the number of Parishes which do not currently have allotments, there is scope to set a quantitative provision standard above existing levels. However, given that provision of allotments is demand led, application of the standard in specific locations across the District should be undertaken in light of local demand and analysis of waiting lists. Achievement of this standard could be met in part by incorporating allotment provision as an option into planning policy standards for provision of open space in new developments.

Quantitative Provision Standard	
District Wide	0.4ha per 1,000 population 14 plots per 1,000 population 3 plots per 200 population

10.3.3 Identifying Quantitative Deficiencies and Surpluses

Table 10.6 summarises allotment provision across the Sub Areas. Provision across all the Sub Areas exceeds the NSALG standard, both in terms of hectares per 1,000 and plots per 200. In terms of the District quantitative standard, Alcester and Bidford, Stratford upon Avon and Studley and Henley fall most short of the standard at 0.21ha/1,000, 0.33ha/1,000 and 0.3ha/1,000 respectively.

Table 10.6 Quantitative Provision of Allotments per 1,000 population by Sub Area

Sub Area	Ha/1,000	Plots per 200 people	Plots per 1,000
Alcester & Bidford	0.32	2.15	11
Shipston	0.42	2.8	14
Southam	0.51	3.4	17
Stratford upon Avon	0.21	1.2	6
Studley & Henley	0.33	2.2	11
Wellesbourne & Kineton	0.46	3.11	16
District Wide	0.36	2.39	12

*for assumptions about plot sizes, please see Appendix x

Table 10.7 summarises quantitative provision by individual settlement.

Table 10.7 Quantitative Provision of allotments per 1,000 population by individual settlement

Settlement	Ha/1,000	Plots per 200 people	Plots per 1,000
Stratford upon Avon	0.13	1	5
Alcester	0.27	2	9
Bidford on Avon	0.61	4	21
Shipston on Stour	0.24	2	8
Quinton	1.05	7	36
Southam	0.78	5	27
Bishops Itchington	0.33	2	11
Harbury	0.66	4	22
Long Itchington	0.38	3	13
Studley	0.74	5	25
Henley in Arden	0.29	2	10
Wellesbourne	0.50	3	17
Kineton	0.73	5	25
Salford Priors	0	0	0
Welford on Avon	0.99	7	33
Wootton Wawen	0.63	4	21
Ilmington	0.19	1	6
Brailes	1.88	13	64
Ettington	0	0	0
Long Compton	1.07	7	36
Tysoe	0.74	5	25
Napton on the Hill	0.39	3	13
Stockton	0	0	0
Temple Herdewycke	0	0	0
Tiddington	1.73	6	32
Bearley	0	0	0
Claverdon	0	0	0
Earlswood	0.07	0	2
Fenny Compton	0	0	0
Lighthorne Heath	0	0	0
Snitterfield	0.34	2	12

Settlements of marginal under provision include:

- Bishops Itchington
- Long Itchington
- Napton on the Hill
- Snitterfield

Areas of more significant under provision include:

Category 1 & 2 Settlements:

- Stratford upon Avon
- Alcester
- Shipston on Stour
- Henley in Arden

Category 3 Settlements:

- Salford Priors
- Bearley
- Claverdon
- Earlswood
- Fenny Compton (Parish Plan identifies investigation of options for allotment provision as an Action 2009)
- Lighthorne Heath

Although not identified through quantitative analysis, Bidford on Avon Parish Council have specifically reported an undersupply of allotments in the local area. Allotment provision has been calculated on the basis of provision against the population of each settlement. Allotment provision in settlements is however likely to serve a wider population, which will exacerbate existing under provision, as well as reducing apparent over provision in settlements comparing favourably with the adopted quantitative standard.

Table 10.8 summarises additional provision required to meet the quantitative standard in each Sub Area. The greatest additional requirement is in the Stratford Sub Area (172 plots).

Table 10.8 Additional Allotment requirements by Sub Area

Sub Area	Current provision (ha)	Provision to meet standard (ha)	Additional Requirement	
			ha	Approx no. plots
Alcester & Bidford	6.70	8.5	-1.76	-60
Shipston	7.89	7.5	0.38	13
Southam	8.89	7.0	1.90	65
Stratford upon Avon	5.48	10.5	-5.06	-172
Studley & Henley	6.37	7.7	-1.28	-44
Wellesbourne & Kineton	7.31	6.4	0.92	31

Table 10.9 summarises quantitative provision requirements by individual settlement. The greatest requirement is in Stratford upon Avon, where an additional 226 plots would be required to meet the standard, although some of this would be met by allotment provision in Tiddington, where there is a surplus of 64 plots. Identified deficiencies must also be balanced against evidenced demand.

Table 10.9 Additional Allotment requirements by individual settlement

Settlement	Current provision (ha)	Provision to meet standard (ha)	Additional Requirement	
			ha	Approx no. plots
Stratford upon Avon	3.03	9.7	-6.65	-226
Alcester	1.96	2.9	-0.99	-34
Bidford on Avon	2.88	1.9	0.98	33
Shipston on Stour	1.15	1.9	-0.78	-27
Quinton	1.77	0.7	1.09	37
Southam	4.91	2.5	2.41	82
Bishops Itchington	0.73	0.9	-0.16	-5
Harbury	1.50	0.9	0.59	20
Long Itchington	0.70	0.7	-0.03	-1
Studley	4.44	2.4	2.04	70
Henley in Arden	0.84	1.2	-0.34	-11
Wellesbourne	2.76	2.2	0.55	19
Kineton	1.74	1.0	0.78	27
Salford Priors	0	0.4	-0.44	-15
Welford on Avon	1.30	0.5	0.77	26
Wootton Wawen	0.64	0.4	0.23	8
Ilmington	0.14	0.3	-0.16	-5
Brailes	1.91	0.4	1.51	51
Ettington	0	0.4	-0.43	-15
Long Compton	0.85	0.3	0.53	18
Tysoe	0.72	0.4	0.33	11
Napton on the Hill	0.38	0.4	-0.01	0
Stockton	0	0.5	-0.52	-18
Temple Herdewycke	0	0.3	-0.32	-11
Tiddington	2.45	0.6	1.88	64
Bearley	0	0.3	-0.31	-11
Claverdon	0	0.3	-0.34	-11
Earlswood	0.07	0.4	-0.33	-11
Fenny Compton	0	0.3	-0.32	-11
Lighthorne Heath	0	0.3	-0.31	-11
Snitterfield	0.37	0.4	-0.06	-2

One of the factors identified as fuelling demand in some of the larger settlements is the size of gardens in new developments, which are often too small to allow people to grow their own produce. Parish Councils have however also commented that the number of people on the waiting list for allotments is often higher than 'actual' demand as several of those on the waiting list who are then allocated an allotment often find that they are unable to maintain it due to factors such as time and cost, which result in them giving it up after a relatively short time.

10.4 Qualitative Assessment

Local residents, the District Council and Parish Councils have not raised any issues relating to the quality of existing allotment provision, apart from issues of water supply at Bear Lane allotments in Henley. Main issues relate to the supply and availability of allotments and Parish and Town Council's ability to respond to this due to lack of funding and/ or suitable land. Issues relating to funding have also been identified by some Parish Councils in relation to ongoing maintenance and management of allotments, particularly given the relatively low levels of rent that are charged for allotment tenancies.

10.5 Summary of Spatial Distribution of Unmet Needs

Settlements with the most acute **accessibility deficiencies** on the basis of 480m Effective Catchment include:

- Bishops Itchington (Category 2)
- Salford Priors
- Ettington
- Stockton
- Temple Herdewycke
- Bearley
- Claverdon
- Fenny Compton
- Lighthorne Heath

Settlements with less than 50% accessibility on the basis of 480m Effective Catchment include:

Category 1 & 2 Settlements:

- Stratford upon Avon
- Bidford on Avon
- Shipston on Stour
- Quinton
- Southam
- Henley in Arden
- Wellesbourne

Category 3 Settlements:

- Brailes
- Long Compton
- Tiddington
- Earlswood

On the basis of the proposed **quantitative provision** standard, the following settlements have been identified as having an under provision (although this must be matched by evidence of local demand)

Category 1 & 2 Settlements:

- Stratford upon Avon
- Alcester
- Shipston on Stour
- Bishops Itchington
- Henley in Arden

Category 3 Settlements

- Salford Priors
- Bearley
- Claverdon
- Earlswood
- Fenny Compton
- Lighthorne Heath

10.6 Forecasting Future Need

Looking forward to future population growth and allotment requirements, Table 10.10 summarises additional allotment requirements required to meet three growth scenarios for the District, based on the application of a standard of 0.4ha/1,000 population. If the District's population increases by 17,100 people as forecast in the trend based demand-led scenario, an additional 7ha (271 plots) of allotments will be required. The location and exact amount of required provision will however depend upon evidenced demand.

Table 10.10 Future allotment requirements to meet population growth up to 2023

Growth Scenario	% growth	Population 2023	Additional population from 2009	Allotment requirement (ha)	Approx no. plots
Policy constrained low growth	6%	126,200	7,334	3	117
Policy constrained medium growth	9%	129,000	10,134	4	162
Trend based demand-led growth	14%	135,800	16,934	7	271

Local Trends that may impact on future allotment provision requirements

There are clearly a number of healthy living and grow your own food initiatives at both the local and national level that could increase demand for allotments in the future. Issues such as climate change, food miles and the rising cost of imported food are also raising people's awareness of the need to maintain food security. The impact of these issues is however already evidenced in existing and growing demand for allotments across the District and local initiatives such as Transition Shipston and Transition Stratford that are responding to it. The proposed quantitative standard for the District 0.4ha/1,000 population therefore already reflects the current rise in demand in response to these trends, and it is not therefore considered that there is a need to increase this further.

10.7 Standards and Recommendations

Accessibility Standard	
District wide	10 minutes driving time 4.8km Effective Catchment
Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements	10 minutes walking time 480m Effective Catchment
Quantity Standard	
District wide	0.4ha per 1,000 population (16 plots)
The application of this standard should be supported by evidenced demand for allotments within specific locations. Consideration should be given to whether provision of allotments should be incorporated as an option within open space requirements for new developments.	
Quality Standard	
None proposed.	

10.7.1 Design Guidelines

The National Society for Allotments and Leisure Gardeners provide the following guidelines for Plot Sizes⁴⁹:

Standard Plot Size: 250 sqm

Paths: should be 1.4m wide to enable disabled access

Allotment buildings:

- Plot holder's shed: 12sqm
- Greenhouse: 15sqm
- Poly tunnel: 30sqm

Further guidance is provided in their publication Allotment Site Facilities, which includes recommendations for water supply, hedges and fences, entrances, communal buildings, haulage ways and composting.

Under Civil Law, anyone involved in allotment management has a common duty of care to ensure that their allotment sites are run in as safe and appropriate manner as possible, as set out in the Occupiers Liability Act 1957. The Allotments Regeneration Initiative (ARI) has produced 'Health and Safety on Allotments: A Management Guide', which can be downloaded from <http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari/resources/ari-factsheets-mainmenu-147/-health-and-safety-on-allotments>. The ARI has also provided resources for strategy development to combat security and vandalism issues and improving accessibility for people with disabilities and mental health issues.

⁴⁹ NSALG, Creating a New Allotment Site

Minimum Site Size

The average individual allotment plot size is 250sqm, based on National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG). Allowing for haulage ways, paths etc, the NSALG recommends that the optimum number of plots would be 12-15 per acre – equivalent to 30-38 plots per hectare. There are no recommendations relating to the optimum number of plot sizes per allotment site, as this will be dependent on land availability, water points and demand. Clearly, larger sites present advantages in terms of opportunities for bringing residents together and accessibility in terms of quantity, although this must be balanced against cost and maintenance requirements.

10.7.2 Conclusions and Recommendations

There is a relatively good supply of allotments across the District, although analysis suggests that there is sufficient demand and trends in participation to support an increase in supply; particularly in the Stratford upon Avon Sub Area. The provision of new allotment sites is often hampered by the availability of suitable land, an issue that might be overcome in part if developers can be encouraged to provide more innovative forms of open space – such as allotments – within their developments, although this will depend on suitably drafted planning policies that allow for flexibility in the type of open space that can be provided within new developments. Where new allotments are proposed, there should however be robust evidence of sufficient demand.

The Small Holdings and Allotments Act of 1908 also makes provision for securing new allotments; Section 23 refers to an evidenced demand for allotments, which activates the mandatory obligation of provision and letting, on a local authority and Section 25 relates to the powers of compulsory acquisition of land for allotments on a local authority.

11 Community Facilities

11.1 Introduction

Primary Purpose

Convenient indoor facilities that provide local opportunities for community gatherings, social events, local clubs and activities.

In a rural district such as Stratford, village and community halls play a particularly important role in providing facilities for local residents to come together for social events and indoor recreation. They are often multifunctional and provide valuable space for indoor sports and local clubs. This chapter considers the quantity, accessibility and quality of community facilities across the District. No site visits were undertaken for community halls; the qualitative assessment therefore comprises feedback from consultation and a review of Parish Plans.

Map 26 provides a visual illustration of the location of village and community halls across the District.

11.2 Accessibility Assessment

11.2.1 Defining Effective Catchments and Accessibility Standards

Shaping Neighbourhoods⁵⁰ sets out minimum reasonable accessibility standards for settlements of different densities. For higher density areas (up to 100ppha) 600m is considered to be an acceptable walking distance; for more rural areas with a population density of 40ppha this distance increases to 800m (straight line distance, equivalent to 480m actual distance). The Institution of Highways and Transportation⁵¹ also identifies 800m as an acceptable walking distance, with 1,200m being the maximum.

There are currently no local accessibility standards for community facilities.

71% respondents to the online questionnaire are within 10 minutes travel time of a village hall or equivalent, rising to 88% within 15 minutes. Feedback from the Parish Council forum also indicated that 10 minutes was an acceptable travel time for a village hall. 67% respondents reported that they currently travel to their local community facilities by foot, with 29% travelling by car.

Very few PPG17 Assessments in comparative local authority areas have considered community facilities; West Oxfordshire District Council has adopted a distance threshold of around 5 minutes travel time.

On the basis of feedback from local consultation and national best practice, a District wide Effective Catchment of 10 minutes travel time is proposed. Given the importance of village halls to rural communities as a centre for community gatherings and indoor recreation, it is not suggested that a separate standard is adopted for rural vs urban areas. Within Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements, the

⁵⁰ Barton, Grant & Guise, 2003. Shaping Neighbourhoods for Local Health and Global Sustainability

⁵¹ Institution of Highways and Transportation, 2000. Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot

emphasis should be on walking as the preferred travel mode. In more rural areas, a drive time of 10 minutes is acceptable.

Accessibility Standard	
Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements	10 minutes walking time 480m Effective Catchment
District wide	10 minutes driving time 4.8km Effective Catchment

11.2.2 Identifying Accessibility Deficiencies

Maps 27 and 28 show the spatial distribution of Effective Catchments for community facilities across the District. With the exception of the most easterly part of Upper and Lower Shuckborough Parish, there are no areas or settlements in the District that do not fall within the 4.8km Effective Catchment. Overall accessibility for each Sub Area on the basis of the 480m Effective Catchment is summarised in Table 11.1.

Table 11.1 480m Effective Catchment coverage by Sub Area

Sub Area	% Sub Area
Alcester & Bidford	8.5%
Shipston	6%
Southam	6%
Stratford upon Avon	23%
Studley & Henley	6.3%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	8.7%
District Wide	7%

Table 11.2 summarises the overall proportion of Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements within a 480m walking and 4.8km driving distance of a village hall or equivalent by Sub Area. On the basis of the 480m Effective Catchment, accessibility ranges from 44% in Wellesbourne & Kineton to 69% in Southam.

Table 11.2 Combined Effective Catchment coverage of Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements by Sub Area

Sub Area	% combined settlement coverage	
	480m	4.8km
Alcester & Bidford	52%	100%
Shipston	58%	100%
Southam	69%	100%
Stratford upon Avon	57%	100%
Studley & Henley	59%	100%
Wellesbourne & Kineton	44%	100%
District Wide	57%	100%

Table 11.3 summarises the proportion of each Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlement within a 480m walking and 4.8km driving distance of a village hall or equivalent.

Table 11.3 Effective Catchment coverage by individual settlement

Settlement	% settlement coverage	
	480m	4.8km
Stratford upon Avon	53.4%	100%
Alcester	52.6%	100%
Bidford on Avon	60%	100%
Shipston on Stour	45.4%	100%
Quinton	53.3%	100%
Southam	60.5%	100%
Bishops Itchington	98.4%	100%
Harbury	75.5%	100%
Long Itchington	90%	100%
Studley	44.2%	100%
Henley in Arden	97.4%	100%
Wellesbourne	34.5%	100%
Kineton	76.6%	100%
Salford Priors	54%	100%
Welford on Avon	54.4%	100%
Wootton Wawen	69.7%	100%
Ilmington	73.8%	100%
Brailes	43.8%	100%
Ettington	89.2%	100%
Long Compton	70.7%	100%
Tysoe	60.5%	100%

Napton on the Hill	45.4%	100%
Stockton	96%	100%
Temple Herdewycke	0%%	100%
Tiddington	70%	100%
Bearley	32.1%	100%
Claverdon	96%	100%
Earlswood	36.8%	100%
Fenny Compton	84.2%	100%
Lighthorne Heath	81.3%	100%
Snitterfield	66.7%	100%

Temple Herdewycke is the only settlement not to achieve any coverage on the basis of the 480m Effective Catchment. Settlements with less than 50% accessibility include:

Category 2 Settlements:

- Shipston on Stour
- Studley
- Wellesbourne

Category 3 Settlements:

- Brailes
- Napton on the Hill
- Bearley
- Earlswood

Several settlements achieve over 80% accessibility, including:

- Bishops Itchington
- Long Itchington
- Henley in Arden
- Ettington
- Stockton
- Claverdon
- Fenny Compton
- Lighthorne Heath

11.2.3 Other Factors Affecting Accessibility

Availability of public transport in more rural areas was identified as an issue for some local residents wishing to access and make use of community halls. The cost of hiring some facilities was also identified as a potential barrier to their use – particularly for young people or small gatherings. Parish Councils have however also commented that hire charges must cover the costs of maintenance.

11.3 Quantitative Assessment

11.3.1 Baseline Provision

Tables 11.4 and 11.5 summarise known provision of community and village halls and other similar facilities (such as youth clubs and church halls) known to be available for public access/ hire⁵² across the Sub Areas and individual settlements. In total, there are 131 community facilities across the District. The Alcester and Bidford Sub Area has the greatest number (29). Stratford upon Avon has the lowest (15), although this is the smallest Sub Area. At the settlement level, Stratford upon Avon has the largest concentration of community facilities – as would be expected of a town this size and the principle settlement in the District. Provision across Category 2 Settlements is variable: Shipston on Stour, Quinton and Kineton only have one community hall apiece, whilst Alcester, Southam and Henley in Arden have 6. Provision in Category 3 Settlements ranges between 1 and 3 community halls (or equivalent) per settlement – with the exception of Temple Herdewycke, which has none.

Table 11.4 Quantitative provision of Community Facilities by Sub Area

Sub Area	No. community halls (or equivalent)
Alcester & Bidford	29
Shipston	26
Southam	19
Stratford upon Avon	15
Studley & Henley	20
Wellesbourne & Kineton	23
District Wide	131

⁵² There may be other facilities that are also available for hire - in particular school halls, although the availability of these facilities is dependent on their owners/ operators.

Table 11.5 Quantitative provision of Community Facilities by individual settlement

Settlement	No. community halls (or equivalent)
Stratford upon Avon	12
Alcester	6
Bidford on Avon	3
Shipston on Stour	1
Quinton	1
Southam	6
Bishops Itchington	2
Harbury	2
Long Itchington	2
Studley	2
Henley in Arden	6
Wellesbourne	4
Kineton	1
Salford Priors	3
Welford on Avon	2
Wootton Wawen	1
Ilmington	1
Brailes	1
Ettington	1
Long Compton	2
Tysoe	1
Napton on the Hill	1
Stockton	1
Temple Herdewycke	0
Tiddington	3
Bearley	1
Claverdon	3
Earlswood	2
Fenny Compton	1
Lighthorne Heath	1
Snitterfield	1

11.3.2 Setting a Quantitative Provision Standard

There are no nationally available benchmarks for quantitative provision of community facilities such as village halls. Shaping Neighbourhoods sets out an illustrative population catchment for community centres of 1 per 4,000 population, although the majority of village and local halls in the District are likely to be smaller facilities than a community centre. There are no existing local standards relating to the provision of community halls in the District.

Existing provision in the District is equivalent to 1.1 community hall per 1,000 population.

Feedback from the online questionnaire revealed that 80% respondents consider there to be sufficient village halls in the District. This is perhaps reflective of the fact that 71% respondents reported that they used a village hall once a month or less; although qualitative consultation feedback revealed that in many areas they provide valuable resources for local clubs and community gatherings. Consultation feedback from the Parish Council and Community Forum suggested that existing levels of provision are generally satisfactory, although there are some areas where there is an under provision of village halls or community facilities – particularly in rural areas.

In terms of comparative local authorities, South Oxfordshire has adopted a standard of 1 village hall per 1,250 residents; existing provision in Stratford upon Avon is roughly equivalent to this standard.

Given generally high levels of satisfaction with existing provision and accessibility to community facilities across the District as a whole, it is suggested that the quantitative provision standard is set at existing levels of 1.1 community hall per 1,000 population. This will allow resources and attention to focus on areas of under provision, evidenced demand and qualitative improvements to existing facilities specifically identified by local communities and Parish Councils.

The proposed standard also reflects the fact that there are other existing facilities in the District – such as school halls that could supplement existing provision by providing a similar resource to village and community halls where required. A review of Parish Plans also indicates that several Parishes are looking to improve current usage levels or hire out their village halls more widely, which suggests that there is capacity within existing provision. The potential for improving community use of these resources to meet unmet demand should also be explored prior to providing new facilities.

It is not suggested that a separate standard is set for urban or rural areas, since facilities such as village halls are considered to be an equally (if not more) important community resource in rural areas.

Quantitative Provision Standard	
District wide	1.1 community hall per 1,000 population

11.3.3 Identifying Quantitative Deficiencies and Surpluses

Tables 11.6 and 11.7 summarise quantitative provision of community facilities across the Sub Areas and individual settlements. A full list of village halls is provided in Appendix F.

Table 11.6 Quantitative Provision of Community Facilities per 1,000 population by Sub Area

Sub Area	No. halls	Halls per 1,000
Alcester & Bidford	29	1.4
Shipston	26	1.4
Southam	19	1.1
Stratford upon Avon	15	0.6
Studley & Henley	19	1.0
Wellesbourne & Kineton	23	1.4
District Wide	131	1.1

Table 11.7 Quantitative Provision of Community Facilities provision per 1,000 population by individual settlement

Settlement	No. halls	Halls per 1,000
Stratford upon Avon	12	0.5
Alcester	6	0.8
Bidford on Avon	3	0.6
Shipston on Stour	1	0.4
Quinton	1	0.6
Southam	6	1.0
Bishops Itchington	2	0.9
Harbury	2	0.9
Long Itchington	2	1.1
Studley	2	0.3
Henley in Arden	6	2.0
Wellesbourne	4	0.7
Kineton	1	0.4
Salford Priors	3	2.8
Welford on Avon	2	1.5
Wootton Wawen	1	1.0
Ilmington	1	1.3
Brailes	1	1.0
Ettington	1	0.9
Long Compton	2	2.5

Tysoe	1	1.0
Napton on the Hill	1	1.0
Stockton	1	0.8
Temple Herdewycke	0	0.0
Tiddington	3	2.1
Bearley	1	1.3
Claverdon	3	3.6
Earlswood	2	2.0
Fenny Compton	1	1.2
Lighthorne Heath	1	1.3
Snitterfield	1	0.9

On the basis of the proposed quantitative provision standard, only the Stratford upon Avon Sub Area falls below the recommended standard. Settlements with the most significant under provision include:

- Stratford upon Avon
- Bidford on Avon
- Shipston on Stour
- Quinton
- Studley
- Wellesbourne
- Kineton
- Temple Herdewycke.

Given the importance of village and community halls to rural communities, Box 11.1 lists those Parishes which do not currently have a village hall (or equivalent) of their own.

Box 11.1 Parishes without a Village Hall or equivalent

Shipston	Studley & Henley
Loxley	Spernall
Butlers Marston	Sambourne
Whitchurch	Coughton
Admington	Preston Bagot
Honington	Oldberrow
Idlicote	Southam
Compton Wynyates	Chesterton & Kingston
Butlers Marston	Lower & Upper Shuckborough
Barcheston	Radbourn
Tidmington	Priors Hardwick
Whichford	Chapel Ascote
Great Wolford	Hodnell & Wills Pastures
Wellesbourne & Kineton	Watergall
Compton Verney	Stoneton
Chadshunt	Alcester & Bidford
Fulbrook	Billesley

*Parishes known to share a facility (e.g. Kinwarton and Great Alne and Cherington and Stourton) have not been included.

Existence of a shortage of community facilities would however need to be confirmed though further localised analysis of demand for additional facilities and the potential for other existing facilities (such as school halls) to be mobilised to meet this demand.

Wellesbourne Parish Council has confirmed that the local population has outgrown the size of existing facilities, and that there is a need to provide improved facilities that reflect the size of the settlement and associated demand, and potentially space suitable for indoor sports (see Section x). Other particular issues relating to quantitative provision that were raised in the online questionnaires, during the Parish Council and Community Forums or through Parish Plans are summarised in Box 11.2.

Box 11.2 Issues Relating to Quantitative Provision of Village/ Community Halls

Wellesbourne is in need of a new community hall as the population has outgrown the current one. The lease on the current village hall has also expired and there is no funding to maintain the facility. The village hall car park has also been allocated for development – even though it provides an important revenue stream.

If the Greig Hall in Alcester closes (which is likely), then there will be a shortage of community facilities and meeting places for local clubs and social events

Bidford on Avon would like an improved youth centre

Preston Baggot does not have a village hall – they have to use Claverdon's

Moreton Morrell Parish needs a village hall

Long Marston Parish Plan (2007) states that existing village hall is too small to provide capacity for some annual events

Loxley Parish Plan (2005) reports that there is strong local support for providing a village hall

11.4 Qualitative Assessment

Parish Councils – who are largely responsible for the maintenance of village halls, have commented about the expense of maintaining them up to a suitable standard. Maintenance and repair is usually required about every five years. Village halls specifically identified as being in need of refurbishment/ upgrades during the course of consultation include:

- Shipston village hall
- Wellesbourne village hall
- Alcester village hall
- Greig Hall (Alcester)
- Alderminster village hall needs financial assistance to maintain it – it is currently used very intensively, but the Parish Council cannot charge any extra for hire as there is competition from other village halls
- Henley in Arden youth club lacks funds for ongoing maintenance
- The roof on Blackwell village hall needs replacing
- Bishop's Itchington village hall is in need of modernisation.

A review of Parish Plans also identified several other issues relating to existing provision. These are summarised in Box 11.3.

Box 11.3 Quality issues relating to Village/ Community Halls identified in Parish Plans

Fenny Compton (2009) – need to improve the appearance and ambience of the village hall. Potential for new multi functional hall to be considered.

Ilmington (2006) – improvements to stage and heating required

Ladbroke (2010) – planned replacement of existing village hall

Long Marston (2007) – current parking arrangements adjacent to the village hall are dangerous

Priors Marston (2005) – village hall requires refurbishment

Harbury (2005) – planned improvements to village hall to meet the needs of users

Radway (2003) – planned extension and refurbishment

Ratley & Upton (2008) – options to refurbish village hall to meet future needs of community to be considered

Shipston on Stour (2008) – options to refurbish/ enhance/ replace Townsend Hall to be evaluated

Snitterfield (2005) – options to modernise/ relocate village hall to be considered

11.5 Summary of Spatial Distribution of Unmet Needs

On the basis of the 4.8km Effective Catchment there are no areas of accessibility deficiency across the District. In terms of the 480m Effective Catchment Settlements with the lowest levels **of accessibility** include:

Category 2 Settlements:

- Shipston on Stour
- Studley
- Wellesbourne

Category 3 Settlements:

- Brailes
- Napton on the Hill
- Bearley
- Earlswood
- Temple Herdewycke

On the basis of the proposed quantitative provision standard, areas of particular **quantitative deficiency** include:

Stratford upon Avon and Studley and Henley Sub Areas

Category 1& 2 Settlements:

- Stratford upon Avon
- Bidford on Avon
- Shipston on Stour

- Quinton
- Studley
- Wellesbourne (reinforced by Parish Council feedback)
- Kineton

Category 3 Settlements:

- Temple Herdewycke.

Of those parishes that currently do not have a village hall, Preston Bagot and Loxley Parish Councils have specifically mentioned this as an issue. Long Marston's existing village hall has also been identified as being too small.

Issues relating to the **quality of existing provision** have been identified in connection to:

- Fenny Compton village hall
- Ilmington village hall
- Ladbroke village hall
- Long Marston village hall
- Priors Marston village hall
- Harbury village hall
- Radway village hall
- Ratley & Upton village hall
- Shipston on Stour Townsend Hall
- Snitterfield village hall
- Wellesbourne village hall
- Alcester village hall
- Greig Hall (Alcester)
- Alderminster village hall
- Henley in Arden youth
- Blackwell village hall
- Bishops Itchington village hall

11.6 Forecasting Future Need

Table 11.8 summarises the number of additional community facilities that will be required to maintain existing levels of provision. Additional requirements range from 8 under the low growth scenario, to 19 under the trend based scenario.

Table 11.8 Future community facility requirements to meet population growth up to 2023

Growth Scenario	% growth	Population 2023	Additional population from 2009	Hall requirement
Policy constrained low growth	6%	126,200	7,334	8
Policy constrained medium growth	9%	129,000	10,134	11
Trend based demand-led growth	14%	135,800	16,934	19

Local Trends that may impact on future community facility provision requirements

The following trends and drivers may have an impact on demand for community facilities in the future:

- Local residents have commented that village halls are used primarily by older residents; with an ageing population and growing life expectancy, the demand for and role of village halls in providing a local resource for the community may increase in the future.
- Village and community halls are also recognised as a valuable resource for hosting activities and events for young people, and represent a means of improving/ supplementing provision for young people by utilising existing resources.
- In rural areas, village halls provide opportunities for local residents to establish local clubs and to participate in indoor sports, such as bowls and badminton. Local and national initiatives to encourage participation in sport may lead to an increase in demand for this kind of facility.
- The role of village halls in facilitating social interaction, inclusion and community cohesion is also recognised.

Whilst these trends may impact on local demand for community facilities this is not likely to be significantly greater than existing requirements. It is considered that there is sufficient capacity within the existing quantitative standard to respond to any small increase in local demand for community facilities.

11.7 Standards and Recommendations

Accessibility Standard	
District wide	10 minutes driving time 4.8km Effective Catchment
Category 1, 2 and 3 Settlements	10 minutes walking time 480m Effective Catchment
Quantity Standard	
District wide	1.1 village hall per 1,000 population
The application of this standard should be supported by evidenced demand for additional provision in local areas. Where deficits are identified, attention should in the first instance focus on improving access to and utilisation of existing facilities.	
Quality Standard	
None proposed. However, it is suggested that issues relating to the quality of existing provision identified in Section 8.4 are addressed.	

11.7.1 Design Guidelines

In recognition of the multi functionality of village and community halls, and there potential for providing local opportunities for indoor sports and social events, Sport England have published design guidance for village and community halls, which demonstrates how the value and flexibility of these buildings can be maximised through thoughtful planning and accommodating layouts⁵³. Designing the main hall to accommodate a one court badminton hall can for example allow for a range of other activities, including short mat bowls, aerobics, yoga, play groups, auctions, drama/ film, table tennis, discos, clubs and societies.

11.7.2 Conclusions and Recommendations

There appears to be a good supply of community halls or equivalent facilities across the District. Their particular value in rural areas where they perform a number of functions and provide a key community resource should be recognised and assets appropriately protected. There are some Parishes which do not have access to a community hall of their own; where this is the case an argument could be made for providing such a facility, dependent on there being sufficient evidenced demand for one.

Feedback from a variety of sources indicates that there is a pressing need for a new community hall in Wellesbourne. The existing facility is both too small and under threat from new development. Elsewhere, there are a considerable number of community facilities whose existing quality and condition is in need of improvement – although this is dependent on there being sufficient funds available for maintenance through Parish Councils and other bodies.

⁵³ Sport England, 2001. Design Guidance Note: Village and Community Halls

12 Other Open Space

12.1 Introduction

This chapter presents assessment findings relating to civic spaces, green corridors and cemeteries and churchyards. No quantitative assessment has been undertaken for any of these typologies, nor any provision standards suggested. They have however been included in the assessment in recognition of the contribution that they can make to overall open space provision and opportunities for leisure and recreation in the District. The following sections present an overview of the supply of each of these types of open space, along with findings from local consultation.

Map 29 provides an indication of where the District's cemeteries and churchyards are located.

12.2 Churchyards and Cemeteries

Primary Purpose

Opportunities for quiet contemplation and relaxation; contribution to visual amenity of an area.

There are 143 cemeteries, churchyards and burial grounds in the District. Table 12.1 summarises their size and distribution by Sub Area. A full list of cemeteries and churchyards is provided in Appendix F.

Table 12.1 Provision of Churchyards by Sub Area

Sub Area	No. churchyards	Combined Size (ha)
Alcester & Bidford	33	10.09
Shipston	37	12.05
Southam	17	7.14
Stratford upon Avon	9	2.6
Studley & Henley	24	7.81
Wellesbourne & Kineton	23	6.85
District Wide	143	46.54

No particular issues were raised in relation to churchyards and cemeteries as part of consultation. Alcester Town Council has however reported a shortage of burial space. Other issues raised during consultation or during a review of Parish Plans are summarised below:

- Avon Dassett – need to improve maintenance of St John Baptist Churchyard
- Stockton – need to continue financial support for maintaining local graveyard

Churchyards and cemeteries can provide particularly important areas of open space in smaller villages and settlements where there is no formal provision. Churchyards and cemeteries are also growing in importance in terms of their nature conservation value. Although none of the churchyards in the District are

currently managed for their nature conservation value (most are mown regularly), they do present an opportunity to improve levels of natural accessible greenspace, particularly within older parts of sites that are not in active use. Several local authorities around the country have designated cemeteries as Local Nature Reserves. There are also examples of natural burial grounds which are growing in demand and represent a potentially sustainable and multi-functional resource that can also offer recreational benefits to local communities. An example is Sun Rising Burial Ground, located near Middle Tysoe in the Vale of White Horse, which is managed as a growing nature reserve.

12.3 Green Corridors

Primary Purpose

Providing opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding.
Improving connectivity between the District's green infrastructure network and facilitating access to natural greenspace.

Stratford District has an extensive Public Rights of Way network. There are also several other 'Green Corridors' that perform an important role both in terms of recreation and connectivity. These include:

- The Greenway – a five mile section of the old Honeybourne railway. The route has been developed by WCC in partnership with Sustrans to provide a high quality surfaced path suitable for cyclists, walkers and wheelchair users. The Greenway is a popular tourist attraction and forms part of the National Cycle Network and forms part of the West Midlands Cycle Route that links Oxford to Derby. There are also several picnic locations along the route, a cafe and car parking.
- Part of the 26 mile canal towpath network, which covers rural Warwickshire, including the Stratford upon Avon Canal, which connects the town with Birmingham, the Oxford Canal and Grand Union Canal.

Quantity of Provision

57% respondents to the online questionnaire reported that they used a green corridor or Public Right of Way (PROW) at least once a week. There appears to be a general satisfaction with the level of provision across the District, with 79% respondents reporting that current provision is 'Enough or More than Enough'. Parish Councils have however commented that the level of coverage across the District is variable. Provision of Bridleways could particularly be improved.

Accessibility of Provision

85% respondents to the online questionnaire considered accessibility to Green Corridors and PROW to be Average or better. This is consistent with the Warwickshire County Council Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan 2006-2016, which has classified 68.6% of the PROW network in Stratford District as being 'easy to use' (BVPI 178).

Residents have however commented that the connectivity across the network could be enhanced to provide a better range of local walks and circular routes.

Residents would also like improved access to old railway lines for walking and cycling – for example the Kineton to Stratford railway line.

In the short term, the WCC PRWIP has identified two additional routes for Stratford District:

- Flagship trail between Warwick and Stratford upon Avon along the River Avon for walkers and cyclists
- Relaunch of the existing Avon Valley Way between Stratford upon Avon and Marcliff

Other issues relating to accessibility that were raised during consultation are summarised in Box 12.1.

Box 12.1 Issues relating to the accessibility of Green Corridors

Compliance of footpath surfaces with DDA requirements (Alcester)
Disabled access for routes around Wellesbourne
Overgrown vegetation (including old railway line from Arrow to Wixford)
Blocked footpaths
Unsuitability of some routes for pushchairs and scooters
Use of footpaths by youths causes problems with antisocial behaviour

Quality of Provision

The overall quality of Green Corridors and PROW was rated by 62% respondents to the online questionnaire as Very or Fairly Good, with 85% rating them as Average or better. Levels of management and maintenance were similarly generally considered to be good, with 50% respondents rating them as Very or Fairly Good and 77% as Average or better. Management of the natural environment along the Green Corridors and PROW was also considered to be good.

Specific issues raised by residents and Parish Councils relating to the quality of green corridors and PROW in the District are summarised in Box 12.2.

Box 12.2 Issues relating to the quality of green corridors

Safety risk of wooden styles in wet weather
Overgrown vegetation (including old railway line from Arrow to Wixford)
Bridleways become very muddy and churned up in the winter due to horses
Poor maintenance in and around Wellesbourne and Alcester
Missing or poor signage (including Preston Bagot)
Need for improved hard surfaces
Diversion of WCC funding from local access routes to ‘key gateways’
Poor maintenance of footpaths by WCC means that Parish Councils have to take over the responsibility, with corresponding implications for financial resources

12.4 Civic Spaces

Given the rural nature of the District and relative size of most of its settlements, there are a limited number of hard surfaced ‘civic spaces’ in the District. Civic spaces and other sites suitable for larger events and markets in the District include:

- Long Marston Airfield
- Wellesbourne Airfield
- Rother Street, Stratford upon Avon
- Cattle Market, Stratford upon Avon
- Stratford Race Course, Stratford upon Avon
- Waterside, Stratford upon Avon
- Henley Street, Stratford upon Avon
- Henley Market, Henley in Arden
- Wood Street car park, Southam

Given its relative size and position within the settlement hierarchy, the majority of civic spaces are located in Stratford upon Avon town. Local residents and Parish Councils have not however raised any issues relating to the availability of civic spaces across the District, as other types of open space/ sites (e.g. car parks) can be used for the same purpose. Many of the open spaces in the District do indeed double up as sites for community events, car boot sales, markets etc. Stratford Recreation Ground in particular hosts a number of District events, including bandstand concerts, food festivals and summer activity programmes. Suitable open spaces (i.e. the larger ones) do however tend to be located in the larger settlements.

Respondents to the online questionnaire generally thought that there are enough spaces in the District for outdoor events and markets, with 80% considering there to be Enough or More than Enough. The frequency with which such spaces are used/ required is however relatively low with 63% reporting that they used such spaces once a month or less.

Accessibility to such spaces is relatively good across the District with 71% respondents to the online questionnaire reporting that they could access a suitable space within 15 minutes; although a greater proportion currently travel by car to reach them (37%). This was generally considered to be a good level of accessibility, with 79% respondents rating it as Average or better.

The overall quality of spaces used for community events and markets is considered to be good, as is the management of the sites. Although not perhaps feasible to establish new civic spaces in existing settlements, Parish Councillors have highlighted issues relating to the shared use of larger open spaces in the District for community events, as this can conflict with other uses and demands – both in terms of timings and the compatibility of uses (e.g. hosting a village fete on a football pitch).

12.5 Standards and Recommendations

No quantitative provision standards for Cemeteries, Green Corridors or Civic Spaces are proposed as part of this assessment. The following recommendations are made with a view to maximising the benefits of existing provision and making improvements where necessary:

- Consideration should be given to the potential for cemeteries and churchyards in the District to be cultivated as Local Nature Reserves, to supplement existing provision of Natural Accessible Greenspace in the District.
- The nature and extent of quantitative deficiencies in cemetery space reported in Alcester should be considered further.
- WCC should be made aware of the need to improve the maintenance of some Public Rights of Way in the District, and issues relating to disabled access.
- Consideration should be given to reinforcing or improving the existing PROW network to provide better connectivity and a wider range of circular routes.