

Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study for Winchester City Council

Part 1: Main Report

April 2008

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Format of the Report

This report is **Part 1** of an Open Space, Sports and Recreation study for Winchester City Council. The study has four parts:

- Part 1: Main Report
- Part 2: Area Profiles
- Part 3: Playing Pitch Strategy
- Part 4: Built Facilities Study

Each part of the study has been written as a 'stand alone' document. However, all four parts should be considered together to have a comprehensive understanding of the study.

The study has been split into four parts to enable different stakeholders to read and use the documents with ease. The contents of each part of the report are outlined below:

Part 1: Main Report

- Outline of the methodology used in the study. (Section 2).
- Summary of key local policy of relevance to this assessment, and some of the implications. (Section 3).
- Review of the results of relevant surveys and consultation on local needs. (Section 4).
- Presentation of an overview of the different types of open space, sport and recreation facilities across the area. (Section 5).
- Suggestions for minimum standards of provision for various types of open space, sports and recreation opportunity, and their application as appropriate at a strategic level.
- Consideration of some general options and recommendations (Section 7).

Part 2: Area Profiles

This examines provision on a local (sub area) level, based on defined 'Local Need Areas'. It applies the suggested standards, explained in Section 6, to the sub areas and draws conclusions about the local provision specifically in relation to the quality, quantity and access to facilities.

Whilst the separation of the two parts of the report is not a requirement of PPG17, it is found to be beneficial to the report's 'audience', many of whom are interested in their local area, whilst others are interested in the key findings of the report.

Throughout Parts 1 and 2 of the report, reference is made to the links between the two sections.

Part 3: Playing Pitch Strategy

- The Playing Pitch Model, a step by step guide
- Pitch Provision
- Pitch Quality Assessment
- District Wide Assessment - by Sport
- District Wide Assessment – by Sub Area
- Additional Considerations
 - Feedback From Sports Clubs
 - Administration Of Pitches
 - Equalities
 - Community Use Agreements
 - Hub Sites
 - Hub Site Identification Technique
 - ATPs
 - Funding
 - Sunday Football
 - Developments and Updates
- Formulating the Strategy
- Strategic Framework
- Playing Pitch Strategy and the Planning System

Part 4: Built Facilities Study

- Introduction and Methodology
- Strategic Context
- Sub Areas Analysis
- Built Facilities Audit - Existing and Planned
- Local Standards of Provision
- Conclusions and Recommendations
- Draft Action Plans

Acknowledgments

Winchester City Council wishes to acknowledge and thank the many individuals, groups and organisations who have provided information, views and support in preparing this study. Input from these stakeholders has been fundamental to the report, and has provided the basis for the evidence to support the standards, options and recommendations in relation to open space, sport and recreation facilities.

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Base maps used in Part 2 of this report are copyright of Ordnance Survey.

Glossary of Terms

'Technical' reports such as this document sometimes have to use terms and phrases that may be unfamiliar to the lay reader. Where this happens they are explained in the body of the text. The following is a quick reference to the terms used.

Term	What it means
ASBO	Anti Social Behaviour Order
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DPD	Development Plan Document
Extended Schools Initiative	A national government initiative encouraging the 'opening up' of schools to generate greater use beyond traditional hours and years
LAP	Local Area for Play
LDD	Local Development Document
LDF	Local Development Framework (a component of the revised statutory land use planning system)
LEAP	Local Equipped Area for Play
MUGA	Multi Use Games Area
NEAP	Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play
NPFA	National Playing Fields Association
OS,S&R	Open Space, Sport and Recreation
PUSH	Partnership for Urban South Hampshire
QUANGO	Quasi Autonomous Non Governmental Organisation
Schools for the Future	A national government redevelopment programme (based on the Private Finance Initiative) that has the aim of renewing aging school complexes throughout the country.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
STP	Synthetic Turf Pitch

Foreword

In encouraging healthy, active use of 'free time' it is essential to appreciate the relative drawing power of different activities.

This study has collected a great deal of information on many different pursuits ranging from very informal and spontaneous activity, through to highly regulated and competitive sport. People of all ages have been asked to express their views, and the results are fascinating.

The ease of 'counting people' in some activities can completely obscure the enormity and importance of participation in others which are difficult to monitor. In addition, many people play sport, and on a regular basis. However, the views expressed in this study suggest that greater numbers prefer to take their active leisure in other ways: a walk, or bike ride (perhaps to the shops, work, or school); a jog in the park; a contemplative ramble in an attractive setting. Whilst youngsters might want to run around a playground; older folk might prefer a leisurely walk through the park, or nurturing a fruit and vegetable plot - it all counts.

National surveys regularly highlight the comparative popularity of informal, individualistic activities such as walking, cycling, recreational running and swimming. Local evidence confirms these national patterns.

Much leisure activity requires either 'Open Space' or 'Buildings'. 'Routes' are also highly important; both to facilitate access to leisure destinations, and as recreation provision in their own right. Opportunities covered by this study fall into one of these headings which, combined, reflect a rich tapestry of provision: footpath, cycleway, play area, park, allotment, pitch, court, pool, hall, country park, woodland and more.

The aim of this study has been to help plan for an appropriate pattern of Open Space, Routes, and Buildings to best meet varied local needs. It may require the Council to review its overall thinking on how it can best contribute to achieving this within the public realm.

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

1.1 Context of the Study

Winchester City Council and East Hampshire District Council have jointly commissioned a study of open space, sport and recreation facilities. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPG17) supports the principle of local authorities cooperating in undertaking such assessments.

The experience of undertaking a joint study has highlighted the added complications that can arise, through differing priorities and internal/external influences within the two Districts. However, the benefits of joint working on such studies has far outweighed the added complications, and this has been clearly demonstrated in this study. These include:

- Greater sharing of skills, knowledge and expertise, and greater opportunities for learning;
- Opportunity for benchmarking and comparing systems, processes and management arrangements of open space, sport and recreation facilities;
- More comprehensive community consultation, with greater opportunity for analysis of trends and differences in opinions;
- A more comprehensive analysis and understanding of the use of larger facilities, particularly as people will 'cross boundaries' to use such facilities.

On a practical level, working jointly has resulted in economies of scale for both authorities, and has undoubtedly demonstrated best value in the procurement of the study, compared with the studies being commissioned separately.

This report outlines the findings of the study in the **Winchester District**, and will be used to inform the future planning for open space and built recreation facilities until 2026.

The report has been prepared by Inspace Planning Ltd, being commissioned jointly by both local authorities to undertake the study. RQA have been commissioned to conduct the built facilities component of the study, which has been included as part of this report.

1.2 Aims and Objectives

The overall aim of the study was to undertake, research, analyse and present conclusions meeting the requirements of 'Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation'. The specific objectives as identified in the project brief have been:

- To meet the objective of PPG17 to provide local people with networks of accessible, high quality open space, sports and recreation facilities

in both urban and rural areas, which meet the needs of residents and visitors, are fit for purpose, and are in sustainable locations.

- To provide part of the evidence base for the development of appropriate policies in the Local Development Frameworks of each Authority and for the sustainability appraisals of future Development Plan Documents.
- To provide an effective evidence base for each Authority to prepare a local strategy for the provision or improvement of open space, sports and recreation facilities in their District.
- To carry out the assessment in accordance with the good practice methodology set out in the Companion Guide to PPG 17: Assessing Needs and Opportunities.

The demographic characteristics of the study area have also been considered, as these could greatly influence the range of open space and recreation opportunities sought, as well as the nature of local standards recommended.

The planning and other relevant policy context has been examined, and a thorough review undertaken of various information sources identified within the brief.

The study findings will:

- Provide a comprehensive and robust evidence base for planning policies in the Local Development Framework (LDF) for the study area and any supporting Supplementary Planning Documents.
- Inform other corporate strategies, plans and initiatives as appropriate.

1.3 Overview of the Study Area

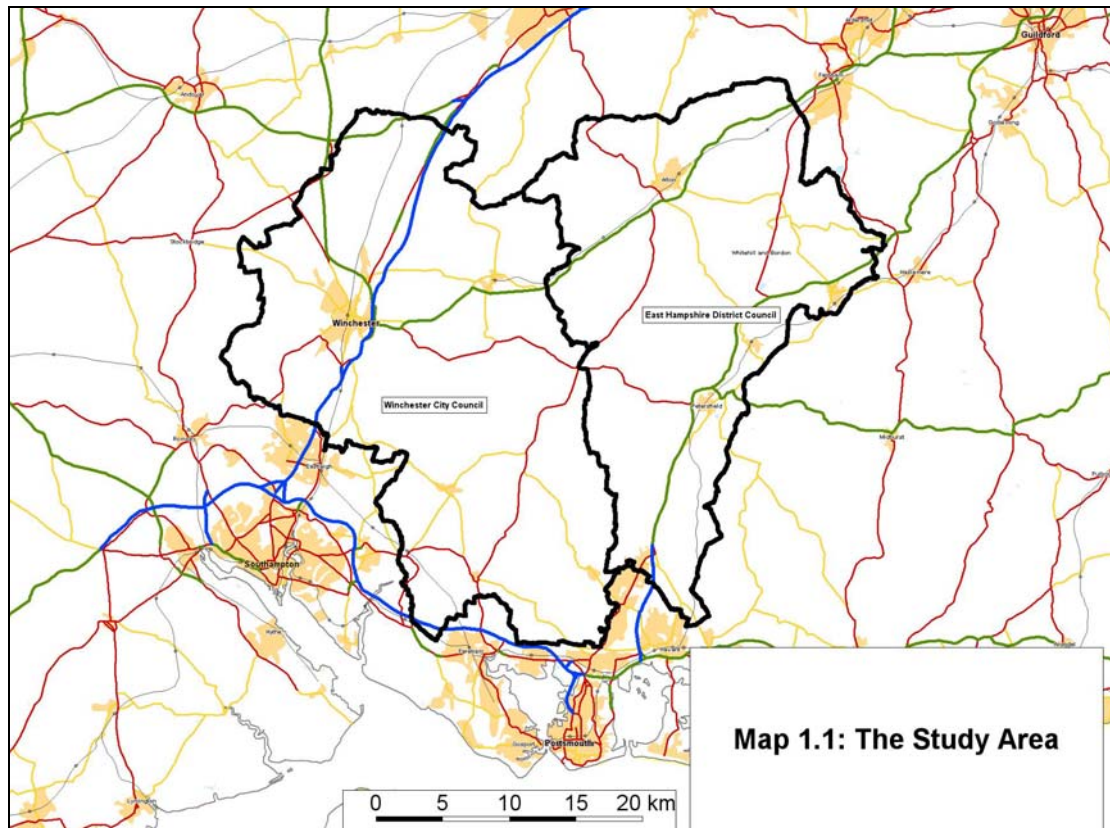
The local authority is a highly attractive area, largely rural in nature, and set within landscapes of high quality.

The main settlements are:

- Winchester.
- Bishop's Waltham.
- Denmead.
- Kings Worthy.
- New Alresford.
- Whiteley.
- Wickham.

The study area is shown on **Map 1.1** (including both Winchester City and East Hampshire local authority areas).

Map 1.1 The Study Area

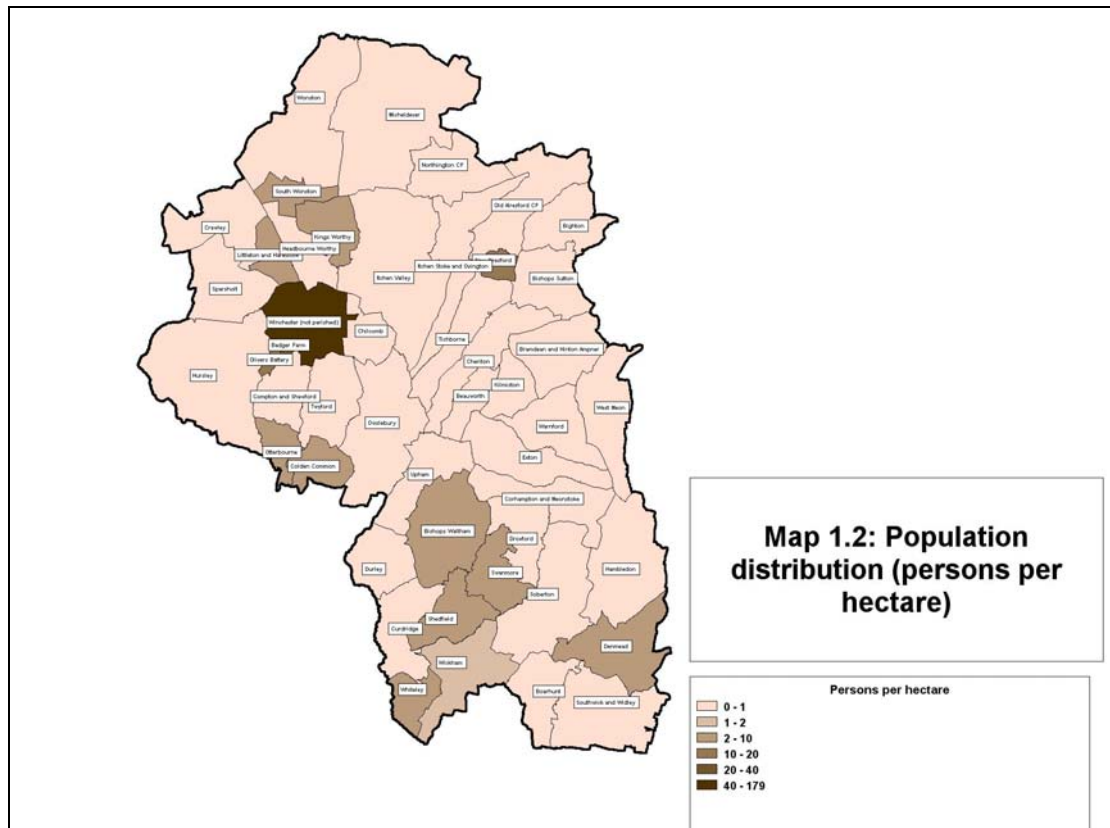


At the time of the 2001 Census¹, the area had a population of 107,222. The mid-year population estimates for 2007 suggest a figure of around 112,500.

The District covers an area of 66,107 ha. This provides an overall population density of 1.62 persons per hectare (compared with the average for England as a whole (3.77 persons per hectare)). **Map 1.2** shows how population is distributed through the local authority, expressed as 'persons per hectare.'

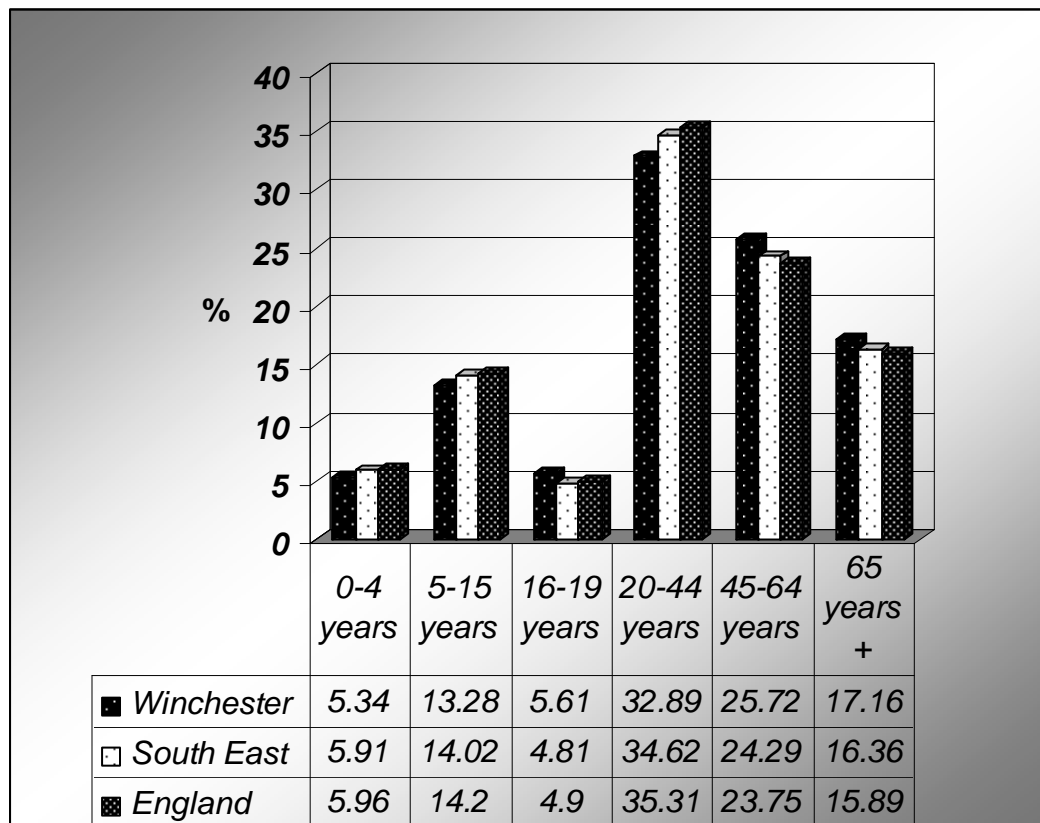
¹ Although more recent population estimates indicate a slight rise in the population from the Census figure, the latter's data are used in this report to enable comparison with other local authorities.

Map 1.2 Population distribution



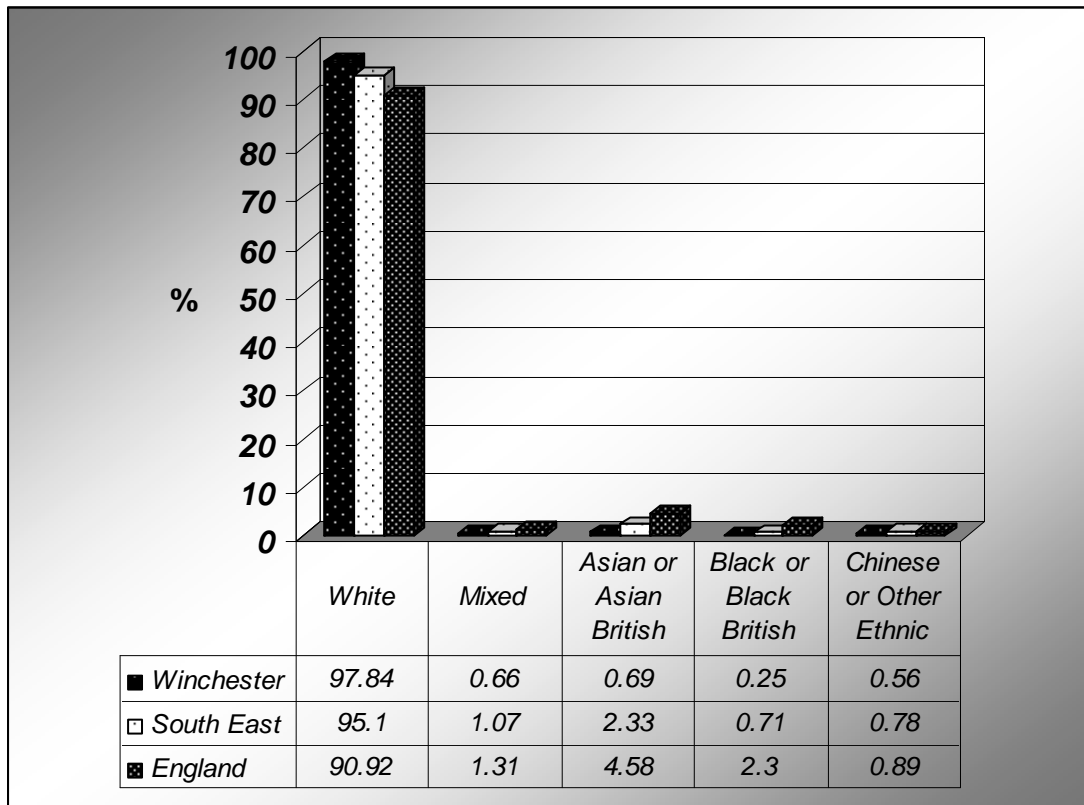
The following figure shows the age breakdown of the Council area. The profile is generally 'older' than for England as a whole, although there are comparatively more teenagers of 16 years and over.

Figure 1.1: Age breakdown of population (2001 Census)



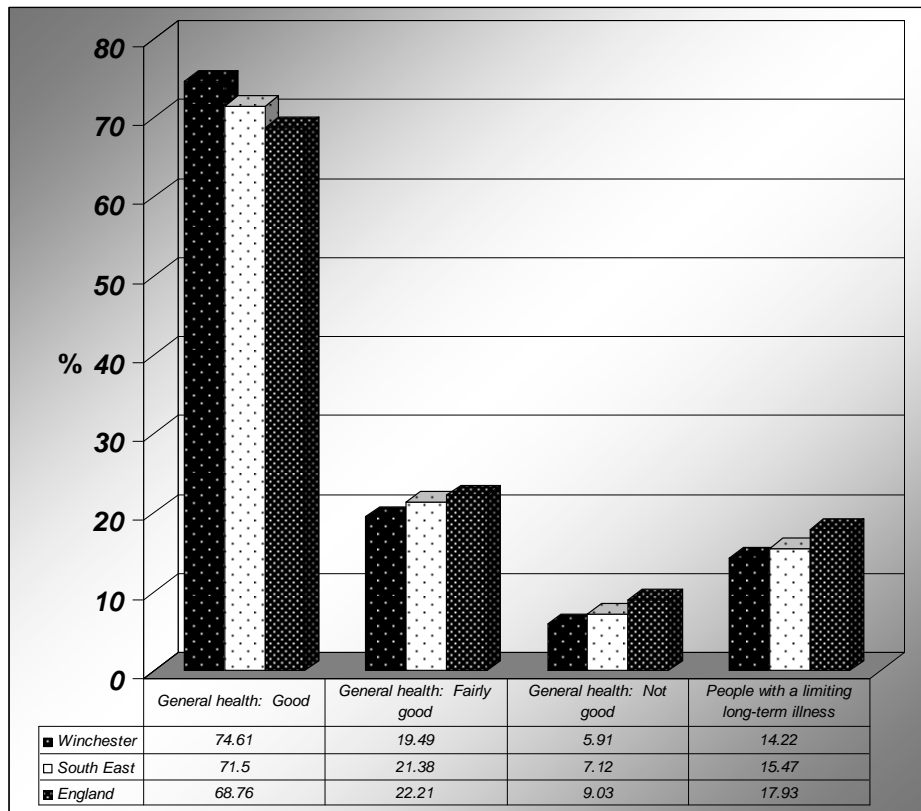
The following figure breaks down the local population by general ethnic grouping. There is a smaller percentage of the population comprised of minority ethnic groups compared with England as a whole.

Figure 1.2: Breakdown of population by ethnic grouping



The following figure breaks down the local population by general health. It shows that there are comparatively more people who are in good overall health, compared with England as a whole; and, comparatively fewer in poor health.

Figure 1.3: Breakdown of population by health



The Winchester District is generally affluent, being amongst the twenty least deprived local authorities in England. It also has some of the highest house prices in the UK, being a sought after location and a major commuting area to London.

However, there are still some pockets of relative deprivation within the District. The Government's Index of Multiple Deprivation² suggest that out of Hampshire's 1091 'Super Output Areas' the five most deprived in ranking in Winchester District are located in the wards of St. Luke (228, 321 and 330); St. Bartholomew (249); and, St. John and All Saints (324).³

² The Index of Multiple Deprivation is a weighted average of other indices, namely Income Deprivation; Employment Deprivation; Health Deprivation and Disability; Education, Skills and Training Deprivation; Barriers to Housing and Services; Crime and Living Environment. Figures are provided for Super Output Areas which were created after the 2001 Census and areas with an average population of about 1500 within wards. The rank given is for Hampshire where 1 is the most deprived and 1091 is least deprived.

³ The Index of Multiple Deprivation is a weighted average of other indices, namely Income Deprivation; Employment Deprivation; Health Deprivation and Disability; Education, Skills and Training Deprivation; Barriers to Housing and Services; Crime and Living Environment. Figures are provided for Super Output Areas which were created after the 2001 Census and areas with an average population of about 1500 within wards. The rank given is for Hampshire where 1 is the most deprived and 1091 is least deprived.

The same Government statistics indicate there are parts of the District that do not rate well in terms of access to housing and other services. This reflects the very rural nature of much of the District and the accompanying difficulty that many small, isolated communities experience in terms of 'getting to things'. Information from the Hampshire County Council also bears this out.⁴

The population of Hampshire as a whole is projected to increase by 105,000 between 2006 and 2026. Much of the population growth will be due to natural increase from within the existing population. However, an estimated 56,000 will be due to net in migration (the number of in migrants exceeding the number of out migrants from the County). It is assumed that a high proportion of development after 2011 will take place in the Strategic Development Areas (SDAs) resulting in net in migration to the County being concentrated into the three Districts of Eastleigh, Fareham and the southern edge of Winchester. (This matter is discussed further in Section 3).

1.4 Challenges for the Report

The overall study area has a number of important characteristics that need to be considered by this Report:

- Its mixed urban and rural character. Winchester City is the largest settlement in a Local Authority area that also covers very extensive rural tracts, and 47 town and parish councils.
- The local population is comparatively healthier than the average for England as a whole - however, it is also comparatively older.
- The very attractive countryside, much of which has special landscape and nature designations.
- The proposed South Downs National Park covering a significant part of the District.
- Pressures of urban expansion (such as the proposed Major Development Area at West of Waterlooville; and, in the future, in the south of the District) and the impact this has both upon the need for all types of recreation outlets, as well as the potentially negative effect it may have on sensitive natural habitats and landscapes.
- The proximity of major urban areas (such as Southampton/ Portsmouth/ Fareham/ Gosport) and the effect of this on patterns of recreational and sporting activity.
- The often contrasting issues and problems affecting rural and urban communities in relation to the provision of and access to various open space, sports and recreational opportunities.

Whilst these are recognised issues for Winchester City Council, they have not necessarily been reflected in the planning and provision of different kinds of

⁴ Experian (Mosaic 2004) from within a review of the availability of demographic software/analysis tools at the Council and how these are used to help identify and target services to areas of deprivation and decline.

open space and recreation opportunity. Recognition of these facts raises the following questions:

- How can open space, sport and recreation opportunities best be planned to provide equal access to all the community in both urban and rural areas?
- In areas of population growth, how can opportunities best be provided to meet the needs of new residents?
- How can the community make better use of facilities which currently have 'limited access', e.g. MOD facilities, schools sites and private sports clubs?
- How can the balance between recreation and biodiversity be achieved, particularly in many of the biologically sensitive areas?
- How can the planning process best address these issues?

1.5 The Benefits of Open Space, Sport and Recreation

Notwithstanding these issues, the philosophy that underpins this study is that open space, sport and recreation in their many forms should be seen as essential to the health and wellbeing of communities.

The benefits of good quality open space, parks, sport and recreation provision are well known and promoted, and covered extensively in other literature. However, some key principles that have informed this study include:

*For **people**, open space and recreation facilities:*

- Provide an area for recreation and play.
- Enable lifelong learning and education.
- Encourage equality and diversity.
- Promote community development and regeneration.
- Establish community cohesion and social inclusion.
- Tackle community safety issues.
- Empower communities.

*For the **environment**, open space:*

- Encourages biodiversity.
- Provides wildlife habitat.
- Promotes education.
- Contributes to sustainable environmental resource management.
- Creates a natural amenity.
- Gives safe, sustainable transport routes.
- Alleviates flood risks.
- Regulates the local microclimate.
- Can instil unique character to an area, and provide a sense of place and local identity.

*For **health**, open space and recreational facilities:*

- Improve physical health through exercise.
- Contribute to good mental health and well being.

- Provide positive community health through sense of space.

*For the **economy**, open space and recreation facilities:*

- Attract economic development and local investment.
- Provide local employment.
- Increase land and property values.
- Encourage ongoing revenue streams through tourism.
- Improve the image and standing of an area.
- Influence location decisions for both employers and employees.

1.6 Definitions of Open Space Sport and Recreation used in this Report

The scope of this study, in terms of the kinds of open space and recreation opportunity being covered, is largely determined by guidance contained in Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, together with its Companion Guide.

In essence the following opportunities for the community are considered:

- Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds.
- Equipped Children's and Young People's Space.
- Informal/Amenity Green Space.
- (Accessible) Natural Green Space.
- Allotments.
- Churchyards and Cemeteries.
- Routeways and Corridors.
- Sports Halls and Swimming Pools.
- Village Halls and Community Buildings.
- Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs).
- Other Built Sports Facilities, including Athletics Tracks, Indoor Tennis, Indoor Bowls, and Health and Fitness Suites.

In terms of the above types of open space and recreational opportunity, the study is restricted largely to those areas and facilities that are physically accessible by the community; either informally or on some sort of managed basis.

The study does not therefore cover facilities that are generally inaccessible to the community. The location of many such facilities have been identified through the audit process, but it is only where they are open to community access that they have they formed part of the analyses within this study.

Some sites currently not open to public access may, in fact, offer potential for overcoming identified shortfalls of provision. An example might be in the case of some school sites that could be opened to wider community use through appropriate agreements, subject to any planning considerations and investment where necessary.

Further description and justification for the types of open spaces and recreation facilities covered within the study are outlined in sections 5 and 6 of the report.

1.7 A Practical Definition of Open Space

The existing or potential recreation utility of a site is a function of its:

- Size.
- Location.
- Shape, topography and internal site features.

Even very small sites are potentially large enough to accommodate meaningful recreation activity. For example, a site of 0.1 ha is still sufficiently large to accommodate an equipped play area, tennis court, or 'pocket park', to name but some possible uses.

The location of a space will have a profound impact on its recreation utility for reasons of safety, accessibility, security, and nuisance (for example.) An unenclosed space immediately adjacent to a very busy road might not be considered to have any practical recreation utility for safety reasons. Similarly, a space adjacent to open plan private gardens (as often occurs in many modern housing estates) might generate concerns from residents and effectively stop it being used actively for this purpose. However, if it were a large site, parts of it may be considered to be a safe distance from the road, or sufficiently remote not to cause actual or perceived nuisance to residents.

A site may in theory be open to use by the public, but in practice might be too heavily vegetated, or sloping, hilly, marshy etc to be used for any recreation purpose. A large site may be of such an awkward shape as to exclude any meaningful recreation use; and, apart from safety issues, much highway land cannot be considered to be open space for such reasons.

In short there can be no hard and fast rules for determining the recreation utility of a site for the community. This has meant that judgements have been made on a site by site basis as to what should be included and excluded for these purposes. In general this has been easy to achieve in a consistent way for the very large majority of sites.

2. SUMMARY OF METHODOLOGY

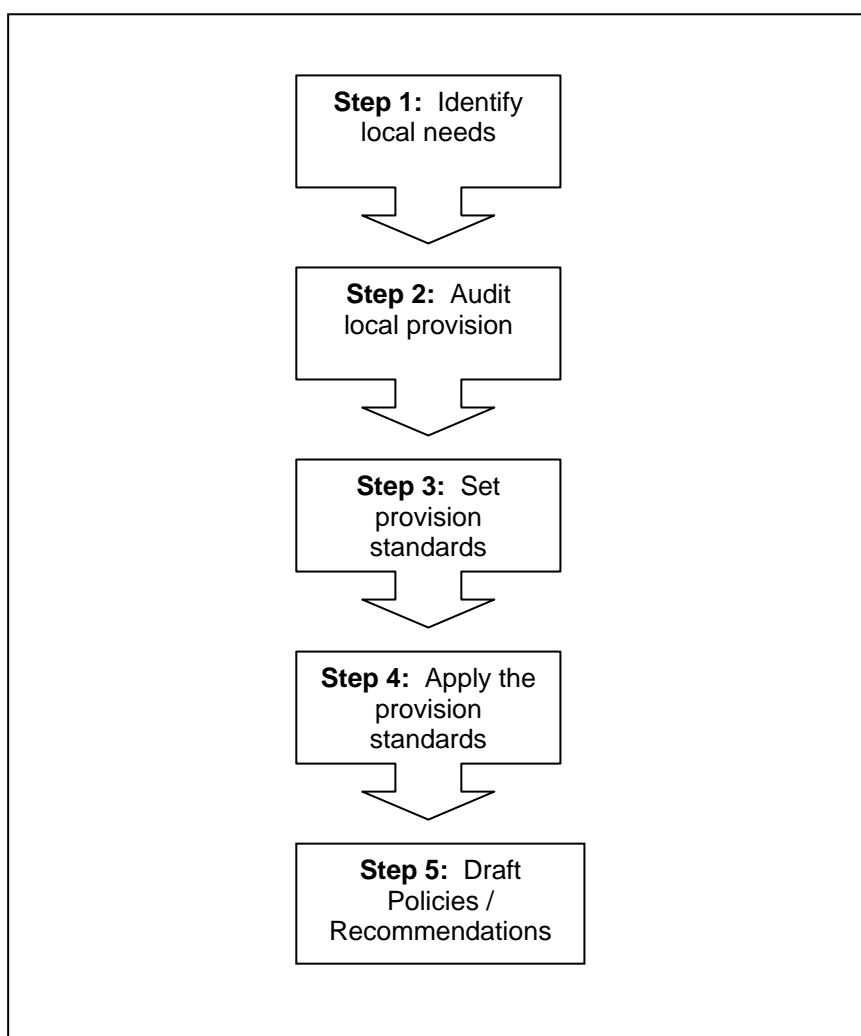
2.1 General

The starting point for this study has been the government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' (PPG17), and its Companion Guide "Assessing Needs and Opportunities". PPG17 places a requirement on local authorities to undertake assessments and audits of open space, sports and recreational facilities in order to:

- Identify the needs of the population.
- Identify the potential for increased use.
- Establish an effective strategy for open space/sports/recreational facilities at the local level.

The Companion Guide to PPG17 recommends an overall approach to this kind of study as summarised below.

Figure 2.1: PPG17 study process



Within this overall approach, the Companion Guide suggests a range of methods and techniques that might be adopted in helping the assessment process and these have been used as appropriate. These methods and techniques, where they have been used, are explained at appropriate points in this report. However, they are summarised in the following paragraphs.

2.2 Identifying Local Need (Step 1)

2.2.1 Sub areas

Many of the open space, sport and recreation opportunities that are covered by this report will serve *local needs* and therefore have *local catchments*. Play areas and nearby parks are obvious examples of such opportunities.

For the study to embrace these varying needs and opportunities, it therefore has to consider provision and need over differing sized geographical areas. Accordingly, surveys and analyses of provision have been based on the following, as appropriate:

- Identified Sub Areas (used in Part 2).
- Local Authority wide/ sub regional (used in this Part in respect of major facilities and opportunities).

Much of the information arising out of the survey of needs can also be broken down to (or built up from) a very local level. For example:

- The findings of surveys provide locally relevant information.
- The clubs/organisations' survey can allow respondents to be linked to geographical areas that they cover (as appropriate).
- Responses to the various surveys conducted through this study can be linked to the general location of the respondent users of open space and recreation facilities.

For very local analyses, the Sub Areas shown on **Map 2.1** have been established to reflect as much as possible the geographical characteristics of discrete local communities. Each Sub Area focuses on a larger settlement, and a number of smaller settlements that make up the area. The exception is Whiteley, which is a relatively self-contained new settlement (along with that part of Whiteley which lies within the adjoining Borough of Fareham). The following outlines the Sub Areas (main settlements are highlighted in bold):

Sub Area 1
Badger Farm, Chilcomb, Littleton and Harestock, Olivers Battery, Winchester

Sub Area 2
Crawley, Headbourne Worthy, Kings Worthy , Micheldever, South Wonston, Sparsholt, Wonston

Sub Area 3

Beauworth, Bighton, Bishops Sutton, Bramdean and Hinton Ampner, Cheriton, Exton, Itchen Valley, Kilmeston, **New Alresford**, Old Alresford, Northington, Itchen Stoke and Ovington, Tichborne, Warnford, West Meon

Sub Area 4

Bishops Waltham, Corhampton and Meonstoke, Droxford, Durley, Swanmore, Upham

Sub Area 5

Colden Common, Compton and Shawford, Hursley, Otterbourne, Owslebury, Twyford

Sub Area 6

Curdrige, Shedfield, **Wickham**

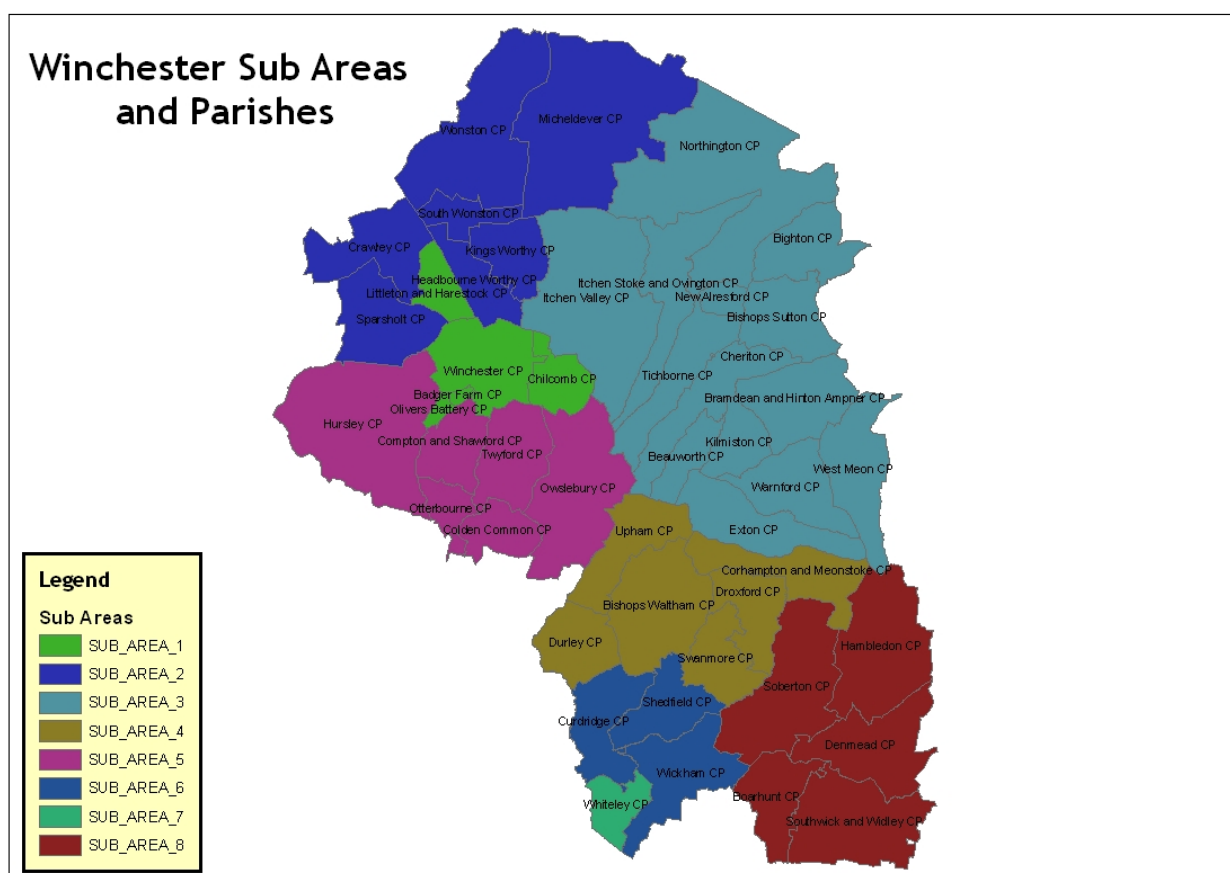
Sub Area 7

Whiteley

Sub Area 8

Boarhunt, **Denmead**, Hambledon, Soberton, Southwick and Widley

Map 2.1



2.2.2 Consultation

The extent of the consultation reflects the breadth and diversity of the study and a consequent need to engage with as wide a cross section of the community as possible. The key findings of the Local Needs Assessment are provided in Section 4, and a full commentary on findings is to be found in **Appendix 1**. The following questionnaire surveys were undertaken:

- Residents' survey.
- Town and Parish Councils' survey.
- Local indoor and outdoor sports clubs' survey.
- Playing pitch clubs' survey.
- Play groups', pre-school clubs' and nurseries' survey.
- Community Organisations' survey.
- School Facilities' survey.
- School pupils' surveys.
- Sports Development Officers' and League Secretaries' survey.

In addition to the above the following 'theme based' focus group meetings/activity based consultations were undertaken as below:

- Wider Advisory Group and local strategic partnerships.
- Sports and Play – Alresford.
- Sports and Play – Whiteley.
- Young people – Winchester.

The result of this consultation and other analyses has helped amongst other things to inform the content of the recommended local standards as well as possible priorities for future action. It has also helped the study to understand local people's appreciation of open space and recreation facilities, and the values attached by the community to the various forms of space. This appreciation should have implications for the way in which open spaces are treated and designated in the revised Local Development Framework.

2.3 Site and Built Facility Audits and Assessment (Step 2)

A site and facility audit has been conducted together with an assessment of relevant sites and facilities.

Information has been collected on open space and relevant built facilities from a variety of sources:

- Site visits.
- Existing databases and records of the Council and other organisations.
- Internet searches and websites.
- Information provided by parish and town councils, and other groups and organisations through their responses to the questionnaire surveys.
- Local directories and handbooks.

All these spaces and facilities have been 'mapped' using a Geographical Information System (GIS).

The detailed method for assessing individual open spaces is explained fully in Part 2 of this report which contains the Sub Area Profiles. In brief it involved:

- A site visit to each open space identified, and, a scoring of its 'quality' in relation to a wide range of criteria, covering:
 - Access.
 - Management and maintenance.
 - Conservation and heritage.
 - Design.
 - Safety.
 - Community involvement.
 - Marketing.
 - Sustainability.
 - Value.

- A scoring of each site's 'potential' to improve with regard to the various criteria, resulting in a 'Gap' score (i.e. the difference between the overall 'Quality' and 'Potential' Scores.)

Where built facilities have been identified and recorded, comments have been made with regard to their perceived quality and fitness for purpose. Key leisure centres have been visited and assessed in relation to their perceived quality and accessibility, from the standpoint of a casual user. Further details can be found in the built facilities report.

2.3.1 Analysis

Analysis of data collected has included the following:

- Mapping and analyses of provision using Geographic Information Systems (GIS).
- Examining and interpreting the findings of the site/facilities audit.
- Examining and interpreting the findings of the various questionnaire surveys, focus group/workshops, and other consultation.

In line with statements made in paragraph 2.2.1 this analysis is provided at the Sub Area and district/sub regional level as appropriate. The analyses are used in this section, but also to draw findings and conclusions in the Sub Area profiles (Part 2), and the built facilities study (part 4).

The analyses also form the basis for the setting and application of standards of provision. (See below).

2.4 Set and Apply Standards of Provision (Steps 3 and 4)

Central Government planning guidance states that local planning authorities should set justified local standards, with three components, embracing:

- Quantity.
- Quality.
- Accessibility.

This report sets, justifies and applies standards for a range of open space and built facility types.

Section 6 sets out and justifies the recommended new local standards. The section explains existing local and national standards and relevant guidance, and explains whether or not this might be used as a basis for developing local standards.

The new local standards are then applied within Part 2 (sub area profiles), and Part 4 (built facilities). However, some example scenarios showing how the standards might be applied and interpreted in differing circumstances are provided in Section 7 of the report.

3.0 POLICY AND STAKEHOLDER CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

This section is in two parts, the first provides a review of relevant policies, and the second considers the role and input of 'key stakeholders'.

3.1.1 Policy review

The PPG17 companion guide identifies the importance of understanding the implications of existing strategies which provide the background for the study. Specifically, before initiating local consultation, there should be a review of existing national, regional and local plans and strategies, and an assessment of the implementation and effectiveness of existing planning policies and provision standards.

3.1.2 Stakeholder analysis

As part of this study, a wide ranging review of the various agencies, organisations and interests involved in Open Space, Sport and Recreation in Winchester District has been undertaken. Their input and role in relation to open space, sport and recreation is outlined.

3.2 Policy Review

3.2.1 Links to the Winchester Community Strategy

The (statutory) Strategy, prepared by the Winchester District Strategic Partnership, has the following Vision:

“Our Vision for the Winchester District is of diverse and dynamic communities, where people work together to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to lead a fulfilling life, now and in the future.”

In seeking the realisation of this Vision the following outcomes are being pursued:

- Outcome 1 - Health and Wellbeing.
- Outcome 2 - Freedom from Fear.
- Outcome 3 - Economic Prosperity.
- Outcome 4 - High Quality Environment.
- Outcome 5 - Inclusive Society.

The provision of OS,S&R opportunities can potentially have a major bearing in helping to achieve the above results It will therefore be very important for recommendations and actions arising out of this study to be seen to link back to community plan themes where appropriate.

3.2.2 Links to the Local Plan

The Local Plan gives a land use policy-based impetus to the planning and realisation of many OS,S&R opportunities and therefore help to pursue the Community Plan results:

- Protecting (through designation and policy reference) existing valued spaces and opportunities.
- Ensuring, as far as possible, an appropriate distribution of spaces and opportunities throughout the study area.
- Ensuring that future development contributes towards the maintenance and improvement of OS,S&R opportunities as appropriate.
- Securing contributions from developers of new (especially residential) property for new or improved existing spaces and facilities reflecting the needs of their residents.

The statutorily adopted Local Plan for Winchester District is the Winchester District Local Plan Review (2006).

It guides the location of new development within the District up to 2011.

The overall aims of the Local Plan strategy can be summarised as follows:

- Ensure that new development helps to conserve and enhance the character and attractiveness of the District.
- Provide for planned development requirements, primarily within existing built up areas and through the allocation of two major development areas as Baseline and Reserve urban extensions.
- Promote development which meets local needs.
- Contribute to sustainable development by avoiding the wasteful use of land, natural resources and energy; and, by controlling the amount, type and location of development.

The Local Plan contains the following policies of particular relevance to OS,S&R:

RT.1: Protection from development of open areas with an important amenity value.

RT.2: General presumption against the loss of significant recreation spaces.

RT.3: General presumption against the loss of small areas of informal space within housing areas where they are in active use and well maintained.

RT.4: Provision of recreational space and facilities where they are deficient, based on minimum standards of provision for public recreational space, as follows (expressed as hectares per 1000 people):

Children's play	0.8 hectares (to include equipped playgrounds, other opportunities for outdoor play and casual play space)
Sports grounds	1.6 hectares (of which at least 1.2 ha should be for pitch sports)
General use	0.4 hectares
Total	2.8 hectares

These provide the basis of the Council's Open Space Funding System, and developers are expected to meet these standards, either on site or through a financial contribution. The supporting text provides some indication as to when it might be appropriate for developers to offer contributions in lieu of direct provision. It also contains brief guidance on the location and design of play provision for the different age groups.

RT.5: Promotes improvements in the provision of recreational space in the settlements, and allocates land adjacent to larger settlements with significant deficiencies.

RT.6: (and accompanying text). General guidance on the development of children's play facilities in relation to location and acknowledged under supply.

RT.7: General support for development of recreational facilities that widen the use of education playing fields as well as those of private organisations.

RT.8: Guidance on where outdoor sport and recreation in the countryside may be appropriate.

RT.9: General support for development associated with the improvement of the public Right of Way network (for walking, cycling, and horseriding).

RT.11: Guidance on the general acceptability of the development of stables, equestrian training areas, riding schools.

RT.12 and RT.13: Guidance on the development of golf course facilities and for noisy sports venues.

RT.14: Guidance on the provision of indoor sports, leisure, arts and entertainment facilities.

Other policies also have some relevance. These include those covering the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (CE.6), Landscape Character (CE.5), and

Gaps between Settlements (CE.1 and CE.3). These policies tend to control the nature of sport and recreation activity (amongst other development) in such areas.

3.2.3 The Local Development Framework

The Local Plan will ultimately be replaced by the Local Development Framework (LDF), and the first LDF document being prepared by the Council is the Core Strategy. This will look at how Winchester District may change in the future. It will provide the overall framework for the other documents making up the LDF and will guide development in Winchester up to 2026.

This Open Space, Sports and Recreation Study will form part of the evidence base informing the Core Strategy and other LDF documents.

3.2.4 Links to the South East Plan

Overview of the plan

The South East Plan is a new type of planning document, providing strategic guidance to replace the Structure Plan. It sets out a vision for the future of the South East region to 2026, outlining a required response to challenges facing the region such as housing, the economy, transport and protecting the environment.

The Plan provides a framework for the region up until 2026. It brings together policies for development and others that influence the nature of places and how they function.

The Plan's vision for 2026 is a healthier region with a more sustainable pattern of development, and a dynamic and more robust economy the benefits of which are to be more widely shared.

It notes that over the years the region's infrastructure (of all kinds) has not kept pace with development, and that this has been the single biggest issue to arise during the Plan's preparation.

It is a core aim of the Plan to promote development in a sustainable way that actually reduces resources used and corresponding environmental damage.

Future major development in the region is to be concentrated upon existing urban areas (defined as a population of more than 10,000 people). A network of 21 regional hubs has been identified in this regard, based on settlements considered to be highly accessible urban centres that can continue to provide a focus for higher order economic, social and cultural activity. In terms of new housing the focus will be directing development as much as possible (at least 60%) onto brownfield as opposed to greenfield sites; increasing planned housing densities to 40 per hectare; and delivering a substantial increase in the amount of affordable housing (an overall target of 35% of new homes).

Although Winchester District does not host any of the regional hubs, it lies in close proximity to some which may impact upon the local authority, including:

- Southampton and Portsmouth (in the South Hampshire sub-region).
- Basingstoke (in the Western Corridor sub-region).

There are two Strategic Development Areas on the edge of the District: north and east of Hedge End; and north of Fareham.

Open space, sport and recreation issues related to the plan

The new plan and its implementation could have major implications for the way in which open space, sport and recreation opportunities are planned and provided in the future. It contains a number of important links including policies related to 'Countryside and Landscape Management' and 'Healthy Communities'.

The plan identifies the importance and role of Countryside and Landscape Management within the South East, and outlines policies related to the New Forest National Park, the proposed South Downs National Park (see below), Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Landscape and Countryside Management and Countryside Access and Rights of Way Management.

Open space, sport and recreation facilities also play a major role in supporting healthy communities. The plan identifies that there are some profound differences between affluent and deprived communities within the region, and that the planning system can play an important role in developing and shaping healthy sustainable communities, including:

- Community access to amenities such as parks, open spaces, physical recreation activity and cultural facilities.
- Healthier forms of transport by incorporating cycle lanes and safe footpaths in planned developments.

3.2.5 South Downs National Park

In December 2002, the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) approved the designation of the South Downs National Park, extending from Winchester to Eastbourne. The exact boundary of the park is still to be defined and is subject to further inquiry, which commenced in February 2008. The final decision and boundary could have major significance for the region, in particular:

- Public bodies and others will be required to have regard to National Park purposes when operating in the area.
- The emphasis will change from quiet enjoyment of the countryside to embrace recreation opportunities.

If the National Park designation is confirmed, this will include significant parts of the Winchester District, and therefore planning for open space, sport and recreation will have to take account of the above issues. This is likely to require further planning and review of existing relevant policies.

3.3 Stakeholder Analysis

There are a wide range of agencies and organisations that have a stake in open space, sport and recreation within Winchester District. This section identifies relevant stakeholders, and provides further analysis on the role and input of key stakeholders.

Figure 3.3: Existing Stakeholders identifies the public, private and voluntary sector stakeholders who generally have some direct or indirect interest in open space, sport and recreation opportunities. It cannot be guaranteed that everyone or everything has been identified. However, it does illustrate the complexity of potential arrangements between all parties.

It is almost impossible to plot the precise relationship of each stakeholder to others in the figure. However, a few observations can be made.

The stakeholders can generally be broken down into 'Users', 'Providers', 'Funders', and 'Enablers' of open space, sport and recreation opportunities, where:

- 'Users' are basically the participants in open space, sport and recreation, (individuals or groups).
- 'Providers' can be agencies, organisations and (sometimes) individuals in the public, voluntary and private/commercial sectors largely responsible for establishing and maintaining open space, sport and recreation opportunities.
- 'Funders' are those that provide *financial* support to either create or maintain opportunities, including through grant aid.
- 'Enablers' help in creating and maintaining opportunities either through policy, general nurture and support including advice on technical issues and sources of funding etc.

Clearly, some of the stakeholders will fall into more than one category. For example, a club will be a 'User', but potentially also a 'Provider'. The local authority may well be 'Providers' in terms of their own facilities, but also 'Funders', and 'Enablers'. The variety of stakeholders ranges from national/central government level, through regional and sub regional interests, down to local interests.

Figure 3.3: Existing stakeholders

'Users'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals, groups and clubs
'Providers'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winchester City Council (various departments) • Schools, colleges and universities • Youth and play organisations • Local clubs and organisations • Landowners • Hampshire County Council • Local councils • Forestry Commission • Commercial providers • Countryside organisations • MoD • Forestry Commission (Public Estate)
'Funders'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central government • Winchester City Council • Local Councils • Hampshire County Council • The Lottery • Governing bodies of sport • Charitable trusts and foundations • Environmental trusts • Sport England • Natural England • Football Foundation • NPFA • Housebuilders • Business • Private Finance Initiatives/Private Public Partnerships • Voluntary fundraising • Other grant sources • Forestry Commission (English Woodland Grant Scheme)
'Enablers'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winchester City Council (various departments) • Sport Hampshire and Isle of Wight • National Governing Bodies of Sport • Sport England South East • Winchester District Sport and Physical Activity Alliance • Regional Assembly • South East Economic Development Agency • Sport England • Forestry Commission • Government Office for the South East • Natural England • Environment Agency • Community and Voluntary Forum for the Region • Local Environment Partnership • Winchester District Strategic Partnership • Forestry Commission (Public Estate)

3.4 The role and input of key stakeholders

Whilst all the above stakeholders have a role and input to the study, it is not feasible to evaluate all of them, however, there are a number of 'key stakeholders' where further analysis has been undertaken. The following section considers the input and role of these key stakeholders, including:

- Ministry of Defence
- Hampshire Sub Regional Bodies
- Schools and other education establishments
- Forestry Commission
- Parish Councils
- Sport England

3.4.1 Ministry of Defence (MoD)

The MoD controls a considerable range of open space, sports and recreation provision within Winchester District. These include those at the Sir John Moore Barracks, and at Worthy Down. Information on these facilities has been requested and obtained from the MoD, and referenced in the Area Profiles (in Part 2) and the Built Facilities report (Part 4) as appropriate.

Some of the facilities are open to the public or let to a local club, whereas others are in parts of the MoD estate where public access is normally not permitted.

The MoD run a 'casual' use licensing system for sports and other facilities. A group, charity, or individual can apply to the Site Estate Representative at the MoD station to use such a facility. If this is possible, i.e. security implications allow, and the facility is not required for MoD use, then a 'Casual Use' licence can be issued at the discretion of the local station and a charge levied. The charges levied are required to be in line with local authority charges as the MoD is under remit not to undercut local providers.

The casual nature of the use licences (where available) mean that longer term access to facilities by an outside user cannot be assured. Therefore, although MoD facilities have been recorded in the audits underpinning this report, they are not considered to be sufficiently 'available' at this time to count towards local community provision.

In addition to sports facilities, the MoD Training Areas in the District offer significant opportunity for informal recreation, although access is limited at times subject to relevant byelaws.

3.4.2 Hampshire Sub Regional Bodies

The District lies within two different sub-regions which are derived from the South East Plan. The southern part of the District lies within the more urban South Hampshire, whereas the remaining northern and more rural part of the District lies within the sub region now known as Central Hampshire. A Green Infrastructure

Strategy is being developed for Urban South Hampshire in response to the planned major growth for this part of the County. The Strategy is being promoted by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH)⁵. PUSH's review of infrastructural needs in response to the South East Plan identified 'green infrastructure' as a critical component necessary to support major development. An associated report⁶ has been published presenting the findings of the research phase of the development of a Green Infrastructure Strategy. The research report (as well as the Strategy remit) examines a broad spectrum of roles for green infrastructure beyond that directly covered by this report. Other than its recreation function, the research report examines the threats and impacts upon, and opportunities for, green infrastructure in relation to biodiversity, natural resources, landscape, heritage, social inclusion, and economic development.

The report identifies some of the general threats that new development can pose for the existing green infrastructure resource. It stresses that the location of recreation sites and networks in relation to high levels of existing and projected use is a critical planning issue, and the potential range of recreational uses of green space should be considered alongside wider functions (i.e. biodiversity, landscape etc) when options for development are investigated. Importantly, the report emphasises the need for 'cross boundary' cooperation in the planning and provision of green infrastructure opportunities for recreation.

It was felt that the value of the report would be further increased if the scope of the Green Infrastructure Strategy was extended to cover the Central Hampshire sub-region, which includes the remaining parts of Winchester District. Initially the 'supply and demand' study, that was prepared in advance of the Strategy, has been expanded to provide this information, which could be used to inform any future Green Infrastructure Strategy for Central Hampshire, if one was required.

3.4.3 Schools and other education establishments

Traditionally, School based open space and recreational provision, particularly in Secondary Schools, primarily exists to meet educational need. It does have the potential to be used by the wider community where there is a policy, practice or agreement in place promoting such dual use. School based provision may offer some scope to assist in meeting local needs for playing pitches and built provision where there may otherwise be local shortages.

Changes in legislation since 1986 including the recent "Extended Schools" agenda have had a major impact on the life of schools, notably outside school hours. School premises are now under the control of governing bodies within each school. Local authorities could issue direction about its use; however this cannot amount to control.

⁵ PUSH was formed in response to the South East England Regional Assembly's requirement for a 20 year plan for the region and works to the principles of conditioned, managed growth within the sub region.

⁶ Towards a Green Infrastructure Strategy for Urban South Hampshire Research: Report July 2007. (Prepared by TEP on behalf of PUSH).

Winchester City Council has assumed the role of an enabling authority, assisting other existing organisations to make provision. This approach has been characterised by the use of resources and relevant operational strategies. The Council has two established leisure centres in Winchester and Whiteley, with well developed programmes of use. Swanmore College of Technology has benefited from funding from WCC towards leisure facilities for community use with a management agreement in place to ensure that the community have maximum benefit from these facilities.

In other secondary schools, namely Kings, Henry Beaufort, Perins and Westgate, the Council has engaged in partnership approaches to enable local community needs to be met.

It is clear that the schools rely heavily on receiving grants to maintain a balance between service provision and cost. The absence of the sports facilities at these sites would prove detrimental to the quality of life of the local residents.

The Schools themselves are also committed to developing closer relationships with their communities, not as a means of making money, but enhancing the curriculum experience of the pupils and the life of the community of which the school is a part. Head teachers are often acutely aware of the needs of the community and many of the issues.

Whilst Hampshire County Council is firmly committed to the development of community education for adult learning and opening schools up to the community, they are having to find new strategies to maintain this commitment. They have to do this in the face of reductions in local authority budgets, increasing independence of schools and increasing pressure to make more schools community orientated to meet government objectives through extended schools.

At present, Westgate, Kings, Perins and Henry Beaufort School do not engage in dual management agreements; however there is a variety of leisure provision available at all these sites. The schools do represent real opportunities for future partnership working since all strive to improve recreational provision on the sites.

Some schools feel powerless to respond to the issues because their buildings are not intended for use by this sector of the community, do not have the time or the staff to manage it properly or are concerned that school pupils do not suffer as a consequence of use by the wider community. There were also issues around security, insurance, space, appropriateness of school furniture (including primary) and liability.

There needs to be a continuing emphasis to strengthen where possible access to primary school premises, particularly in villages and small communities. The importance of this aspect is the reality that over half the population lives in rural areas. Currently, there is only one "community" primary school in the District, Ridgmede School in Bishops Waltham. However, Primary Schools are also expected to provide services to the community through the "Extended Schools" remit.

Projects to offer increased community access would be dependent on approval by the Community School, Hampshire County Council and the ability to find the necessary funding from a number of different sources. The County Council is currently undertaking reviews to inform its long term planning including the “Building Schools for the Future” programme. The upgrading process may include primary schools and make premises more suitable for community use. Given the rather disparate nature of sports and leisure provision in primary schools, it could be suggested that provision is improved across a “Cluster” of primary schools around a “hub” secondary school rather than all embracing provision on one set of premises. Opportunities should be planned on a whole year, seven days a week basis, not limited to school term and weekdays.

In the light of tighter financial restrictions, there are also higher customer expectations and competition from the other leisure providers. Schools will also need to commit to high standards of customer service and facility design, fitting and layout if their leisure and community facilities are to provide a viable and attractive alternative for local residents.

3.4.4 Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission is a government department with a long track record of working in the Hampshire landscape with various partners. It works with the forestry sector to deliver England’s Tree Woodland and Forests (national strategy). It is also a partner in delivering the Regional Forestry Framework, a strategic document informing the draft South East Plan and directing local delivery and sustainable development.

There are two distinct ways in which the Forestry Commission can achieve this. Firstly through working with the private sector and secondly via its considerable estate holding.

The Forestry Commission can use its England Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) to help private landowners improve environmental and social aspects of their future or existing woodlands and forests, for example through supporting the provision of woodland access.

One of the Forestry Commission’s key roles is being an exemplar land manager, able to balance the multi-purpose use of its estate to meet local, regional and national needs in conventional and innovative ways. It aims to increase day visitor numbers to the countryside, it provides locations for a number of benefits to society and the economy, whilst also protecting the environment.

The Forestry Commission has seventeen woodlands within the southern Hampshire area. Fifteen of these are within the district boundaries of East Hampshire and Winchester. Some of the above, and two from other borough boundaries, form the seven woodlands that are within the Partnership for Urbanisation of Southern Hampshire (PUSH). This provides a considerable cluster of woodlands strategically well placed for existing and future delivery.

3.4.5 Town and Parish Councils

Town and Parish Councils have a major role in the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities. Many of these Councils have management responsibility for such facilities, which includes maintenance, improvement and development. Whilst this has many benefits in terms of local accountability and decision making, it also has its problems. This includes a lack of financial and staff resources to effectively manage facilities, and a lack of consistency in management within Parishes and across the District.

These problems will not be remedied by the Local Councils working in isolation, and therefore, the District Council must have a role in supporting them, helping them to build on their strengths and minimise weaknesses and problems. Largely this can be achieved through financial, technical and administrative support. There is also a role for the District Council to provide a forum for Town and Parish Councils to network, and facilitate information and knowledge sharing, good practice, and cross boundary working.

This will in part be delivered by the utilisation of existing forums including the District wide forum for Town and Parish Councils, and the Winchester Town Forum.

Part 2 of the report identifies a number of issues and opportunities at a sub area and Parish level, and many of these require the direct action of the Town and Parish Councils. Particular issues include:

- The need to improve the consistency of maintenance within Parishes and across the District;
- The need for management plans for major open spaces and facilities, and in some cases the need for improvement plans;
- The need for a more cohesive approach to improving facilities, including design and sustainability;
- The need for the District Council to provide resources to support the Town and Parish Councils.

Although the above issues have emerged from the study, the Council will need to consider the priorities (for example through a Greenspace Strategy).

3.4.6 Sport England

As a key stakeholder Sport England has sought to ensure that the PPG17 study provides the robust and defensible evidence base required to support the work of all those involved in the provision of land and facilities for sport and active recreation within Winchester. A robust and defensible evidence base with set standards of provision will play a key role in providing new and enhanced opportunities for people to increase their participation levels in sport and active recreation. Bringing experience of supporting a number of authorities across the region with such studies, Sport England's primary role has been to ensure the robustness of the sporting elements of the study along with ensuring

the work makes full use of Sport England's Strategic Planning Tools. These tools, such as Active Places Power, the Sports Facility Calculator and the Playing Pitch Strategy methodology, provide extremely valuable information and guidance to help strategically assess the supply and demand for sporting provision.

Sport England has also sought to ensure that the evidence base developed by this study can be used effectively to aid the assessment of relevant planning applications along with supporting the emerging Local Development Framework, including updating and advancing the authority's approach to planning obligations and developer contributions. Sport England will continue to provide Winchester City Council with advice and assistance regarding the implementation and monitoring of this study.

4.0 IDENTIFICATION OF LOCAL NEED (KEY FINDINGS)

4.1 General

The findings of the local consultation have helped to inform the content of the recommended local standards as well as possible priorities and actions.. Crucially it has also helped the study to understand local people's appreciation of open space and recreation facilities, and the values attached by the community to the various forms of opportunity.

The following questionnaire surveys were undertaken:

- Residents' survey.
- Town and Parish Councils' survey.
- Local indoor and outdoor sports clubs' survey
- Playing pitch clubs' survey.
- Play groups, pre-school clubs' and nurseries' survey.
- Community organisations' survey.
- School facilities' survey.
- School pupils' surveys.
- Sports Development Officers' and League Secretaries' Survey.

In addition to the above the following 'theme based' focus group meetings/activity based consultations were undertaken as below:

- Wider Advisory Group and local strategic partnerships.
- Sports and Play – Alresford.
- Sports and Play – Whiteley.
- Young people – Winchester.

The following is a summary of the key findings of the consultation, with a full commentary being included in **Appendix 1**.

4.2 Residents' Survey

4.2.1 General views about provision

The following points are considered significant:

- The survey response suggests that indoor facilities are visited less often than a range of outdoor provision: most types of indoor provision (including leisure centres, gyms, community centres and school community facilities) are visited by a maximum of 15% of the respondents once a week; compared to around nearly 27% visiting local parks and recreation grounds, a third visiting amenity open space and 27% visiting natural green space and recreation cycle paths and footpaths). However, they are clearly important to a significant section of the local community.

- People in Winchester District rate the quality of their amenity open space and natural green space very highly; indoor swimming pools also score highly.
- The cleanliness of open space areas, their accessibility for people with reduced mobility, car parking (another access issue) and the quality of play facilities for children are regarded as areas where there is scope for improvement.
- More provision for teenagers is considered necessary.
- More gyms, health and fitness facilities are desired.
- Other outdoor sports facilities are felt to be required (which is consistent with the results of other surveys (see below)). The particular issues around outdoor sports facilities are:
 - Localised shortages of pitches in rural areas/villages where there are particularly active clubs.
 - More strategic deficiencies – football pitches in Winchester and Whiteley.

A representative quote summarises many people's views:

- “We are very fortunate in this area to have beautiful open countryside, well kept parks and access to super sports and play activities in Winchester City Centre, however in rural areas, outlying villages, etc, we have found that children 12-16 yrs old are the least catered for in local activities such as youth clubs and skateparks that they can reach themselves. Although we all seem to live in a 'privileged' area, we have families on low incomes who are not always able to drive and cannot fund transport regularly to the excellent facilities in the centre of Winchester.”

4.2.2 Preparedness to travel to reach opportunities

The importance of having accessible spaces close to where people live, which they can walk to was highlighted:

- For over 50% respondents, their most visited local area of open space is less than a quarter of a mile from their home and for 2/3rds, less than half a mile. For over 50%, it takes up to 5 minutes to reach these areas. Around 70% of people walk to these and 29% go by car. For indoor sports facilities, a surprisingly high number walk (45%), and almost 50% go by car.
- Local areas of open space and recreation facilities are used mainly for walking, walking the dog and giving people the chance to enjoy the natural environment and exercise (for between 40% and 50% of respondents). Around a quarter visit children's play areas in them. 20% use them to jog/take some exercise, which forms a good basis from which to promote such areas as opportunities for improving health and fitness levels.
- Research into people's journey times shows that people, ideally, are prepared to travel for the following amounts of time to reach different types of facility (this has been of major importance in setting accessibility thresholds):
 - Local amenity spaces – between 5 and 10 minutes, walking.

- Equipped children's play areas - around 10 minutes, walking.
- Space for teenagers – between 10 and 15 minutes, walking/cycling.
- Playing fields – up to 15 minutes, preferably walking but also by car.
- Other outdoor sports facilities – about 15 minutes – walking, also by car.
- Synthetic turf pitches – up to 15 minutes, by car.
- Natural green space – about 15 minutes, by car, but also like to walk.
- Cycle paths and footpaths – about 10 minutes – getting there is part of the activity!
- Gym/Health and fitness centres – around 10 minutes – preferably walking.
- Indoor sports halls – up to 15 minutes, driving.
- Indoor swimming pools – between 10 and 15 minutes, driving.
- Local community centres and village halls – up to 10 minutes, driving, but walking where possible.

As an observation, residents in the neighbouring East Hampshire District seem prepared to travel for a little longer to reach most types of open space. This may well reflect the higher proportion of people living in rural areas, where travel to facilities is an accepted part of daily life.

4.2.3 Importance of improving accessibility

A key theme from the research was that unless people can get to places easily, they will not use them. Improving access as well as the obvious components such as increasing cycleways and public transport routes, is also about improving quality; some of the many suggestions made include the following:

- Greening routes, lighting them more effectively, making them feel safer and more welcoming.
- Linking schools and other sports facilities/green sites.
- Improving cycle lanes and taking them seriously.
- Working with bus companies to improve bus services and community transport between places that people want to go to 'a sports bus route', 'a play bus route', 'a young people's bus route' etc.
- Providing better information on exactly how to get to places (without using a car) and coming up with ideas to link places.
- Using green routes, cycleways etc as a major component of encouraging people to integrate basic fitness activities into their daily lives.

4.2.4 Encouraging people to make greater use of facilities

- The main determinants in encouraging people to make greater use of open space, sport and recreation facilities are often related to the provision of new facilities or if there were more suitable areas/facilities near to where people live. Perhaps much of the latter is to do with people's perception of how easy it is to get to places and what they can do when they get there, and promoting the flexibility and range of opportunities on offer may help to address this. The provision of more information appears to be an

important factor. The role of cheaper, easier and better-linked public transport is also a key factor to emerge.

- Priorities did not vary much according to whether people were in employment or not, or with age particularly, but those with reduced mobility were much more likely to find poor public transport and the cost of getting to and using facilities acting as major deterrents.
- The dominance of Winchester itself influences many findings from the south of the district – especially in Whiteley where people are routinely using facilities in Fareham (but cannot use leisure cards in operation there, for example) and Eastleigh.

4.3 Parish Councils

For Parish Councils, the main concerns are:

- Improving the quantity and quality of playing pitches;
- the quantity of multi use games areas/tennis courts,
- the provision of facilities for teenagers,
- making better indoor spaces for sport, and
- improving the quality of changing facilities and play areas.

Older people as well as children and teenagers are considered as not having particularly good provision.

Maintaining and providing adequate play areas is a major preoccupation for Parish Councils and the theme of need for ongoing revenue financing was constantly referenced.

The safety and security of facilities is also considered very important.

4.4 Educational Establishments

- Out of 28 schools, 5 of the schools desire/need improvements to their sports facilities.
- 16 have community/dual-use (some with agreements), 12 do not. Out of these 16, 13 intend to maintain access for the general community and 3 have no plans.
- 6 schools have requests from additional outside clubs/groups to use their facilities. 2 schools are unable to fulfil requests, the main reason given was security issues.
- 8 schools have spare capacity for community use in holidays and out of school hours.
- Certain schools – notably Kings School in Winchester, Sparsholt College, Perin’s School, New Alresford and Swanmore College do make important contributions to catering for the community, not least through the use of Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs) (potentially also Henry Beaufort).
- The University is also jointly providing much needed athletics and STP facilities with the local authority.
- The opportunities provided by education - local schools, colleges both in the state and private sector - and the greater use that could be made of

both indoor and outdoor provision is a key theme to emerge from most consultation undertaken: this should not be addressed piecemeal but at a strategic level. Some schools are already well integrated with the community, others are planning new facilities which could and should where possible be made available – the scope is endless and key to addressing deficiencies, both at the highest level in sport and the basic needs of access to play areas in rural areas.

- Schools themselves generally seem open to discussing greater community use, but they do have real concerns about overuse, security, and the cost of more intensive use, adequate caretaking and supervision. This deserves a wider debate.

4.5 Sport

The adequacy and deficiencies in sports provision are picked up in other analysis but as an overview:

- Football – key deficiencies in Winchester and Whiteley and other settlements; various grounds require improvements to facilities.
- Alresford RFC is looking to relocate to New Alresford with the concomitant facilities to enable it to further develop and flourish.
- Winchester RFC has growing numbers and limited available space.
- Badminton would benefit from the availability of more courts; the Westgate Badminton Centre requires an extension.
- Cricket: the pavilions at the main facilities at North Walls and King George V in Winchester are inadequate; opportunities for greater contribution of school cricket facilities.
- Athletics – proposal for all weather track in Winchester.
- Lack of Synthetic Turf Pitches for both football and hockey (latter being addressed through proposal at Bar End, Winchester).
- Ageing leisure centre at River Park – possibility/desirability of relocation.

4.6 Play

Much good material has arisen from consultation with Play Groups and Associations: people are full of ideas for what is required, perhaps to be summarised as:

- Better facilities required for under 5s.
- More imaginative and adventure play areas for all ages.
- Older children and teenagers require cycle paths, places to meet, adventure and wild play area.
- There are accessible facilities within central Winchester, but it is much harder to find good quality play areas in the outlying rural areas.
- The need for inclusive play facilities for children with disabilities was referred to often; indeed, improved accessibility across the range of open space typologies for people with disabilities and or those with reduced mobility is a major theme.

4.7 Community Organisations

Community organisations also highlighted lack of facilities for teenagers, the importance of open space and recreation areas feeling safe and secure (to encourage use) with good lighting and supervision from police, park wardens etc, and being accessible to everyone.

4.8 Students

- Around 50% of the students said it took only up to 5 minutes to get to their most visited local area of open space; 12% of the younger students took more than 15 minutes to get there; and for sixth form students, 38% took more than 15 minutes.
- 66% walked, 14% used a car and 7% use public transport
- The majority of students said the frequency with which facilities were used depended on their location -28% went most days to an open space/sports facility, around 40% once or twice a week, but 14% less than once a month.
- 50% went to meet friends, 29% of the students went there to jog/get some exercise and 28% went to play games with friends
- The majority felt there were enough playgrounds, local parks, playing fields, and kickabout areas, although there are not enough MUGAs, skate parks, youth shelters, gyms and fitness facilities, indoor sports halls and swimming pools.
- They would like to see more 5 aside football pitches, indoor swimming pools and places to meet outdoors, i.e. shelters and seats.
- Students said that they would be encouraged to use the facilities more if:
 - they were cleaner and better maintained; and,
 - it was cheaper to use them and easier/cheaper to access by cheaper public transport.

4.9 Key Findings from Focus Groups

4.9.1 Findings

1. Many people travel to facilities out of the District. People in the south of the District are more likely to access facilities in neighbouring areas.
2. There is general satisfaction with the quality of open spaces, play facilities, sports facilities, leisure centres and community buildings although there are some concerns.
3. There is general dissatisfaction with facilities provided for young people in and this is a significant concern.
4. Schools provide valuable and valued additional provision for sports needs. However there is room for improvement, particularly with regard to access to changing facilities and access for informal sport.
5. People are used to travelling to facilities and most journeys are made by car. However those without access to private transport can be disadvantaged.

6. There is little incentive to cycle as a means of transport and roads are thought to be too dangerous. In some rural areas this extends to walking on pavements which can be inadequate.
7. Public transport is patchy and poor in places which is disadvantaging those without access to private transport. Bus services through different providers are thought to be uncoordinated, expensive and unreliable.
8. The provision of information on the availability of facilities can be patchy and is un-co-ordinated.
9. The different numbers of governing authorities and their respective responsibilities is confusing and there is a need for clarity as to where responsibilities lie for the provision of facilities.
10. Communities in the south of the District feel disengaged from Winchester City Council and are accessing facilities provided in urban areas to the south.
11. The study needs to be integrated with other relevant City Council policies, particularly the Extended Schools Partnerships.
12. There are local issues around the availability and suitability of land for providing additional facilities.
13. There are local shortages of facilities for sports inc. football, netball, basketball and tennis.
14. There are local shortages of accessible community space available for hire – many facilities are at capacity.
15. Young people tend to visit and have a need for spaces that are close by where they live and hence local facilities are important.
16. Further research is advised with young people in different areas of the District.
17. Further research is advised with disabled people or their representatives in the District.

4.9.2 Key recommendations from Focus Groups

1. Future strategy and policy needs to recognise connections and co-ordinate with other local authority providers of facilities.
2. Schools facilities need to be made more accessible, particularly changing facilities and for informal use, in areas where this is currently not so. Communities recognise that some school facilities are of high quality and provided in the right areas.
3. More and better facilities need to be provided for young people. This includes outdoor meeting spaces, indoor spaces, and outdoor informal games areas. Provision needs to be made accessible in terms of the level and nature of adult supervision, where it is situated, the cost of use and, with sports, equipment provided to encourage use.
4. Facilities provided for those that do not have easy access to private transport, particularly children and young people, are required at a local level.
5. Public transport in the south of the District does not encourage a strong link with facilities available further north. This should be improved if communities are to make better use of them.

6. The City Council needs to improve the marketing of its facilities to enable communities to easily identify who is the provider of those facilities and where information on them can be accessed.
7. Providing a single, regular source of information on the facilities included in the open space strategy, with connections to neighbouring authorities, may act to improve use.

4.10 Summaries by Typology

The following is a general summary of all the key findings of the overall consultation as applied to the various kinds of open space and built facility covered by this study. Further details can be found in Part 2 (Sub Area profiles) and Part 4 (Built Facilities) of the report.

4.10.1 Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds

The key points were that:

- These are very important spaces and there should be more of them.
- Standards need to be raised – in particular there should be good maintenance, perhaps through the involvement of park keepers.
- All ages and sectors of the community can benefit from, and use, parks and gardens and that a mix of formal and informal space is advantageous. They should be developed in consultation with their local community.
- They have wider benefits for health and education and for hosting community and social events.
- The cost of maintenance can be burdensome.
- Litter and dogs need to be controlled.
- There needs to be adequate supervision and policing to combat vandalism, drug and alcohol abuse and ensure that people feel safe when using them.

For Outdoor Sport – Fixed, the key points were that:

- There should be good facilities, accessible and affordable to all age groups.
- There are many issues relating to the need for planned and effective maintenance with sustainable provision; outdoor facilities can be targets for vandalism.
- A theme emerged whereby outdoor sports facilities should be properly planned, linking in with leisure facilities and sports development opportunities (coaching) and taking advantage of trends in sport.
- Where possible, facilities should be shared between different uses e.g. pavilions used for play group when not required for sport.
- Standards of provision are required.
- Every village should have a facility like a tennis court/ball wall/multi-use area.

For Outdoor Sport – Seasonal, the key points were that:

- There was a general shortage of grass pitches and all weather surfaces.

- Facilities should be multi use and flexible; good management is critical.
- Accessibility to the whole community is important, with good access to transport links and car parking.
- Many facilities require improvement, but funding and maintenance are an issue.
- There should be a hierarchy of provision, with good quality higher status facilities.
- Facilities need good promotion and information.
- Pitches may be able to share land with more informal pursuits when team sports not in season.
- Presently they are driven by unnecessary high standards of provision – can be difficult for communities.

4.10.2 Children's and Young People's Spaces

The key points were that:

- Areas which they can get to on their own, near to where they live, are the key to meeting the needs of teenagers. Given the vandalism which many facilities suffer from, many young people are concerned that such areas should be well supervised, well maintained and clean and feel safe and secure.
- These are seen as very important and should be accessible to all children with a range of equipment for all ages.
- They should be well managed and maintained and have safe equipment on a secure, safe site.
- More adventurous and exciting sites are required which encourage outdoor activity for young people. Health and Safety laws are over restrictive and limiting, making spaces less interesting and do not encourage the children's initiative; we need more imagination and creativity in play provision - use international examples, i.e. Scandinavia .
- It is important to involve young people and the community in planning and managing these spaces.
- Location is key, and especially for larger equipment such as skate parks.
- Need to get away from many small sites with limited equipment, to more flexible areas with better use of space.
- Lack of facilities for teenagers especially in outlying suburbs of Winchester and rural areas.

4.10.3 Informal/Amenity Green Space

The key points were that:

- These spaces should be accessible to everyone.
- They are very valuable for informal recreation.
- Better use, management and maintenance of existing informal areas is required – they are vulnerable areas – open to vandalism and anti-social behaviour.
- New developments should provide adequate informal green space.
- The cost of maintenance is again an issue.

- The study should provide guidance and information as to whether existing areas are private or public areas.
- Importance of design of appropriate areas within new housing estates which are well related to housing, easily supervised and accessible to children/young people.

4.10.4 (Accessible) Natural Green Space

The key points were that:

- The natural environment should be conserved and protected through the planning system.
- These areas have high educational value and use should be encouraged and publicized;
- Such areas should be included in new developments;
- They should be accessible to everyone with a network of green space within urban areas.
- Fly tipping is an issue.
- People need to feel safe when using them.
- Landowners' co-operation and agreement is needed for specific users, i.e. walkers, horse riders.
- Trees are an important feature and there should be greater use of tree protection orders.

4.10.5 Allotments

The key points were that:

- A growing demand for allotments is identified in various locations throughout the District, and with rise in interest generally, this is an element of open space provision which needs to be adequately catered for and recognised.
- These have great benefits for health, especially when using organic resources.
- More are needed, especially as housing density increases.
- They should be well maintained with good facilities and be secure.
- Rents should be revised.
- They should be in accessible locations with their use by schools also being encouraged.
- They require better protection through the planning system.
- The study should provide authentication of sites and information about who is in charge.

4.10.6 Sports Halls and Swimming Pools

The key points were that:

- There should be standards of provision based around the community's needs and requirements.
- Long term vision is required.
- Value for money is critical.
- Facilities should be in accessible locations with good transport links.

- They should be programmed to provide varied activities for all age groups.
- Opportunities for schools to contribute to supply of facilities should be investigated.
- More competition from other providers will create better facilities.

4.10.7 Village Halls and Community Buildings

The key points were that they should:

- Be of attractive design in a good location with good facilities, storage and adequate car parking.
- Be well managed, so that there is enough use to justify them and for adverse points from use such as noise and anti-social behaviour to be controlled.
- Be multi use facilities and the hub of the community. There needs to be a reappraisal of their role in meeting needs for active recreation, especially for the young and those with reduced mobility.

4.11 Key Findings: A Summary of the Identified Key Themes

The following summarises what are felt to be the main points arising from the various consultations. (Comments having relevance to the local Sub Areas are provided in the Sub Area Profiles contained in Part 2 of this Report).

- A wider broader spectrum of open space types should be recognised in local planning, especially in terms of informal provision.
- Local people value informal and natural space, parks and attractive recreation corridors for walking and cycling. However, these are not reflected in current local planning standards.
- For certain forms of open space e.g. play areas, the expectation is to be able to walk to reach such provision; for major opportunities (including built facilities) the general expectation is to have to rely on motorised transport.
- Overall, people appear to use informal spaces and recreation opportunities more frequently than formal sports areas and/ or 'built' provision.
- More provision for teenagers/young people is desired
- Issues of access to facilities from the rural parts of the local authority area is a major problem; especially for those without private transport.
- A feeling that safer, greener routes can improve access by foot and bike, and can be recreation opportunities in their own right.
- A general feeling that many opportunities are focussed on the Winchester City area. Many people in the south of the District depend

on Southampton and other neighbouring authorities for accessible opportunities.

- There is a perceived local shortage in playing pitch provision in some areas (although not specified).
- There are perceived issues with the quality and maintenance of children's and young people's play facilities in the rural areas.
- There is an expressed desire on the part of many schools to offer more of their provision out for community use. Equally, there is a concern over the quality of such provision in many cases.

5.0 AUDIT OF LOCAL PROVISION (OVERVIEW)

5.1 Introduction

This section describes the overall provision and distribution of open space and other community recreation facilities within Winchester. It should be read in conjunction with the Local Needs Area Profiles in Part 2 which provide more detailed consideration of the adequacy or otherwise of provision of facilities within local areas.

5.2 Typologies of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities

Generally, this study has looked at the following types of publicly accessible provision:

- Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds.
- Equipped Children's and Young People's Space.
- Informal Open Space.
- Natural Green Space.
- Allotments.
- Churchyards and Cemeteries.
- Routeways and Corridors.
- Sports Halls.
- Swimming Pools.
- Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs).
- Village Halls and Community Buildings.

These categories generally reflect the typology of provision identified in PPG17 with some modifications to suit local circumstances. **This is further explored and justified in section 6.2.**

Although the above are varied in their nature, a number of simple criteria have been set to establish whether they 'qualify' for assessment, and have therefore been included within the audit, these are:

- they are freely and openly accessible to the community (e.g. recreation grounds),
- they are accessible to the public on a managed access basis (such as with allotments and some kinds of outdoor sports facility.)

Within the audit the following has been assessed: 341 open spaces (including associated buildings), 14 major leisure facilities and more than 100 smaller built facilities (sports halls, village halls etc). Quality assessments for these sites have been undertaken. The assessment forms used for this purpose are included as **Appendix 2**.

Additional sites close to, but outside, the study area have also been identified by the study.

Each identified site has been given a Unique Reference Label. These labels are shown on the Area Profile maps (Part 2), and (wherever possible) on the maps in this section.

Because of its very extensive nature, and proximity of the southern part of the District with the Southampton/Fareham/Portsmouth/Gosport conurbation, many residents will rely on access to and use of certain open spaces and built facilities within neighbouring districts for recreational enjoyment. Such sites have not been included in any quantitative analyses of provision. However, it will be important to bear these opportunities in mind, when considering general access to opportunities at the local and strategic level, as council boundaries are not a constraint in this regard.

The following section describes each of the typologies included within the study, including open space and built facilities. It also provides a summary of the existing provision of facilities.

5.3 Open Space

The following section defines the various categories of open space considered by this study. Further justification for the use of these categories is outlined in section 6.2.

5.3.1 Parks, Sports, and Recreation Grounds

For the purpose of this study, all sites that might be thought of as recreation grounds, parks, and public gardens have been placed under a single classification called Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds.

Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds take on many forms, and may embrace a wide range of functions, including:

- Informal recreation and outdoor sport.
- Play space of many kinds (including for sport and children's play).
- Providing attractive walks to work.
- Offering landscape and amenity features.
- Areas of formal planting.
- Providing areas for 'events'.
- Providing habitats for wildlife.

Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds are generally 'multi-functional', an important aspect identified in the PPG17 companion guide, and therefore, as part of this study, the range of multi-functional uses has been identified and assessed.

With the exception of golf (not covered by this study), those outdoor sports that tend to require most space to accommodate activity are the various pitch sports, and athletics. These sports are dealt with in separate reports dealing

with the supply of and demand for playing pitches (Part 3), and 'built' sports facilities (Part 4). The role of Synthetic Turf Pitches and indoor tennis courts is also covered in Part 4.

Grass pitches remain the surface of choice for most pitch sports at the community level, and it is important to point out that most pitches within the local authority (apart from education provision) tend to be situated in recreation grounds. School based provision (both for outdoor sport and built facilities) is covered in both Part 3 and 4 of the study.

5.3.2 Equipped Children's and Young People's Space

It is important at the outset to establish the scope of the audit in terms of this kind of space. Children and young people will play/'hang out' in almost all publicly accessible "space" ranging from the street, town centres and squares, parks, playing fields, "amenity" grassed areas etc as well as the more recognisable play and youth facility areas such as equipped playgrounds, youth shelters, BMX and skateboard parks, Multi-use Games Areas etc. Clearly many of the other types of open space covered by this study will therefore provide informal play opportunities.

To a child, the whole world is a potential playground: where an adult sees a low wall, a railing, kerb or street bench, a child might see a mini adventure playground or a challenging skateboard obstacle. Play should not be restricted to designated 'reservations' and planning and urban design principles should reflect these considerations.

The study has recorded the following:

- Equipped children's space (for pre-teens)
- Provision for teenagers.

The former comprises equipped areas of play that cater for the needs of children up to and around 12 years. The latter comprises informal recreation opportunities for, broadly, the 13 to 16/17 age group, and which might include facilities like skateboard parks, basketball courts and 'free access' Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs). In practice, there will always be some blurring around the edges in terms of younger children using equipment aimed for older persons and vice versa.

5.3.3 Informal Open Space

The category is considered to include those spaces open to free and spontaneous use by the public, but neither laid out nor managed for a specific function such as a park, public playing field or recreation ground; nor managed as a natural or semi-natural habitat. These areas of open space will be of varied size, but are likely to share the following characteristics:

- Unlikely to be physically demarcated by walls or fences.
- Predominantly laid down to mown grass.

- Unlikely to have identifiable entrance points (unlike parks).
- Unlikely to have planted flower beds or other formal planted layouts, although they may have shrub and tree planting.
- Generally no other recreational facilities and fixtures (such as play equipment or ball courts), although there may be items such as litter bins and benches.

Examples might include both small and larger informal grassed areas in housing estates and general recreation spaces. They can serve a variety of functions dependent on their size, shape, location and topography. Some may be used for informal recreation activities, whilst others by themselves, or else collectively, contribute to the overall visual amenity of an area. However, as a general rule such spaces will not include highway verges and other incidental open space that does not fall within the definition of recreational open space contained within Section 1.

5.3.4 Natural Green Space

For the purpose of this study, Natural Green Space covers a variety of accessible spaces including meadows, river floodplain, woodland and copse all of which share a trait of having natural characteristics and wildlife value, but which are also open to public use and enjoyment. Research elsewhere and (more importantly) the local consultation for this study have identified the value attached to such space for recreation and emotional well-being. A sense of 'closeness to nature' with its attendant benefits for people is something that is all too easily lost in urban areas. Natural Green Spaces should be viewed as important a component of community infrastructure in planning for new development as other forms of open space or 'built' recreation facilities. Natural Green Spaces can make important contributions towards local Biodiversity Action Plan targets and can also raise awareness of biodiversity values and issues.

Some sites will have statutory rights or permissive codes allowing the public to wander in these sites. Others may have defined Rights of Way or permissive routes running through them. For the remainder of sites there may be some access on a managed basis. Although many natural spaces may not be 'accessible' in the sense that they cannot be entered and used by the general community, they can be appreciated from a distance, and contribute to visual amenity.

5.3.5 Allotments

Allotments provide areas for people to grow their own produce and plants. It is important to be clear about what is meant by the term 'Allotment'. The Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 obliged local authorities to provide sufficient allotments and to let them to persons living in their areas where they considered there was a demand for allotments.

The Allotment Act of 1922 defines the term 'allotment garden' as:

“an allotment not exceeding 40 poles in extent which is wholly or mainly cultivated by the occupier for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for consumption by himself or his family”

(n.b. 40 Poles equals 1,210 square yards or 1,012 square metres. A Pole can also be known as a Rod or Perch.)

The Allotments Act of 1925 gives protection to land acquired specifically for use as allotments, so called Statutory Allotment Sites, by the requirement for the need for the approval of Secretary of State in event of sale or disposal. Some allotment sites may not specifically have been acquired for this purpose. Such allotment sites are known as “temporary” (even if they have been in use for decades) and are not protected by the 1925 legislation.

In this country an Allotment Garden is generally distinct from a ‘Community Garden’. A Community Garden in the UK tends to be situated in a built-up area and is typically run by an independent non-profit organisation. It is also likely to perform a dual function as an open space or play area: while it may offer plots to individual cultivators the organisation that administers the garden will normally have a great deal of the responsibility for its planting, landscaping and upkeep.

5.3.6 Routeways and Corridors (including Countryside Recreation Sites and Rights of Way/Recreation Corridors in Winchester District)

Beyond the categories of space defined earlier in this section, there are other open spaces that have not been included within the overall open spaces figures provided at the beginning of this section, but which nevertheless offer (potentially) very important community recreation opportunities.

These include:

- Country Parks and managed countryside recreation sites
- Accessible woodland (including land managed by the Forestry Commission)
- The Rights of Way network and permissive routes.

The figures in the following table are worth comparing with those given for other open space in Figure 5.1, as they indicate the huge resource that exists for use, so long as potential users can get to it.

	Total hectares	Hectares per 1000
Accessible Woodland	1871.43	17.45
Countryside Service Sites	313.10	2.92

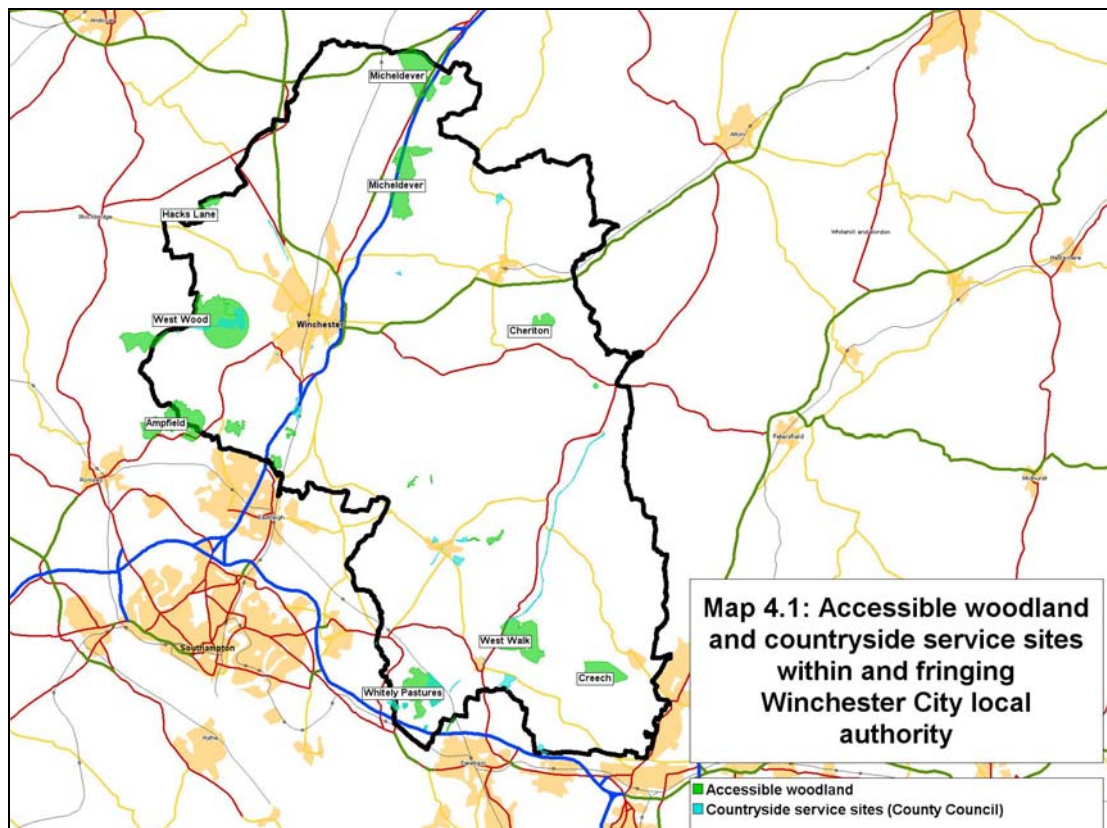
There are estimated to be 793 kilometres of Right of Way network within the District, which converts to 12 metres per hectare, or 7.40 kilometres per 1000 people. When expressed as metres per hectare, Winchester District compares quite favourably for provision relative to other local authorities in southern Hampshire, as shown below.

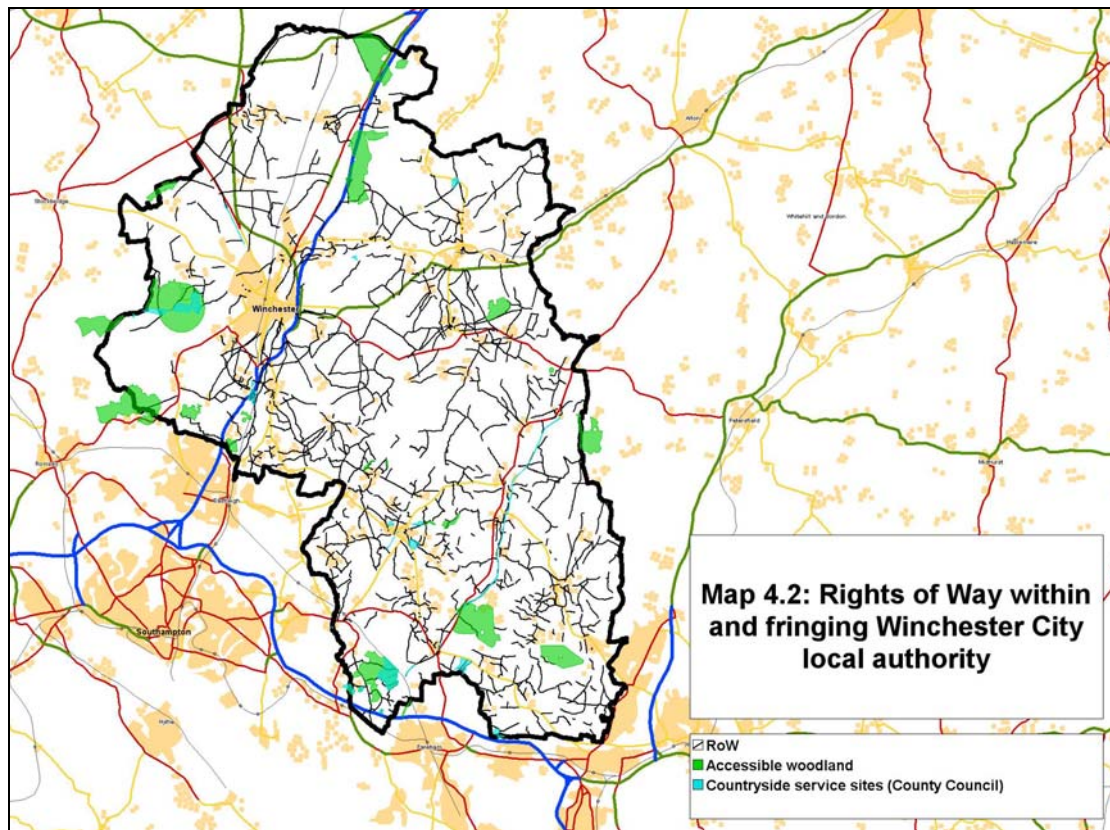
Local Authority	Rights of Way (metres per hectare)
East Hampshire	16
Eastleigh	12
Winchester	12
Fareham	11
Test Valley	11
Havant	9
New Forest	7
Gosport	3
Portsmouth	2.2
Southampton	1.4

An approximate breakdown of this overall provision within Winchester District (from information provided by Hampshire County Council) is as follows:

Right of Way Type	% of overall provision
Footpaths	66.3%
Bridleways	20.2%
Restricted Byways	12.3%
Byways Open To All Traffic	1.1%

Maps 4.1 and 4.2 show the general location of acknowledged countryside recreation sites and Rights of Way within and fringing Winchester District. These represent very significant recreation opportunities when considering the characteristics of the local authority and the relative importance of informal recreation opportunities highlighted throughout this report.





Walking and cycling are continually identified by national surveys as major recreation activities in their own right, but are also endemic to everyday 'healthy living' (such as walking or cycling to work, the shops, or school). As activities they should be encouraged as a means of making both recreation and utility trips. Green recreational corridors can include:

- The local public Rights of Way network.
- Promoted long distance footpaths and cycleways.
- Permissive routes.

It is recognised that some of these routes (especially in the towns) will also serve as utility routes and can be of significant ecological value.

Links between town and countryside are important for accessing the wider rights of way network and quiet lanes, and can help to reduce car usage. Research commissioned by Hampshire County Council has provided very strong evidence that the greater the amount of rights of way available, the more they will be used by the public.⁷

5.3.7 Other Open Space

The study has also identified a variety of other open spaces. These include churchyards and cemeteries, golf courses, and some large private spaces.

⁷ This was the conclusion of a MORI residents' survey reported in 'Local Countryside Greenspace Guidance'. (Prepared by Jo Hale, Hampshire County Council. April 2007).

These are not open spaces which are of central concern to this study given their specialist and (often) private nature. However, their existence should be acknowledged as well as the general contribution that they can make to the character and amenity of an area.

5.3.8 Issues with auditing open space

In practice it can sometimes be difficult to differentiate between certain types of open space:

- Some of the larger local spaces (such as recreation grounds) may clearly serve more than one of the above functions. For example, a large recreation ground may include children's play facilities, sports pitches, natural areas and more. On the other hand, many large spaces may serve predominantly one function.
- It is often difficult to differentiate between various types of informal recreation space, as local people do not necessarily draw distinction between (for example) a 'recreation ground', a park, and a large area of amenity open space; all are capable of meeting local need for informal activity and enjoyment. This demonstrates the need for flexibility in the perception of and planning for open space, which should have implications for the development and application of new local standards for open space.
- Some of the (larger) identified sites have been broken down as appropriate to reflect the above diversity of use. Other sites have not been broken down as such, and they are categorised according to their identified primary use.
- Much of the open space considered in this report is 'free and open to use'. Access is not generally monitored for most sites considered and is often possible from a variety of points and directions. This makes it difficult to quantify with any precision the levels of use of different open spaces. However, as is seen in Section 4, local consultation has identified clearly the desire of residents to have access to such spaces for informal recreation opportunities.

This report and the underlying audit have attempted to address these issues by:

- Breaking large sites down so as to better reflect key elements/uses that would otherwise be overlooked. Equipped play provision (which is often located in larger areas of space) is an example of where this approach is necessary.
- Elsewhere in the report recommending standards, and a revised development plan typology, of open space which better reflect their distinctive recreation values, and the willingness of people to travel to use attractive major spaces.

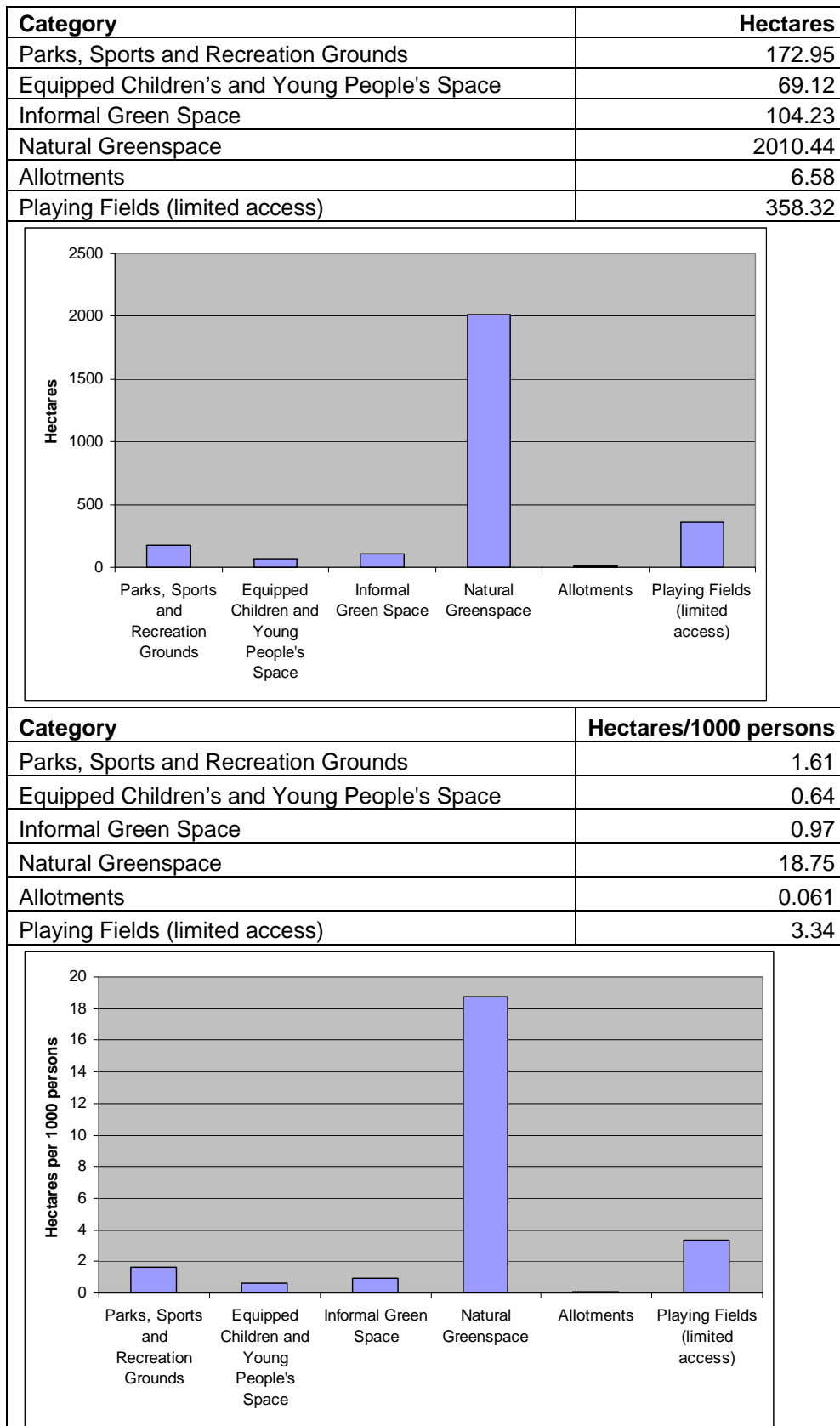
5.3.9 Overall Open Space Provision: some general facts and figures

The following figures provide some general indication of overall supply.

The figures demonstrate how provision is dominated by Natural Green Space, followed by Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds, and Informal Green Space.

These figures do not include large areas of accessible countryside woodland, and other managed sites available for countryside recreation. Such sites are considered elsewhere in this section. Figures also exclude any golf courses identified, as their inclusion would skew the overall picture due to their large size.

Figure 5.3.9: Total provision In Winchester District (hectares) and provision expressed as hectares per 1000 persons



5.4 Built Facilities

The following section defines the various categories of built facilities considered by this study. Further justification for the use of these categories is outlined in Part 4 of the study (Built Facilities Study).

5.4.1 Typology of built facilities

For the purpose of this study 'built facilities' include indoor covered venues that exist to a major or significant extent to accommodate sports and recreational activities for the community. At one end of the spectrum the definition can include large leisure centres, but it will also include smaller community venues and village halls that can be used for a variety of recreation and leisure activities. Synthetic Turf Pitches and indoor tennis facilities are also included within this study, as they are linked to built facilities. The types of built facilities covered within the study are:

- **Sports Halls.** These host a variety of formal sport and active recreational activities. National research indicates that although they generally attract use by a quite limited section of the population, such use tends to be regular and frequent.
- **Swimming pools.** Attract both casual and competitive activity, and swimming continues to be one of the most popular leisure pursuits. Larger facilities may attract use from residents living outside the District and vice versa.
- **Fitness Gyms.** Health and Fitness Suites generally include a range of aerobic and anaerobic equipment offered on a supervised or unsupervised basis. They can also be linked to features such as a swimming pool, tennis courts, and squash courts. Individual venues may or may not be part of a larger chain of clubs, and some may be linked to hotels.
- **Synthetic turf pitches (STPs).** These are required for competitive hockey but are also a very important training resource for football, rugby and other sports. Recent technological developments have also produced a 'tufted' "3rd Generation" STP that is now accepted by the FA for local competitive play (although this surface is not accepted for competitive hockey).
- **Indoor tennis provision.** This includes facilities that are located within buildings and may be private or public. Outdoor tennis facilities are dealt with in Part 3 of the study (Playing Pitch Strategy).
- **Community and village halls.** Village halls and community centres host a variety of recreation and social/community activities. These venues come in all shapes and sizes, and whilst some may not be suited to hosting any formal sports activity, they can provide important local venues for social contact, meetings, crèches, keep fit and other activities satisfying important local needs.

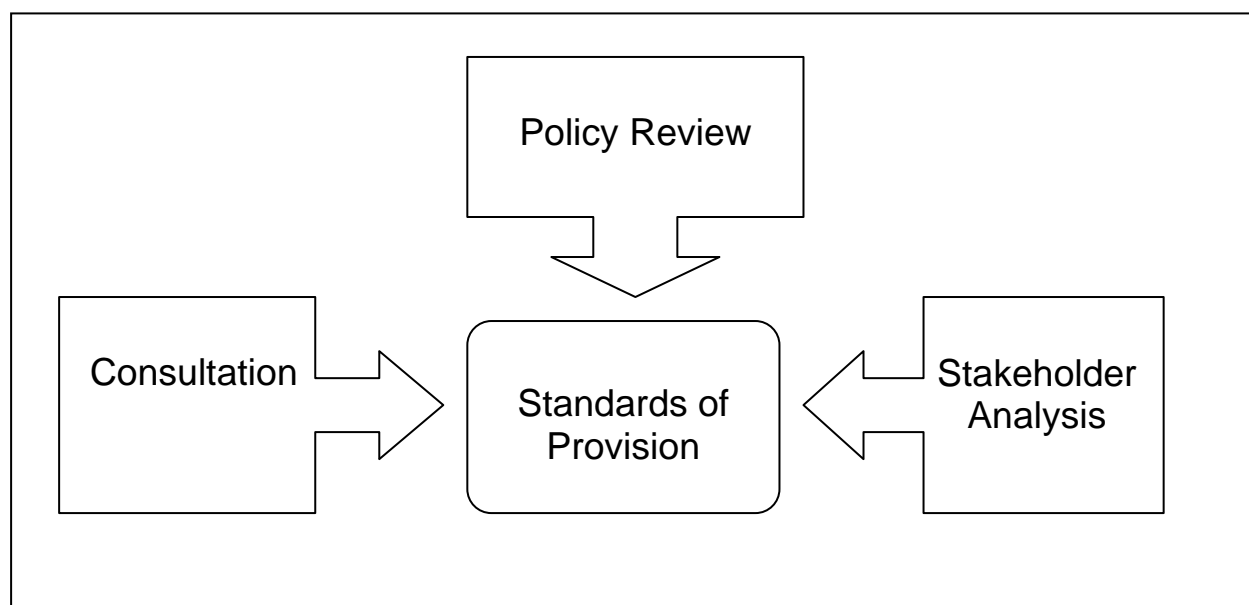
5.4.2 Built facilities: some general facts and figures

Sports Facility	Current provision per 1000 pop
Sports halls <i>with community access</i>	47.6m ² (9 halls included)
Swimming pools <i>with community access</i>	8.6m ² (3 pools included)
Fitness Gyms <i>all provision</i>	3.7 stations (418 total)
Synthetic turf pitches <i>All provision</i>	283m ² (0.04) (5 pitches included)
O/D Tennis Courts <i>Club and public</i>	0.6 court (74 courts included)
Indoor Bowls	1 x 6 rink centre per 120,000 population

5.5 Towards New Standards of Provision

This information, together with the findings from the policy and stakeholder review, and the information from the community consultation, are considered together to inform the development of standards for open space, sport and recreation provision, which is outlined in section 6. This is shown in figure 5.5 below:

Figure 5.5 The development of standards



6.0 WINCHESTER STANDARDS

Following the completion of the assessment of local needs and the audit of provision (the first two stages of this Study), new standards of provision for open space and built facilities are proposed. This section explains how the standards for Winchester have been developed, and provides specific information and justification for each of the typologies.

6.1 The Development of Standards

The standards for open space and built facilities have been developed using guidance in the PPG17 companion guide. Standards have been developed for each typology of open space and built facility using the following components:

- **Quantity standards:** These are determined by the analysis of existing quantity provision in the light of community views as to its adequacy and levels of use. Furthermore, it is essential that the quantity standards proposed are achievable.
- **Quality standards:** The standards for each form of provision are derived from the quality audit and from the views of the community and those that use the spaces. Quality standards should be achievable and reflect the priorities that emerge through consultation.
- **Accessibility standards:** These reflect the needs of potential users. Spaces and facilities likely to be used on a frequent and regular basis need to be within easy walking distance and safe to access. Other facilities which are used less frequently, for example large leisure facilities or country parks, where visits are longer but perhaps less frequent, can be further away.

The standards that have been proposed are for minimum levels of provision. Therefore, where geographical areas enjoy levels of provision exceeding minimum standards, this does not mean there is surplus provision, as all such provision may be well used.

6.2 Typologies

The typologies of both open space and built facilities have been developed using guidance within the PPG17 companion guide, but allowing for local variation as outlined below.

6.2.1 Open space typologies

PPG 17 suggests a list of typologies for open spaces recommended by the Urban Greenspaces Task Force (UGSTF) or a variation of it. The recommended typologies are as follows:

PPG 17 Typology

Greenspaces	Parks and gardens	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events
	Natural and semi-natural greenspaces, including urban woodland	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness
	Green corridors	Walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel, and opportunities for wildlife migration
	Outdoor sports facilities	Participation in outdoor sports, such as pitch sports, tennis, bowls, athletics or countryside and water sports
	Amenity greenspace	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas
	Provision for children and young people	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters
	Allotments, community gardens and urban farms	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion
	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds	Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity
Civic spaces	Civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians	Providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events

The companion guide acknowledges that the above typologies should be used as guidance, and that local variations can be developed. For the study within Winchester District, local variations have been developed, and standards proposed for the following types of open space:

- Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds.
- Children’s Equipped Play Space/Young People’s Play Space.
- Informal/Amenity Open Space.
- Accessible Natural Green Space.

- Allotments.

The above list closely reflects the UGSTF guidance, with the following local differences:

- **Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds.** This combines 'Parks and Gardens' with 'Outdoor Sports Facilities' into one typology. This reflects the local situation, where almost all publicly accessible outdoor sports facilities within the District are provided within Parks or Recreation Grounds. The provision for 'Sports' includes playing pitches (football, cricket, rugby and hockey), and fixed sports (tennis and bowls). Other sports facilities provided have 'limited public access', including private sports grounds and education sites. Whilst no standard has been set for the limited access facilities, the quantity and accessibility has been assessed.
- **Green Corridors.** Whilst these have been identified within the Study, a standard for provision has not been proposed. This reflects the rural nature of the District, which has large areas of accessible natural greenspace (and large areas of limited access natural greenspace), and as such the presence and demand for green corridors is much less than urban areas, where green corridors have a much more significant presence, role and value.
- **Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds.** These have been identified and mapped where known, however, no standard for provision has been set. This reflects the priorities established through consultation, which identifies the need to provide and improve open spaces. Churchyards can provide important open space, but there is little opportunity to have a strategic influence over them (the ultimate end goal in PPG17). Although there may be some opportunities to 'enhance provision' (and this has been identified), there is little opportunity to provide 'new' or 'relocated provision'.

6.2.2 Built facilities typology

PPG17 identifies a minimum range of 'core' facilities for which assessments and standards should be developed. These include:

- Facilities which require large, bulky buildings and are intended to generate high levels of use; including swimming pools, indoor sports halls and leisure centres, indoor bowls centres, indoor tennis centres and ice rinks.
- Community centres (in urban areas) and village halls (in rural areas).

Standards have been set for the following built facilities, which reflect existing local provision and the guidance in the PPG17 companion guide:

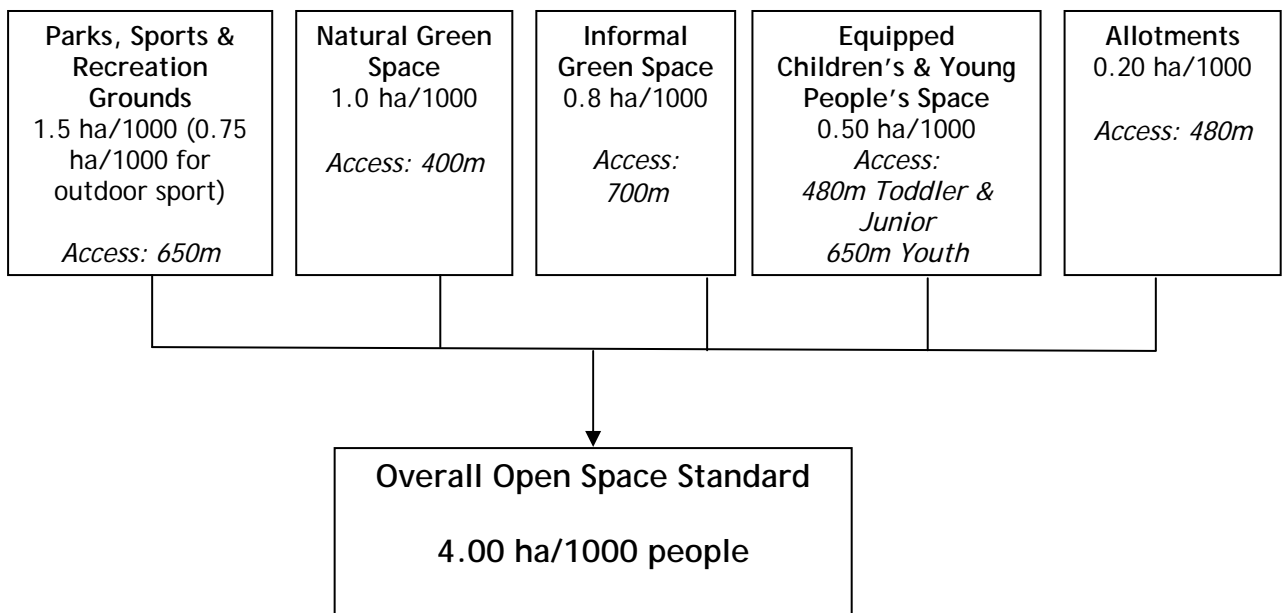
- Sports Halls
- Swimming pools
- Fitness Gyms

- Village halls and community centres
- Synthetic Turf Pitches
- Indoor tennis courts

6.3 Summary of Standards

This section summarises the proposed quantity and access standards for open space and built facilities. Justification for these standards is outlined in the following section.

6.3.1 Summary of quantity and access standards for open space



6.3.2 Summary of quantity standards for built facilities

Sports Facility	Proposed standard Per 1000 pop	Proposed facility per no. population
Sports halls <i>with community access</i>	54.5m ² (0.1 hall)	1 per 11,000
Swimming pools <i>with community access</i>	13m ² (0.04 pool)	1 per 25,000
Fitness Gyms <i>all provision</i>	4 stations -16m ² gym space	1 station per 250
Synthetic turf pitches <i>All provision</i>	330m ² (.05 pitch)	1 per 20,000
O/D Tennis Courts <i>Club and public</i>	0.8 courts	2 per 2,500
Indoor Bowls	0.05 rink	1 rink per 20,000

6.3.3 Summary of access standards for built facilities

Facility	Walking	Driving catchment
Sports halls	20 minutes	15 minutes
Swimming pools	20 minutes	15 - 20 minutes
Fitness Gyms	10 minutes	10 - 15 minutes
STPs Pitches and MUGAs	20 - 30 minutes	20 - 30 minutes
Indoor Bowls	15-20 minutes	15 - 20 minutes
Indoor tennis	20 minutes	15 - 20 minutes
Community Halls	20 minutes	10 - 15 minutes

This is not of course an exact science, but the above walking and driving times translate approximately, subject to precise local conditions not evaluated within this Study, as:

- 20 minute walking time represents 1,500 metres distance
- 10-15 minute walking time represents 1,000 metres distance
- 15 minute drive time represents 5 km catchment distance
- 10 minute drive time represents 3 km catchment distance.

6.4 Justification of Standards

The standards for open space and built facilities are justified in the following section, each considering the following:

- Existing National and Local Policies.
- General justification for a standard.
- Quantity standard: including the existing average ha/1000 people across the District; reference to consultation; and proposed ha/1000 people.
- Accessibility standard.
- Quality standard.
- Other supporting information where appropriate.

The justification of standards for both open space and built facilities follows. Part A outlines the justification for open space, and Part B outlines the justification for built facilities.

PART A: JUSTIFICATION FOR OPEN SPACE STANDARDS

6.5 Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds

Quantity Standard	Access Standard
1.5 ha/1000. (of which 0.75 ha/1000 is for Outdoor Sports provision – see section 6.2.1).	650m

6.5.1 Existing National and Local Policies

There are no existing national or local standards or related guidance relating specifically to these kinds of opportunity. Neither are there local plan policies guiding their planning and provision. Local Plan standards refer to provision for Outdoor Sport, which is not necessarily the same.

6.5.2 General Justification for a Local Standard

The audit of provision and the consultation have identified the significance of and importance attached to Parks, Sports, and Recreation Grounds. It is therefore highly appropriate for local standards of provision to reflect their existing and continued significance through making express provision for these features. Further justification related to the development of this standard is outlined at paragraph 6.2.1.

6.5.3 Quantity

The current average level of provision of Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds across the District has been calculated as 1.61 hectares per 1000 people. The consultation asked a number of specific questions in relation to satisfaction with the quantities of open space, the results identified that:

- 67% of people felt there are currently enough 'Parks and Recreation Grounds', whilst only 21% of people felt there were not enough.
- 48% of people felt there are enough 'Playing Pitches', whilst only 25% of people felt there were not enough.

Therefore, it is fair to conclude that the majority of people are happy with the existing levels of provision.

Therefore, a new minimum standard of **1.5 ha per 1000 people** is proposed both as a basis for a contribution from new housing and as a minimum target for provision across the District. Of this, **0.75 ha per 1000 people** should consist of provision for Outdoor Sport based on the nature of Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds across the District, which on average have 50% of their space laid out for sport (clearly some have more and some have none). This will apply, unless the Playing Pitch Strategy indicates an existing surplus or shortfall in the area, in which case provision would be balanced as appropriate. Further justification and clarification of this is outlined in the Playing Pitch Strategy.

6.5.4 Accessibility

A distance of **650 metres (straightline)**, or about **10 minutes walking time** is proposed (so that local people can gain convenient access by foot).

The public consultation identified that around 75% of those interviewed would be prepared to travel around 10 minutes to reach a local park, and that many of these trips would be by foot.

It would also be reasonable to adopt a larger drivetime catchment for larger facilities (such as Country Parks) of 15 minutes. This would be consistent with local people's preparedness to travel further to larger facilities as expressed through the community survey. It is possible that vehicular trips may be shared purpose journeys, perhaps combining a visit to a high quality park with shopping and/or other commitments.

6.5.5 Quality

Information related to the quality of Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds came from the consultation and from the quality audit. The findings are outlined below:

Consultation

The consultation identified that, although these types of space may not be the most frequently visited type of open space, they are often the only form of provision for recreation, especially within rural areas. This was reflected by the results of consultation with Town and Parish Councils who repeatedly identified the need for improvements at their 'Local Rec', and identified the following priorities within these sites as:

- Having a good range of play equipment
- Being safe and secure
- Being well maintained

Quality audits

The information from the quality assessments identified a need to significantly improve the quality of this type of provision.

General recommendations aimed at improving quality are outlined in section 7 of the report, and detailed recommendations by sub area made in the area profiles in Part 2 of the report.

6.5.6 Developing a hierarchy of provision

Many local authorities are developing 'hierarchies of provision' for their open spaces. These vary from area to area, but there are some emerging models, such as through the Association of Public Sector Excellence (APSE), and the model being developed by the London Boroughs. It is therefore recommended that Winchester City Council considers the value of working with other local authorities towards a hierarchy embracing provision aimed at frequent local use, and also regular (but perhaps less frequent) strategic use which perhaps might be in the form of a Country Park resource hosting other opportunities.

Strategic level:

- Landscaping with a variety of natural and semi natural features, including natural habitats and planted beds.
- Space for outdoor pitch and other sports provision as appropriate (see separate standards).
- Space for children's and youth play facilities (see separate standards).
- Car parking.
- Footpaths.
- Cycleways.
- Buildings for secured storage and for catering outlets.
- Due regard to external links by foot and bicycle which may require improvements to the external environment (see below).
- Events venue.
- A notable and defining architectural feature.
- Seating.
- Litter and dog bins.
- Toilets.
- Refreshment venues.
- Picnic tables.
- Consideration of zoning between active and passive zones.
- The overall size of the park might be expected to be approaching or greater than **40 hectares**.
- Strategic provision might also take the form of a contribution towards a

Country Park, or other existing publicly accessible forested/woodland area.

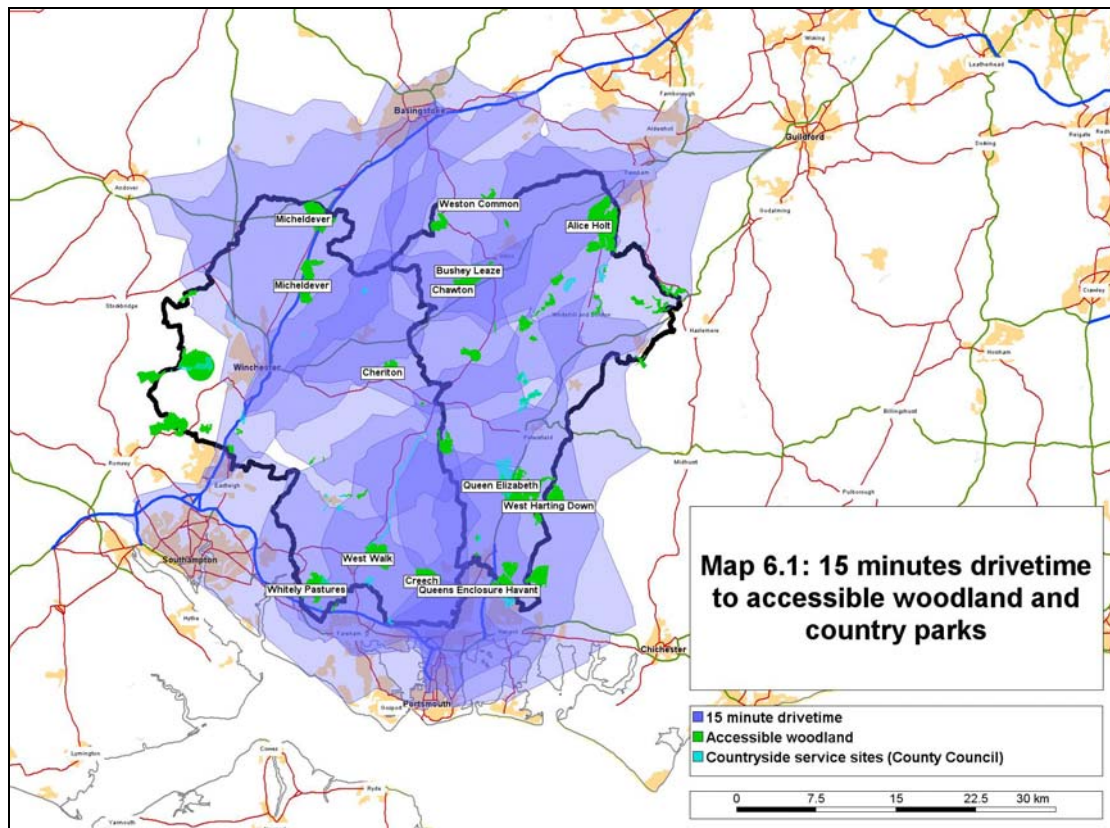
Local level:

- Landscaping with a variety of natural features, including natural habitats.
- Space for outdoor pitch and other sports provision as appropriate (see separate standards).
- Space for children's and youth play facilities (see separate standards).
- Car parking.
- Footpaths.
- Cycleways.
- Buildings for secured storage and/or catering outlets (if appropriate).
- Due regard to external links by foot and bicycle which may require improvements to the external environment.
- Seating.
- Litter and dog bins.
- The overall size of the park might be expected to be at least 2 hectares.

Beyond this 2-tier hierarchy, contributions from developers arising from the application of this standard should also be used to create small 'pocket parks' in certain circumstances.

As mentioned, an element of contributions based on this standard might also be used towards the provision of a Country Park. **Map 6.1: 15 Minutes drive time from significant country parks and accessible woodlands** identifies general ease of access by vehicle to this form of recreation opportunity. This is an example of where local authorities could pool developer contributions in helping to provide an opportunity of cross authority benefit. The expansion and/or improvement of venues such as these could not only meet the needs of local populations, but also those of neighbouring expansion areas.

Access by foot and bike could also be encouraged by focused improvements to the strategic Rights of Way network, linking these areas to towns and villages.



6.5.7 Access to and links between Open Spaces

Although the Study Area's parks, sports and recreation grounds are appreciated and valued, their use clearly depends on how easy they are to access. There is little point in considering the provision of new facilities or the improvement of existing facilities without considering the means of access to them at the same time. This will be especially important by foot and bike, including access for people with disabilities. This is critical for certain groups in the community, particularly children and teenagers. New standards for park, sports and recreation grounds should therefore also include guidance on the improvement of approach routes by foot and bike for which developer contributions should be sought. The Council will need to determine:

- The linear distance threshold upon which such contributions should be based.
- The nature of improvements sought to facilitate and improve upon ease and safety of access. These might include clearly defined cycle lanes, safe crossing points, provision for disabled access etc.

6.6 Children’s and Young People’s Provision

Quantity Standard	Access Standard
0.50 ha/1000	480m (Toddler & Junior provision) 650m (Youth provision)

6.6.1 Existing National and Local Policies:

The existing Local Plan provides for 0.8 ha/1000 people of play space, to cover both equipped and unequipped provision for children of various ages. Although this is a locally derived standard, it does bear comparison with elements of the NPFA ‘Six Acre Standard’, which recommends provision of 0.6 - 0.8 ha/1000 people.

The NPFA guidance has been adopted by many local authorities over the years and its use continues to be widespread. The NPFA standards for equipped children’s play provision have been criticised in recent years because they can result in a proliferation of play areas that can be difficult to maintain, as well as setting unrealistic aspirations in urban areas where insufficient land is available to provide facilities, especially higher density development on brownfield sites. An additional problem is that the current NPFA guidance does not cover the needs of most teenagers specifically within the standard, and it is felt that this is a significant problem in the study area (confirmed by many of the comments and findings of the community consultation).

Another fundamental problem with the NPFA standard for children’s play is how to interpret it in terms of what type of provision is required per head of population. As has been mentioned, whilst the standard suggests an overall level of children’s play provision of 0.6 - 0.8 ha per 1000 people it does not generally specify what should be the ratio between informal and equipped provision within this overall area.

6.6.2 General Justification for a Local Standard

In the light of the ‘unsuitability’ of the NPFA standards and considering the results of community consultation, a new locally derived standard for children’s and young people’s provision is proposed.

The suggested new standard seeks to achieve a more balanced approach to the needs of children of all ages. It also seeks to be realistic in terms of acknowledging the cost of both providing and maintaining equipped playspace.

6.6.3 Quantity

The existing average level of provision of equipped play space across the District is 0.64 ha/1000 people. This figure is high when compared to other Authorities (e.g. East Hampshire currently has an existing provision of 0.08

ha/1000). The consultation asked a number of specific questions in relation to satisfaction with the quantities of open space, the results identified the following:

- *Children's play space.* 57% of people felt there was enough provision for children, whilst 26% felt there was not enough provision.
- *Young people's play space.* Only 18% of people felt there was enough provision, whilst 52% felt there was not enough provision.

Clearly, there is a real distinction between the satisfaction with the levels of provision for children and young people. The lack of provision for young people also came out as an issue through the various focus groups, particularly, those with children and young people.

A revised standard for provision is proposed of **0.50 ha of equipped space** (i.e. excluding any buffer zone space) **per 1000 people**. Although this is lower than the existing levels of provision, it reflects the need to have a more balanced provision of open space as part of new developments (the existing standards can result in a bias towards provision in play). It also provides a guide to a minimum target for provision across the District.

The priority in achieving this standard is the provision of space for young people, where there is clearly a need to improve existing quantities.

6.6.4 Accessibility

The consultation asked people how far they were willing to travel to different types of open space, including play facilities. The findings showed that there is a significant difference between the 'preparedness to travel' for younger children (under 12s) and older children (teenagers). Over 80% of people identified that they would be prepared to walk up to 10 minutes to a facility for children, whilst 70 - 80% of people identified that they would be willing to travel further (up to 15 minutes) to a facility for teenagers.

Therefore, the access standards proposed are:

- **480 metres** (straightline), or about **10 minutes** (often accompanied) walking time for provision aimed at the pre teen age group and also – where possible – the younger teenage band.
- **650 metres** (straightline), or between **10 and 15 minutes** walking time for older teenagers.

6.6.5 Quality

Information related to the quality of children and young people's play space was gathered from consultation and from the quality audit. Key issues are outlined below:

Consultation

Whilst the key message related to there not being enough facilities, both the questionnaires and the focus groups identified that the quality of play facilities is important, particularly in relation to them feeling safe and being clean and well maintained. The household survey identified children's play areas as being the lowest scoring in terms of being 'good' or 'very good' in relation to quality.

The quality of play areas received the least scores of 'very good' or 'good' out of all the types of open space scored.

The Parish Councils identified the poor quality of play areas as the third most significant issue related to open space provision.

Quality audit

Interestingly, the quality audits tell a different story to the results of the consultation. The audits identified that the majority of play areas are in good condition, many having new equipment. A smaller number were in need of improvement, but these were in the minority.

This reflects the fact that Winchester City Council has had a very successful open space funding system, which has resulted in considerable investment and improvement in play areas in recent years.

The poor quality perceived by the community was explored further through focus groups from play and community organisations, and these identified a number of issues. The following community views differ from the audits:

- They generally felt there was a lack of open space for U5s, particularly equipped areas; the same was felt about adventure play areas for children aged between 5 and 12 years.
- There are definitely not enough facilities for older children and teenagers. Other most desired new facilities are adventure/wild play areas, cycle paths, places to cycle and indoor sports facilities.
- The main considerations for children using open space were feeling safe and secure and the need for the facility to be well maintained.

6.6.6 Good practice in play provision

In addition to the general recommendations outlined above and the more specific recommendations outlined in Part 2 of the report, this section outlines some advice and recommendations related to good practice in play provision, which the Council will consider in planning and considering future provision.

Provision of play equipment

Space must comprise a variety of equipped and unequipped play opportunities, and further guidance should be provided by the Council. However, provision could include the following:

- ***For young preschool children:*** Small low key games area preferably with play features & 3 items of 'small scale' items of play equipment. Seating for accompanying adults.
- ***For other children up to teenage years:*** About 5 items of play equipment and a small flat ball games area with kick walls and 'low level' hoops and 'very low key wheel play facility (undulating riding surface with features). Seating for accompanying adults.
- ***For young people:*** About 5 types of play equipment, ball play and wheeled play opportunities, and covered seating for teenagers to use as a meeting place.
- ***Provision for those with disabilities:*** At least some of the larger play areas should contain equipment designed to meet the specific needs of children with disabilities.

Consultation

The standards outlined in this report should be applied flexibly and imaginatively, taking into account the views of local residents, potential users and various interests wherever possible. Meaningful consultation will therefore help to make new provision sensitive and appropriate to local circumstances.

Safety

All **new** Children's' Outdoor Playing Spaces, the equipment and ancillary facilities need to conform to all aspects of safety standards EN 1176 & 1177. Items not covered by either standard or exceptions to the standards must be justified and made explicit.

Combined Provision

It may sometimes be appropriate to provide for all three age groups at the same location separated only by a short distance or by enclosing the separate areas. This might be most appropriate in the case of sites of a more strategic nature, such as in parks and leisure centre grounds in the towns and larger villages.

Other Ideal Locations

Other ideal locations for provision could be at local shopping centres, near primary schools and on village greens:

- Facilitates 'stopping off' for parents / carers when accompanying older children to and from school, or whilst shopping.
- Facilities on known / familiar routes for children are a safety advantage.
- The more 'busy' the play area the more 'fun' and 'safe' it is.
- Informal surveillance (overlooking) normally more frequent.

Achieving the Standard in Small Settlements

The intention should be that these play standards are applied flexibly and with imagination. Many settlements will not be of the size to justify full provision in accordance with the above. However, even a relatively small developer contribution can be invested imaginatively in improving local play opportunities. For example:

- Individual contributions could be used to improve/upgrade the existing provision, which in a small village is likely to be within convenient distance of the funding development.
- Individual contributions could be married to other council and partner funding to provide new or improved provision.
- Public consultation may show a desire and willingness to consider innovative community based solutions to provision. 'Self help' schemes perhaps involving young people in design and creation, can often prove much cheaper and reflective of true local needs than off-the-shelf installations.

A key issue is how to best provide for the needs of youth in rural locations where it will not generally be feasible to provide facilities on the scale that might be envisaged in the larger settlements. In many ways this is a challenging problem, but in some circumstances it may not be so difficult to resolve.

Fundamentally, all young people are asking for is somewhere to meet, play, and feel independent. Bespoke play equipment and sites may be one way of providing for these needs. There may, however, be other much cheaper solutions, involving, for example, inexpensive but intelligent landscaping on the edges of village recreation grounds; encouraging young people to become involved in the design and development of home spun facilities, such as cut and fill BMX tracks; planting trees with low branches to encourage climbing etc, and the creation of dens. All these are 'low tech' solutions, but could be of immense local benefit to youngsters. A prerequisite to such initiatives can sometimes be a change of mindset (on the part of facility managers) and greater tolerance to such projects and activity.

Issues Relating to Risk

There is growing concern about how safety is being addressed in children's play provision. Fear of litigation is leading many play providers to focus on minimising the risk of injury at the expense of other more fundamental objectives. The effect is to stop children from enjoying a healthy range of play

opportunities, limiting their enjoyment and causing potentially damaging consequences for their development.

This approach ignores clear evidence that use of play provision is a comparatively low risk activity for children. Of the two million or so childhood accident cases treated by hospitals each year, fewer than two per cent involve playground equipment. Participation in sports like soccer, widely acknowledged as 'good' for a child's development, involve a greater risk of injury than visiting a playground. Fatalities on playgrounds are very rare – about one per three or four years on average nationally. This compares with, for instance, more than 100 child pedestrian fatalities a year and more than 500 child fatalities from accidents overall.

New provision should balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children safe from harm. The provision should extend the choice and control that children have over their play, the freedom they enjoy and the satisfaction they gain from it.

6.7 Informal Open Space

Quantity Standard	Access Standard
0.8 ha/1000	700m

6.7.1 Existing National and Local Policies

There is no national guidance suggesting a standard expressly for the provision of informal green space. The NPFA's Six Acre Standard has proposed that there should be provision of casual or informal playing space within housing areas as part of the overall standard. The existing Local Plan provides for 0.4 ha of 'General Space'.

6.7.2 General Justification for a Local Standard

The audit of provision as well as the consultation has identified the importance attached by local people to space close to home, and the focus group meetings in particular suggested that casual informal space is valued by local people. It is unclear from the work undertaken whether local people actually differentiate clearly between what is defined in this report as Informal Open Space, and other types of space that might be viewed as important for recreation, play, or visual attraction (which might include parks, natural spaces and other open spaces). This is understandable given the multifunctional nature of much space.

The value of Informal Open Space must be recognised especially within housing areas, where it can provide important local opportunities for play, exercise and visual amenity that are almost immediately accessible. On the other hand open space can be expensive to maintain and it is very important to strike the correct balance between having sufficient space to meet the

needs of the community for accessible and attractive space, and having too much which would be impossible to manage properly and therefore a potential liability and source of nuisance. It is important that Informal Open Space provided should be capable of use for at least some forms of recreation activity by the public. The practical definition of open space given in Section 1 of this report explains the key factors determining recreational utility of space.

6.7.3 Quantity

The existing average level of provision of informal open space across the District is 0.97 ha per 1000. The consultation asked a number of specific questions in relation to satisfaction with the quantities of open space, the results identified the following:

- 57% of people felt there is currently enough informal open space across the District, and 27% of people felt there was not enough.

This indicates that the existing level of provision is 'about right' and should be retained. Therefore, a minimum level of provision of **1.0 ha per 1000 people** is proposed, both as a basis for a contribution from new housing, but also as a minimum target for provision across the District.

6.7.4 Accessibility

The consultation asked people how far they were willing to travel to different types of open space, including informal/amenity space. The household survey identified that 70% of people were prepared to walk up to 10 minutes to informal open space, and further qualitative research through focus groups re-iterated the importance of having some form of open space close to home.

Furthermore, open space in very close proximity to home may become increasingly important to residents of new high density urban development who may themselves lack access to their own gardens, and would welcome space both for visual relief and to provide opportunities for children to meet and play close to home. This space might also be combined with provision for other types of space and offers scope to be used very flexibly. (See below).

Therefore, a distance of **400 metres** (straightline), or just under **10 minutes** walking time is proposed for informal open space, supporting the evidence that such spaces should be within easy reach of home for informal play and recreation opportunities.

6.7.5 Quality

Information related to the quality of informal open space was gathered from both the consultation and the quality audits. Specific recommendations related to informal open space by site and area are detailed in part 2 of the report. The following section outlines some general observations and recommendations.

Consultation

When asked to comment on the quality of informal open space, the highest number of 'very good' or 'good' comments were received compared to any other typology. The quality of informal open space rarely came up as an issue in other qualitative research, such as through the focus groups.

Quality audits

The quality audits of informal open space identified that in general the quality was good, and sites where quality was in need of improvement could be improved relatively easily. General recommendations for improving quality are made in section 7 of this report, and more detailed recommendations made in the area profiles in Part 2 of the report.

6.7.6 Flexible Use of Informal Green Space

Depending on local circumstances, it may be appropriate to use the provision sought under the Informal Open Space standard for additional or improved park space, natural space, or recreation ground space as there is clearly some interchangeability of function.

Informal Open Space can provide an extremely valuable play resource to complement equipped provision. Attention in design of new spaces to planting, topography and safety/security will maximise its potential in this regard.

The shape and size of space provided should allow for meaningful and safe recreation. It will not be appropriate for highway verges and other small pieces of roadside space (for example) to be counted towards such provision. However, these smaller spaces can serve another important function in improving the visual environment.

Further guidance on the flexible use of space and contributions is provided at the end of this section.

6.8 Natural Green Space

Quantity Standard	Access Standard
1.0 ha/1000	400m

6.8.1 Existing National and Local Policies

English Nature has proposed national guidance on an Accessible Natural Green Space Standard (ANGSt) which suggests that provision should be made of at least 2 ha of accessible greenspace per 1000 population according to a system of tiers into which sites of different sizes fit:

- No person should live more than 300 m from an area of natural green space;
- There should be at least one accessible 20 ha site within 2 km from home;
- There should be one accessible 100 ha site within 5 km; and,
- There should be one accessible 500 ha site within 10 km.

There are no local standards relating specifically to the provision of Accessible Natural Green Space.

6.8.2 General Justification for a Local Standard

The audit of provision as well as the consultation has identified the significance of and importance attached to natural green spaces (which might include riverside walks, countryside, woodlands) and it is therefore desirable for local standards of provision to cover these features.

In the absence of an existing local standard it would be appropriate to consider the English Nature ANGSt guidance as a starting point for the development of a local standard. However, it is probably unrealistic to aim for a general minimum level of provision of 2 hectares per 1000, as elsewhere within towns, in particular, it would be largely impossible to find the additional land available to achieve such an objective.

The standards outlined for natural greenspace refer to accessible space, as described in section 5.3.4.

6.8.3 Quantity

The existing average level of provision of accessible natural greenspace across the District is 18.75 ha/1000 people. The consultation asked a number of specific questions in relation to satisfaction with the quantities of open space, the results identified the following:

- Just over 71% of people felt there is enough natural greenspace, whilst only 21% of people felt there was not enough. This is the top response in terms of satisfaction with quantity for all typologies of open space.

The high satisfaction response to the existing quantities of natural greenspace, and the popularity of its use, indicates that there is currently sufficient provision across the District. However, the existing average provision needs to consider how natural greenspace is distributed, as the District has many large tracts of natural greenspace, therefore distribution is uneven. For example, sub area 4, Bishops Waltham, currently has 0.42 ha/1000 people, whilst sub area 1, Winchester, has 11.98 ha/1000 people.

Therefore, it is not possible to achieve an 'average' across the District, as it is not possible to remove large tracts of natural green space in areas which are 'over provided' and similarly it will not be possible to create large tracts of natural greenspace in areas where there is 'under provision'.

As a result, the proposed quantity standard for natural greenspace has much more significance for new provision, and therefore, a minimum level of provision of **1.0 ha per 1000 people** is proposed. This is suggested both as a basis for a contribution from new housing, but also as a minimum target for provision across the District. This is considered to be realistic and capable of delivery, through developer contributions.

The space provided should be of an appropriate shape and character to allow for meaningful recreational use, and its possible integration with other types of open space opportunity. (See under 'Quality'). Wherever possible, local provision should be of at least 2 hectares in size.

In the longer term there might be value in developing a hierarchy of provision as suggested by the ANGSt guidance, offering a range of smaller and larger opportunities set within a geographical dimension. However, it is felt strongly that the focus should be initially on improving provision and accessibility within easy walking distance.

6.8.4 Accessibility

The consultation asked people how far they were willing to travel to different types of open space, including natural greenspace. The household survey identified that almost 80% of people were willing to walk up to 15 minutes to natural greenspace. In general, people were willing to travel further to natural greenspace than any other form of open space.

Therefore, a distance of **700 metres** (straightline), or between **10 and 15 minutes** walking time is proposed for natural greenspace. Whilst this latter figure might be higher than proposed by English Nature/Natural England, it is justified by the local research.

6.8.5 Quality

Information relating to the quality of natural greenspace was drawn from the consultation and the quality audit, whilst specific recommendations are made on an area and site basis, the key issues and recommendations are summarised below:

Consultation

When asked to comment on the quality of natural greenspace, the third highest number of 'very good' or 'good' comments were received compared to other typologies. The quality of natural greenspace rarely came up as an issue in other qualitative research, such as through the focus groups.

Quality audit

The quality audits of natural greenspace identified that in general the quality was good. General recommendations for improving quality are made in

section 7 of this report, and more detailed recommendations made in the area profiles in part 2 of the report.

6.8.6 Providing new natural greenspace

The focus of the quantity standard for natural greenspace is therefore that of new provision. Some guidance has been provided in determining the nature of this provision, which should be applied to reflect local circumstances.

Provision might be expected to include (as appropriate) elements of woodland, wetland, heathland and meadow, and could also include provision for informal public access through recreation corridors. (See below under 'Routeways and Corridors').

For larger areas, where car borne visits might be anticipated, some parking provision will be required. The larger the area the more valuable sites will tend to be in terms of their potential for enhancing local conservation interest and biodiversity. Therefore, the aim should be to create areas of Accessible Natural Green Space of at least 2 hectares that are well distributed throughout the urban areas.

Wherever possible, these sites should be linked which will help to improve wildlife value. There should be parallel commitments to maintain natural green space through appropriate maintenance techniques reflecting the primary purpose of promoting natural habitats and biodiversity that can also be accessed and enjoyed by local people. Access by people should not be restricted to narrow corridors, but should allow freedom to wander.

In areas where it may be impossible or inappropriate to provide additional natural greenspace consistent with the standard, other approaches should be pursued which could include (for example):

- Changing the management of marginal space on playing fields and parks to enhance biodiversity.
- Encouraging living green roofs as part of new development or redevelopment.
- Encouraging the creation of mixed species hedgerows.
- Additional use of long grass management regimes.
- Improvements to watercourses and water bodies.
- Innovative use of new drainage schemes / Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
- Use of native trees and plants in landscaping new developments.

The above should in any event be principles to be pursued and encouraged at all times.

6.9 Allotments

Quantity Standard	Access Standard
0.2 ha/1000	480m

6.9.1 Existing National and Local Policies

There are no existing national or local standards relating specifically to the provision of allotments. Guidance has been provided through the Local Government Association, which does not recommend standards of provision, but rather covers ways in which allotments could be promoted and issues to be considered prior to any disposal.

6.9.2 General Justification for a Local Standard

Relatively few people consulted as part of the study use allotments. However, it is an activity very much linked to stages in life (as is also the case with sport and children's play, for example). The local consultation did not suggest that allotments were used as regularly, or were as valued in comparison with, say, play space or informal spaces of various kinds. However, there is currently an interest in reducing food miles, organic growing, slow food, composting and recycling green waste. Other than their conventional function, allotments can serve as venues for 'community gardens', meeting places, and showcases for recycling. The National Society for Allotment and Leisure Gardeners states that it is seeing an increase in enquiries from people interested in getting an allotment. The majority of allotments within the study area appear to be well used, and cultivated, and therefore standards for provision have been developed.

Furthermore, with the creation of higher density housing in the future occupants lacking private gardens may look increasingly to allotments to meet a desire to garden and grow their own food.

6.9.3 Quantity

The existing average level of provision of allotments across the District is 0.06 ha/1000 people. The consultation asked a number of specific questions in relation to satisfaction with the quantities of open space, the results identified the following:

- 11% of people felt there are 'enough' allotments, whilst 27% felt there are 'not enough', with the further estimated 62% being unsure.
- Allotments are the least frequently visited type of open space by the community, with the highest percentage of people identifying them as 'never used'.

These findings reflect the observations about allotment use outlined above, thus with no clear opinions from the community in relation to quantity, the standard proposed uses the existing level of provision as a basis, but

increasing the quantity by a small amount to accommodate the identified future growth in potential demand.

Therefore, a minimum level of provision of **0.20 ha per 1000 people** is proposed, both as a basis for a contribution from new housing, but also a minimum target for provision across the District.

6.9.4 Accessibility

The consultation asked people how far they were willing to travel to different types of open space, including allotments. The household survey identified that around 80% of people were willing to travel up to 10 minutes to allotments.

Therefore, a distance of **480 metres** (straightline) or around **10 minutes walktime** is proposed. However, given the need to transport equipment to and from sites it is accepted that users may often need to drive to the site.

6.9.5 Quality

The information gathered in relation to allotments is more difficult to assess in comparison to other types of open space. The reason for this is two fold:

- The number of people who actually use allotments is very low compared to the numbers who use other types of open space and therefore, specific comments related to the quality of allotments are less frequent.
- The majority of allotments sites are locked, and the quality audit only allows for assessment against key criteria such as the level of cultivation and general maintenance, which is less comprehensive than the assessments of other open space.

For allotments, therefore, a number of general recommendations are made, as further guidance should be provided by the Council. However, provision should include the following:

- Well-drained soil which is capable of cultivation to a reasonable standard.
- A sunny, open aspect preferably on a southern facing slope.
- Limited overhang from trees and buildings either bounding or within the site.
- Adequate lockable storage facilities, and a good water supply within the easy walking distance of individual plots.
- Provision for composting facilities.
- Secure boundary fencing.
- Good access within the site both for pedestrians and vehicles.
- Good vehicular access into the site and adequate parking and manoeuvring space.
- Disabled access.
- Toilets.
- Notice boards.

6.10 Routeways and Corridors

No standards are proposed for Routeways and Corridors (see 6.2.1 for justification). However, the standards for Informal Open Space and Accessible Natural Greenspace can be applied and interpreted flexibly to create or improve existing routes for walking, cycling and riding in both built up and rural areas. For example, one hectare of Informal Green Space is sufficient to create a route 10 metres wide and a kilometre long.

In rural and urban fringe locations, contribution to both the Informal Green Space, and Accessible Natural Green Space standards might be invested in helping to expand, and/or improve parts of the Rights of Way network. In built up areas, contributions might be used to improve links by foot and bike between important destinations such as work places, schools, shopping areas, parks, and leisure facilities. They might also be used to help improve access by foot and bike to the outlying Rights of Way network.

PART B: JUSTIFICATION FOR BUILT FACILITY STANDARDS

6.11 Approach and rationale

The approach towards identification of local standards for built facilities has been to:

- consider a 'base' standard and level of provision relevant to and benchmarked against rural authorities in discussion with Sport England;
- provide local 'overlays' linked to quantitative, qualitative and accessibility (distance threshold) analyses, geo-demographic assessments including potential impacts of new housing development, and consideration of local issues and priorities;
- propose suggested levels of provision per 1000 population for identified Sub Areas where practicable, or alternative standards where more appropriate.

The suggested levels of provision for Winchester District have been developed with reference to:

- compliance with PPG17 for Open Space, Sport and Recreation;
- the existing spread and make-up of population across the District and neighbouring authority conurbations. This is based upon the 2001 Census with reference as appropriate to the gender, age, socio-economic and employment circumstance, and car ownership (data as set out within the wider Inspace Study);
- reference to Sport England's Active Places Power and Active People diagnostic surveys and reports for geographical areas identified, including reference to Sport England's Facilities Planning Model reports for supply, demand and personal share for swimming pools and sports halls;
- reference to standard/average distance thresholds for accessibility to different types of facility;
- benchmark comparison and analysis of defined standards adopted or referenced within similar rural authorities which underpins the 'overlay' of local issues and priorities.

We have drawn from this range of methodologies in order to provide a robust process and calculations, supported by Sport England, which have then been refined and adjusted to meet the specific circumstances of each geographical area, including:

- proposed and possible new housing development in terms of population growth, geographical location and potential impact on needs and demand for community and district wide built leisure facilities;

- impacts on facilities and cross-migration of use between neighbouring authorities;
- the Community Halls Survey, Parish Council consultations and other research and reports undertaken by Inspace Planning Ltd as part of the wider Open Space and Recreation Study;
- the Built Facilities Audit, visits and consultations with officers of the councils and DC Leisure (leisure management contractor), and stakeholders, undertaken by RQA and Inspace Planning Ltd;
- information on size and location of the built facilities and their component activity areas, levels and types of use, the quality of provision and their value as an amenity to the community; and
- Condition Surveys of the larger sports and leisure centres, as commissioned by Winchester City Council, and our own view on their suitability ('fit for purpose') to meet customer expectations over the next 10 years.

6.12 Benchmarking with other similar and neighbouring authorities

It is our experience that many local authorities have not yet established clear local standards for their built facilities and that local value judgements are applied where appropriate as the main consideration. Our approach draws from Sport England's advice, models and examples used where appropriate by other authorities (Horsham District Council, Mid Suffolk District Council, Chichester District Council for example). Discussions were held with all neighbouring local authorities within Hampshire and West Sussex concerning their approaches to the development of local standards. Indicative figures for similar local authorities are shown where appropriate.

7.0 APPLICATION OF STANDARDS

The standards for open space and built facilities are central to the future planning and provision of facilities. The PPG17 guidance identifies that the standards should be used to:

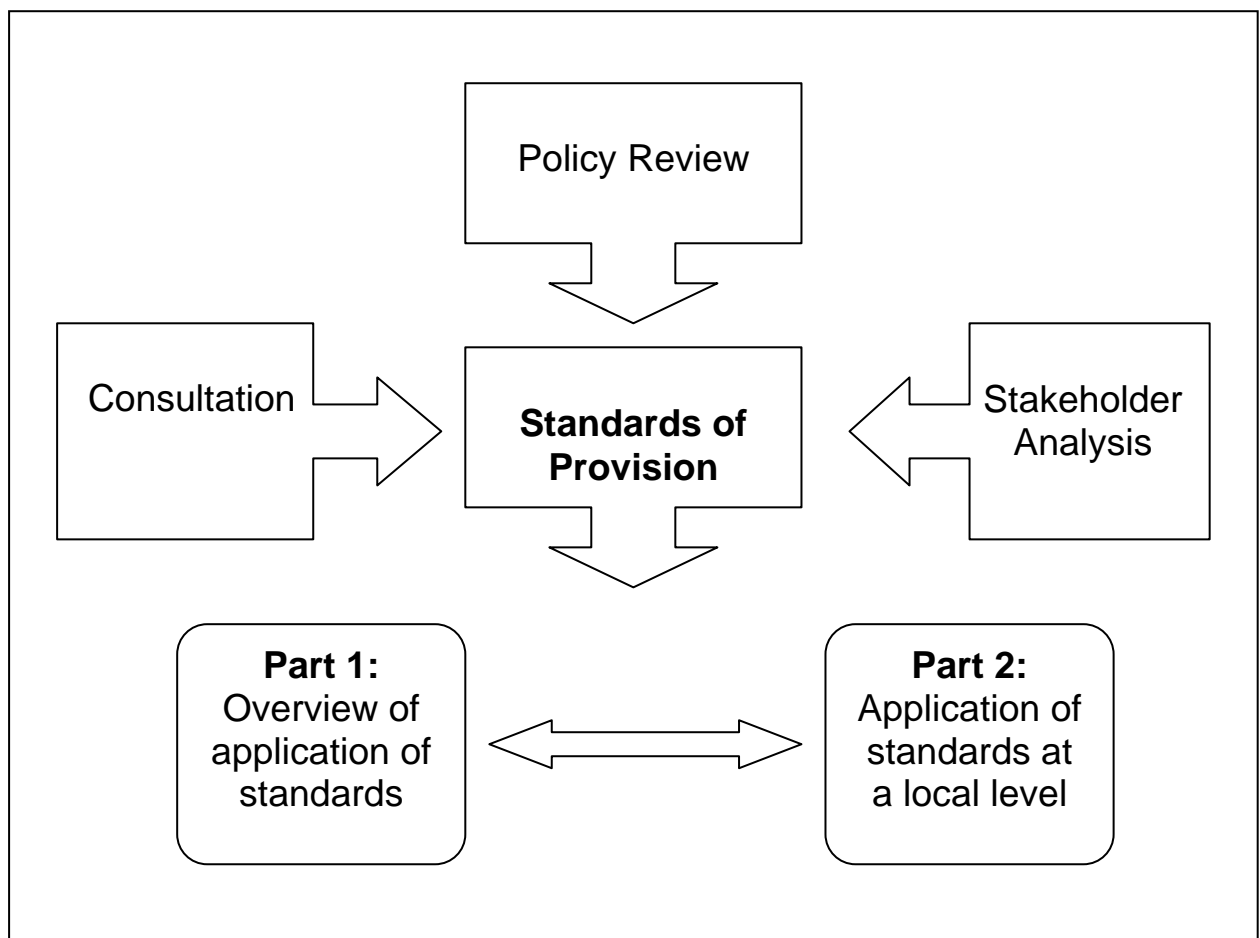
- Identify deficiencies in accessibility;
- Identify quality deficiencies;
- Identify areas of quantitative deficiency or surplus;

The sub area profiles in Part 2 of the report outline specific recommendations in relation to each of the above issues applied at a local level. There is also further information in relation to built facilities in Part 4 of the report.

This section of the report considers the main issues and themes outlined in Part 2 of the report (open space) and Part 4 (built facilities). Part A summaries the application of standards in relation to open space, whilst Part B summarises the application of standards in relation to built facilities.

This section also provides a number of ‘scenarios’ based on the application of the standards. However, it is important to acknowledge that both parts of the report need to inform each other, as demonstrated below:

Figure 7.0 Application of standards



PART A: APPLICATION OF OPEN SPACE STANDARDS

This part of the report deals with access, quality and quantity of open spaces within the District. Access and quantity are analysed on a sub area level, whilst quality is analysed by typology. Further information and supporting evidence can be referred to in the sub area profiles in Part 2 of the report.

7.1 Access to open space and built facilities

For each of the typologies, access standards have been set (as outlined in section 6). These standards are based on either walk times or drive times, depending on the typology. Part 2 of the report shows maps by sub area with the access standards for each typology applied using catchment zones, which have been created using GIS analysis. Maps are also available by Parish to consider more local access issues.

7.1.1 Access to open space

This section outlines key issues with regards to accessibility to open space drawn from the sub area profiles, which is summarised in table 7.1.1. The key findings in relation to each typology are:

- **Parks, Sport and Recreation Grounds.** Generally good access to facilities within the majority of Parishes in the District. Access to different types of outdoor sport facility vary greatly, with tennis being the most varied, football the most common and rugby the least frequent.
- **Informal open space.** Generally good access within the majority of Parishes in the District, a minority of Parishes have no provision.
- **Children's and Young People's Provision.** Access to facilities varies greatly across the District. Several Parishes have no access to children's facilities, whilst the majority of Parishes have no access to Young People's facilities.
- **Natural greenspace.** Good access across the District.
- **Allotments.** Limited access across the District.

Table 7.1.1 Accessibility of open space by sub area

Sub Area	Access issues
Sub Area 1	<p>Generally, there is good access to open space across the area, especially in the Winchester City area. The following observations are made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural greenspace. There is good access across the sub area, with especially good access in Winchester City; • Children's and Young People's provision. There are gaps in provision for children in the central part of Winchester City. There is a more significant gap for young people's provision, particularly in the centre of the City; • Parks, Sport and Recreation grounds. There is a gap in access in the north and south of the area. In terms of sports pitch provision, the most significant gap is in the west of Winchester City; • Informal Greenspace. There are gaps across the area. However, where there are gaps, there is local access to other types of open space, such as Parks or natural areas;
Sub Area 2	<p>Access to open space is largely restricted to the main settlement areas within each parish, with the exception of natural greenspace, where provision occurs outside the settlement areas. The following observations are made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural greenspace. The sub area is very rural in nature, giving a feeling of good access to natural greenspace. There are also a number of larger areas of accessible natural greenspace in areas such as Sparsholt and Micheldever; • Children's and Young People's provision. All parishes within the sub area have access to play facilities within the main settlement areas, with good provision in Wonston. All Parishes also have some form of young people's provision, with the exception of Kings Worthy; • Parks, Sport and Recreation grounds. There is access in the settlement areas within each Parish. • Informal Greenspace. The provision of informal greenspace is limited in this rural area.
Sub Area 3	<p>Access to open space across the area is focused on the settlement areas within the Parishes. A number of Parishes have no formal provision (Beauworth and Bishops Sutton), whilst others have provision limited to informal space (Kilmeston). Provision within the other Parishes in the area is limited to one or two sites, with the exception of New Alresford which has a larger population and more extensive provision. The following observations are made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural Greenspace. Whilst much of the area is rural in nature, there are also some larger accessible areas of natural greenspace, for example within Cheriton and Bishops Sutton. There is also a large lake with some access on the outskirts of New Alresford. • Parks, Sport and Recreation Grounds. The majority of provision is focused in New Alresford, there is also provision within Bighton and Northington, and Itchen Valley.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's & Young People's provision. Provision of play facilities is limited to New Alresford, Northington, Bighton and Itchen Valley, with the only form of youth provision in New Alresford.
Sub Area 4	<p>There is good access to facilities across the sub area, with every Parish having some form of provision of open space. A number of Parishes have a good mix of types of open space including Bishops Waltham, Swanmore and Corhampton and Meonstoke. The following specific observations are made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks, Sport and Recreation Grounds. All the Parishes within the sub area have access to a park or recreation ground. Swanmore and Bishops Waltham have sports provision for football, cricket and tennis. Durley and Upham have provision for football, whilst Droxford and Corhampton and Meonstoke have provision for cricket. Children's and Young People's Provision. All the Parishes have some form of equipped play provision, however, only Swanmore and Corhampton & Meonstoke have any form of provision for Young People. Natural Greenspace. The area is rural in nature, there is also access to Bere Forest, although this is only accessible by car for most of the area's population.
Sub Area 5	<p>Each Parish within the sub area has access to formal open space provision and the following observations are made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks, Sport and Recreation Grounds. Each Parish has access to a facility. Within each facility, provision varies from site to site. Football is provided at Hursley, Owslebury, Compton and Shawford, and Colden Common. Cricket is provided in Hursley, Twyford and Otterbourne. Tennis is provided at Hursley, Twyford and Colden Common. Children's and Young People's provision. Children's play areas are provided at Compton and Shawford, Twyford and Colden Common, there is no provision in the other Parishes. There is a lack of provision for young people across the area; Natural Greenspace. The main provision is in Compton and Shawford and Twyford, which both have easy access to larger areas of natural greenspace on the southern fringe of Winchester.
Sub Area 6	<p>Access to facilities varies across the area, whilst each Parish has a main Park, Sport and Recreation Ground, access to play and specific types of outdoor sports provision varies. The following observations are made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks, Sport and Recreation Grounds. There is a facility in each of the parishes within the sub area. Curdridge has provision for football, Wickham for football and tennis, and Shedfield has provision for football. Children's & Young people's Provision. There are facilities for children in each of the parishes, and provision for young people in Wickham; Natural Greenspace. There is good access in Wickham, but the rest of the Parishes lack access to accessible natural space.
Sub Area 7	<p>This area is a new community and open space provision has been planned as part of its development. The following observations are made:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks, Sport and Recreation grounds. There is one facility located in the north of the Parish, which includes provision for football, cricket, tennis and children's & young people's provision; • Children's & Young People's provision. Good access across the area, provision for young people is limited to the north of the Parish; • Natural Greenspace. There is good access to natural greenspace within the Parish.
Sub Area 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks, Sport and Recreation Grounds. All of the Parishes have a publicly accessible facility, with the exception of Hambledon. Within Soberton, Denmead and Boarhunt there is provision for football. Provision for cricket is made in Hambledon although the site has limited public access. Provision for tennis is only available in Denmead. • Children's & Young People's provision. All the parishes have some form of provision for both age groups; • Natural Greenspace. There are some larger areas of woodland on the outskirts of Denmead, Boarhunt and Soberton.

7.2 Quality of open space and built facilities

The quality of open space and built facilities is dealt with in detail in Part 2 (sub area profiles), and in Part 4 (built facilities study). This section provides an overall summary of issues related to the quality of open space and built facilities within the District.

7.2.1 Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds

In general, there is a need to improve the quality of these facilities across the District, recommendations include:

- Many of the sites have had ‘ad hoc’ improvements, for example a new play area may have been installed with little consideration for the rest of the site. It is therefore recommended that management plans are developed for all the major sites across the District, using CABI Space guidance. Clearly the involvement and buy in from Parish Councils and the effective allocation of resources are key to the success of this.
- There is a lack of signage and information within these open spaces, impacting the welcoming aspect of the space and limiting opportunity for community involvement. It is therefore recommended that a ‘house style’ is developed for signage within Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds, which facilitates a consistent quality, with the flexibility for local influence.
- There are significant differences in the quality of maintenance across the District, clearly influenced by the varying management regimes that are in place. Whilst it is accepted that within a rural District, with numerous maintenance regimes in place, a consistent standard is very difficult to achieve, there are some fundamental issues that need to be addressed:
 - Safety surfaces within play areas need to be maintained to a higher standard;
 - The maintenance of playing fields, particularly football and cricket needs to be more consistent;
 - Maintenance of buildings, such as sports pavilions is greatly varied, with many in need of investment, which needs to be delivered through a long term programme of replacement;

There is a need to improve the consistency of the design of Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds, part of this links to the ad hoc improvements outlined above, but there is also a need for all new improvements to be subject to a more rigorous design process. It is recommended that this is led by the Council, with resources being made available for officer time to support Parishes in delivering improvement programmes.

7.2.2 Children's and Young People's Provision

As part of the quality audit of open spaces, an assessment of play areas was undertaken, and considered factors such as management and maintenance, safety and play value. Specific recommendations by area and by site are outlined in part 2 of the report, which should be used to develop an investment strategy for play space on an area basis. However, the key issues and general recommendations related to play space are outlined below:

- The quality audit identified that the majority of sites are in good condition, many with new and modern equipment, and good safety surfacing and fencing. There were much fewer sites in need of significant investment.
- The majority of provision tends to be for children, whilst there is a lack of facilities for young people. Where facilities for young people do exist, provision is basic e.g. a skate ramp.
- There is an opportunity to provide a number of larger youth play 'hub sites' which offer a range of activities for young people, combining activities such as wheels parks, basketball with more adventurous play facilities.
- There is a lack of natural play spaces across the District. Existing provision for play is almost entirely restricted to traditional equipped play spaces. Many open spaces audited offer opportunity for the provision of natural play.
- Provision within the larger settlements tends to be of higher quality than the more rural parishes, particularly in terms of design, management and maintenance. It is therefore recommended that funds, particularly from developer contributions, are able to be spent across the sub area where development takes place, rather than within the specific Parish. This will enable funds to be targeted at those sites in greatest need of improvement.
- The majority of play areas are provided within a larger open space (e.g. a recreation ground), however, very few of these play areas are 'integrated' within the site. That is, their location has not been considered in the context of the whole site and its wider uses. Again this is more evident in rural locations. It is therefore recommended that any investment in play areas is co-ordinated with a wider 'master plan' for the whole of the open space.

7.2.3 Informal Open Space

The following section makes some general observations and recommendations regarding informal open space:

- The provision of informal open space varies across the district, with some areas having little more than an area of grass, whilst others having planting and play areas. In general the quality of informal open space was

found to be above average or good, and sites were generally well maintained.

- Informal open spaces provide a significant opportunity to provide additional facilities. For example, many of the sites are large enough to accommodate facilities for children and young people, many lending themselves to creating 'natural play space'.
- Where sites have been identified as having the potential to improve, generally, this can be achieved relatively easily and at a reasonable cost (compared to play areas or sports grounds). Simple improvements such as enhanced planting and improved footpath surfacing can significantly improve the overall quality of a site.

7.2.4 Natural Greenspace

Key issues and recommendations include:

- The District is well provided for in terms of natural greenspace, with significant tracts of woodland and heathland, offering a rich and wide variety of habitats with both biodiversity and recreational value. This asset should be maintained and protected.
- The quality of management for biodiversity is good, with appropriate levels of access balanced with areas for biodiversity. Mostly this is achieved as a result of the large size of many of the areas which are large enough to provide for both recreation and biodiversity.
- The provision of information and signage is varied across the District (not surprisingly as the sites are under the management of various landowners). There is, therefore, a need to improve information provision across many of the sites.
- Information about the footpath and bridleway network is in need of improvement, particularly on the ground signage showing routes and links.

7.2.5 Allotments

The information gathered in relation to allotments is more difficult to assess in comparison to other types of open space. The reason for this is twofold, firstly, the number of people who actually use allotments is very low compared to the numbers who use other types of open space, and therefore, specific comments related to the quality of allotments are less frequent.

Secondly, the majority of allotment sites are locked, and the quality audit only allows for assessment against key criteria such as the level of cultivation and general maintenance, which is less comprehensive than the assessments of other open space.

In the short term, the priority for allotments should be to ensure that their basic infrastructure (e.g. paths, fences, water supplies, signage) is in good condition and meeting the needs of allotment users. There is also an opportunity to clear abandoned plots to encourage existing or new allotment holders to take them on.

In the medium to long term, the management and maintenance of allotments should be addressed through an allotment strategy (as adopted by many other Local Authorities within the UK). The strategy should identify sites where there are issues of under or over occupancy, sites which may be surplus to requirement, potential for new sites and ultimately a strategy for securing the long term sustainability of allotments in the District.

7.3 Quantity of Open Space and Built Facilities

For each of the typologies, quantity standards have been set (as outlined in section 6). For open space, these standards are expressed as hectares of open space per 1000 population (e.g. 0.5 ha/1000). Standards for built facilities are expressed in different ways, depending on the nature of the facility, including recommended sizes and numbers.

7.3.1 Quantity of Open Space

For each of the typologies, the existing quantity of open space has been assessed using GIS analysis. The area profiles in Part 2 of the report show the provision of open space against the standard by sub area, this information is also available by parish for more local analysis if required. Table 7.3.1 outlines provision of each typology by sub area, which is summarised as having either 'sufficient supply' or under supply'.

Table 7.3.1 Summary of provision of open space by sub area

Sub Area	Parks, Sports & Recreation Grounds	Children's and Young People's Provision	Informal Open Space	Natural Greenspace	Allotments
Sub Area 1	Under supply	Under supply	Under supply	Sufficient supply	Under supply
Sub Area 2	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Under supply
Sub Area 3	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Under supply
Sub Area 4	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Under supply	Under supply
Sub Area 5	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Under supply
Sub Area 6	Under supply	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Under supply
Sub Area 7	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Sufficient supply	Under supply
Sub Area 8	Under supply	Under supply	Under supply	Sufficient supply	Under supply

Key observations:

- **Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds.** Provision varies across the District, only two of the eight sub areas have under provision.
- **Children's and young people's provision.** Provision varies across the District, only two of the eight sub areas have under provision.

- **Informal Open Space.** Provision varies across the District, only two of the eight sub areas have under provision.
- **Natural Greenspace.** Only one of the sub areas has under provision.
- **Allotments.** Under supply in all the sub areas.

PART B: APPLICATION OF BUILT FACILITY STANDARDS

The following table summarises the provision of built facilities against the proposed standards for built facilities (further clarification and evidence is provide in Part 4 of the study).

Sports Facility	Proposed standard per 1000 pop	Proposed facility per no. population	Current provision per 1000 pop	Current shortfall per 1000 pop	Quantity required - shortfall by 2016	Quantity required - shortfall by 2026
Sports halls <i>with community access</i>	54.5m ² (0.1 hall)	1 per 11,000	47.6m ² (9 halls included)	6.9m² (1.3 halls)	11.3 (2.3)	12 (3)
Swimming pools <i>with community access</i>	13m ² (.04 pool)	1 per 25,000	8.6m ² (3 pools included)	4.4m² (1.53 pools)	5 (2)	5.3 (2.3)
Fitness Gyms <i>All provision</i>	4 stations -16m ² gym space	1 station per 250	3.7 stations (418 total)	.3 stns (34 in total)	500 stations in total	528 stations in total
Synthetic turf pitches <i>All provision</i>	330m ² (.05 pitch)	1 per 20,000	283m ² (0.04) (5 pitches)	47m² (0.8 pitches)	6.3 (1.3)	6.6 (1.6)
Outdoor Tennis Courts <i>all courts</i>	0.8 courts	2 per 2,500	0.6 court (74 courts included)	0.2 (23 courts)	100 (28 courts)	106 (34 courts)
Indoor Bowls Rinks	05 rink	1 rink per 20,000	1 x 6 rink centre per 120,000 population	No shortfall	6 rink indoor centre	6 rink indoor centre

7.12 Scenarios

The following are examples to demonstrate how the proposed standards could be applied in three different development scenarios

7.12.1 Scenario A

Application of a range of standards to a large development of 250 houses of mixed house types and densities.

It is determined that a proposed planning application for the above development would lead to a projected net increase in population of 500 within the locality.

The Council confirms that the type of housing proposed requires provision/contributions.

- Some local play provision and amenity space is initially proposed on site, with a financial commitment by the developer to new or improved outdoor sports provision off site. The new residents are likely to place significant additional demands on existing local provision within the area, justifying detailed consideration of a) what should be provided within the site; and b) how contributions should be provided to provision elsewhere within reasonable access of the development.

The immediate area already has the following:

- Existing education outdoor/sports provision which currently has no formally established public use. Even without the additional demands placed upon existing provision by new development, there is already an identified shortage of outdoor public sports provision in the immediate area.
- A community 'wet and dry' leisure centre within a few minutes drive.
- Good access to Rights of Way in the immediate urban fringe/open countryside, accessible woodlands and a country park (the latter by car).

There are no allotments or youth provision within easy reach.

The following amount of provision could be raised through developer contributions.

Provision	Standard	Amount generated (calculation)	Amount generated (total)
Parks, Sports Recreation Grounds	1.5 ha per 1000 persons	1.5 ha x 0.5	0.75 ha
Natural Green Space	1.0 ha per 1000 persons	1 ha x 0.5	0.5 ha
Informal Green Space	0.8 ha per 1000 persons	0.8 ha x 0.5	0.4 ha
Children's and Young People's Space	0.5 ha per 1000 persons	0.5 ha x 0.5	0.25 ha
Allotments	Allotments 0.20 ha per 1000 persons	0.2 ha x 0.5	0.1 ha
Small Hall/Community venue	1 (400 m ²) per 1000 persons	1 hall x 0.5 (200 m ²)	0.5 halls
Sports Hall	1 x 4-court hall (636 m ²) per 15,000 persons	1 sports hall x 0.033 hall (20.98 m ²)	0.033 sports halls (or 20.98 m ²)
Swimming Pool	1 x 4-lane pool (215 m ²) per 21,000 persons	1 pool x 0.023 pool (4.94 m ²)	0.023 pool (or 4.94 m ²)
Synthetic Turf Pitch	1 x full-size floodlit pitch (6,400 m ²) per 20,000 persons	1 pitch x 0.025 pitch (160 m ²)	0.025 pitch (or 160 m ²)

The above calculations confirm that the demands generated by the new residents would justify new provision either on or off site, and significant contributions which might go towards improving existing provision within easy reach.

Discussion with relevant parties suggests the following programme of action:

Opportunity	Action
Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds	The existing education playing fields are improved in respect of drainage in return for the school entering into a community use agreement. However, it is felt that the major new development will merit a new local park to serve as a community focal point. A contribution is also agreed towards improvements to nearby accessible woodland in this regard.

Opportunity	Action
Informal Green Space	Beyond the informal space already proposed local consultation suggests a view that the contribution could go towards improving Rights of Way close to the development. A contribution is also agreed towards improving identified accessible woodlands.
Natural Green Space	
Children's and Young People's Space	Existing and planned provision for junior and pre-school children is generally of good quality. However, there is a clear need for new and better youth facilities which are planned and designed into revised layouts. Beyond this conventional provision, it is determined that contributions could be made towards natural play features on nearby recreation grounds.
Allotments and Community Gardens	A small site is proposed near to the local school, which can then also be used by pupils.
Small hall/community venue	The size of the new development generates sufficient funds to finance a major refurbishment of the existing village hall (within easy walking distance) to a modern standard.
Sports Hall and Swimming Pool	Contributions are made towards the upgrading of the reception and both 'wet' and 'dry' changing facilities at the nearby leisure centre.
Synthetic Turf Pitch	There is no STP within easy travel distance. However, a new pitch is planned for two years time in a nearby settlement. Contributions are therefore collected for the STP, and 'pooled' and saved with others from development elsewhere to help fund this new project.

7.12.2 Scenario B

Application of a range of standards to a medium size, high density development (60 houses) on a 'brownfield' site.

It is determined that a proposed planning application for the above development would lead to a projected net increase in population of 120 within the locality. No open space or recreation provision is currently proposed on site, other than incidental space.

The immediate area already has a very good range of provision, including a well equipped and large recreation ground (with both children's and young people's space); a 'wet and dry' leisure centre; STP; and, a modern community centre.

The following amount of provision could be raised through developer contributions.

Provision	Standard	Amount generated (calculation)	Amount generated (sum)
Parks, Sports Recreation Grounds	1.5 ha per 1000 persons	1.5 ha x 0.12	0.18 ha
Natural Green Space	1.0 ha per 1000 persons	1 ha x 0.12	0.12 ha
Informal Green Space	0.8 ha per 1000 persons	0.8 ha x 0.12	0.096 ha
Children's and Young People's Space	0.50 ha per 1000 persons	0.50 ha x 0.12	0.06 ha
Allotments	Allotments 0.20 ha per 1000 persons	0.2 ha x 0.12	0.024 ha
Small Hall/Community venue	1 (400 m ²) per 1000 persons	1 hall x 0.12 (48 m ²)	0.12 hall (or 48 m ²)
Sports Hall	1 x 4-court hall (636 m ²) per 15,000 persons	1 sports hall x 0.008 hall (5.088 m ²)	0.008 sports halls (or 5.088 m ²)
Swimming Pool	1 x 4-lane pool (215 m ²) per 21,000 persons	1 pool x 0.0057 pool (1.22 m ²)	0.0057 pool (or 1.22 m ²)
Synthetic Turf Pitch	1 x full-size floodlit pitch (6,400 m ²) per 20,000 persons	1 pitch x 0.006 pitch (38.4 m ²)	0.006 pitch (or 38.4 m ²)

The general feeling is that although the new development would generate additional demands, these can largely be met by existing local provision. The main problem is that access to most of the existing outdoor local facilities from this site can be difficult by foot due to poor signage and inadequate road crossing points.

Discussion with relevant parties suggests the following programme of action:

Opportunity	Action
Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds	Because the existing local recreation ground is large and of high quality, the contributions generated by these three standards are used instead to improve access by foot and bike to this facility. A package of signing, and 'greening' of a local route is agreed, which includes identifying and marking road crossing points.
Informal Green Space	
Natural Green Space	
Children's and Young People's Space	Contributions are made towards the maintenance and repair of children's and young people's provision at the recreation ground. However, it is also agreed that the developer should provide a small toddler play and sitting area within the housing site, as a doorstep play opportunity for very young children.
Allotments and Community Gardens	Contributions are used to purchase a 'compost toilet' at the local allotment.
Small hall/community venue, Sports Hall and Swimming Pool, Synthetic Turf Pitch	Lump sum contributions are made towards the maintenance and longer term refurbishment of all these local facilities.

7.12.3 Scenario C

Application of a range of standards to a small development of family houses within a village (5 houses).

It is determined that a proposed planning application for the above development would lead to a projected net increase in population of 22.5 people within a village.

The Council confirms that the type of housing proposed requires provision/contributions.

No provision for open space and/or recreation is currently proposed on site.

The village already has the following:

- A recreation ground (providing for sport and informal recreation) only 10 minutes walk from the development.
- No identified Informal or Natural Green Space within the limits of the village.
- A well maintained children's playground, but nothing for older children.
- A well used football pitch (on the recreation ground).
- A local allotment site only 10 minutes walk from the development.

In addition there is:

- A village hall (of good size but needing some improvement) less than 10 minutes walk from the new development).
- A sports hall and swimming pool each within 15 minutes drive from the development (on separate sites)
- No Synthetic Turf Pitch within easy reach that is not already heavily used.

The following amount of provision could be raised through developer contributions.

Provision	Standard	Amount generated (calculation)	Amount generated (sum)
Parks, Sports Recreation Grounds	1.5 ha per 1000 persons	1.5 ha x 0.0225	0.05 ha
Natural Green Space	1.0 ha per 1000 persons	1.0 ha x 0.0225	0.0225 ha
Informal Green Space	0.8 ha per 1000 persons	0.8 ha x 0.0225	0.0036 ha
Allotments	Allotments 0.20 ha per 1000 persons	0.2 ha x 0.0225	0.0045 ha

Provision	Standard	Amount generated (calculation)	Amount generated (sum)
Small Hall/Community venue	1 per 1000 persons	1 hall x 0.0225	0.0225 halls
Sports Hall	1 x 4-court hall per 15,000 persons	1 sports hall x 0.0015	0.0015 sports halls
Swimming Pool	1 x 22+ metre length pool pr 21,000 persons	1 pool x 0.0010	0.0010 pools
Synthetic Turf Pitch	1 x full-size floodlit pitch per 20,000 persons	1 pitch x 0.0011	0.0011 pitches

The above calculations confirm that the demands generated by the new residents would make it very difficult to justify new provision of any kind on site. However, given the costs involved in providing many of the opportunities covered by the standards⁸, even small developments could generate significant contributions which might go towards improving existing provision within easy reach.

Discussion with relevant parties suggests the following programme of action:

Opportunity	Action
Parks and Gardens	Improvements to the recreation ground in agreement with the local parish council/playing field trust
Informal Green Space	Local consultation suggests a view that the contribution could go towards improved rights of way surrounding the village. Consideration also given to 'naturalising' under-utilised parts of the existing recreation ground.
Natural Green Space	
Children's and Young People's Space	Local consultation suggests no desire to improve existing provision for younger children (which is already good), but to offer something for teenagers, such as a 'hangout' area on the recreation ground and a 'target' wall.
Allotments and Community Gardens	Improvements to the existing allotments (such as secure storage shed).
Village Hall	Contribution towards much needed roof repairs on the village hall.
Sports Hall	Contribution towards local sports hall (earmarked

⁸ For example, Sport England figures indicate that the cost of a 4-court sports hall might be expected to be £2,550,000, and that of a full size, floodlit synthetic pitch could be around £550,000. On the other hand a 1.5 ha park could cost in the order of £1,841,100.

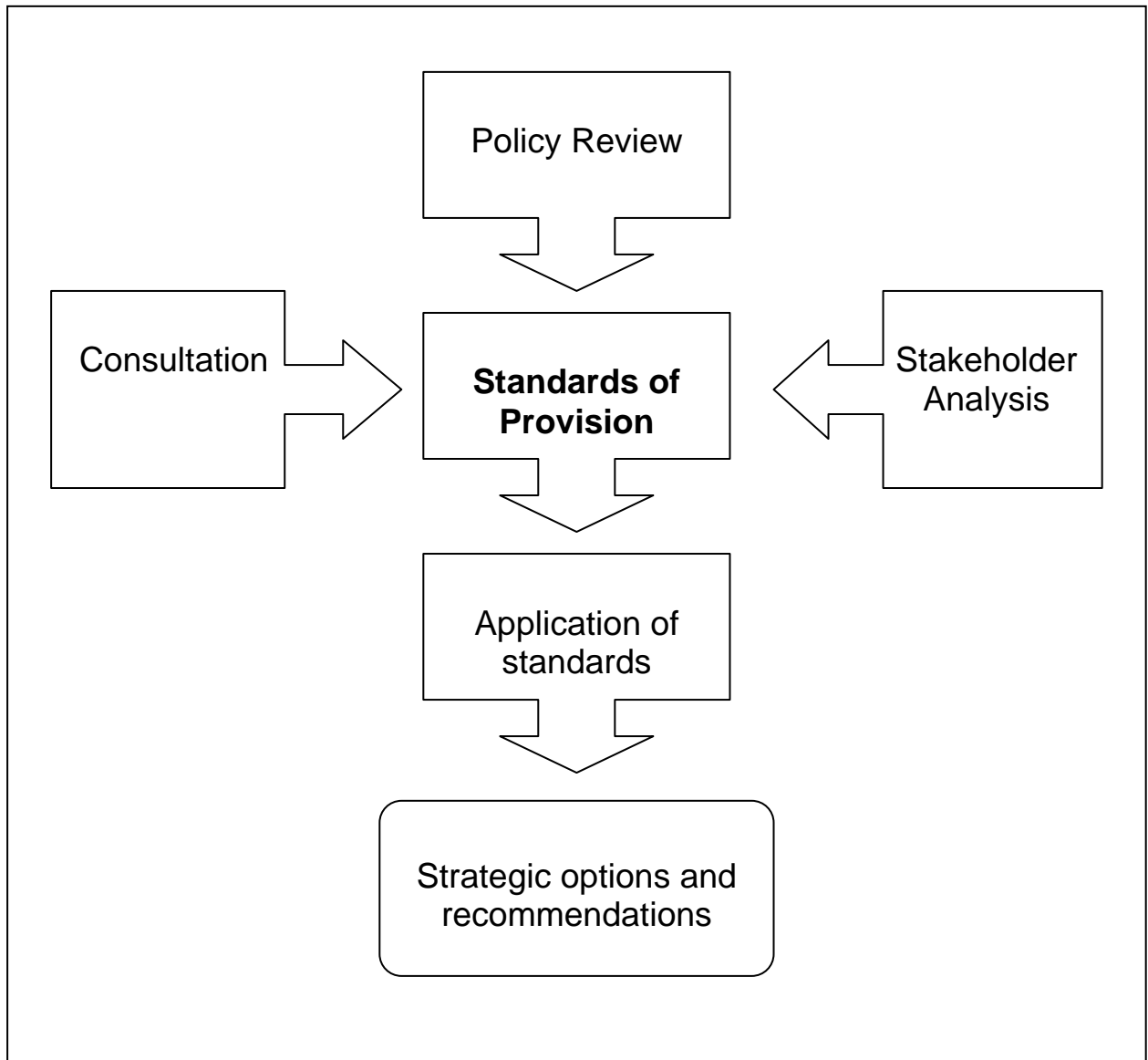
Opportunity	Action
	as part of a larger investment in the improvement of the reception area).
Swimming Pool	Contribution towards local swimming pool (earmarked as part of a larger investment in replacement of the filtration plant).
Synthetic Turf Pitch	Contribution towards a larger fund for the provision of a Synthetic Turf Pitch in a nearby settlement.

8.0 STRATEGIC OPTIONS

8.1 Developing Strategic Options

The PPG 17 guidance recommends the study should be brought together to identify and evaluate strategic options and draft policies. This information is gathered from all previous elements of the study as shown in figure 8.1 below:

Figure 8.1 Process for developing strategic options



Specifically, the guidance recommends that the strategic options should consider four basic components:

- Existing provision to be protected.
- Existing provision to be enhanced.
- Existing provision to be relocated in order to meet local needs more effectively or make better overall use of land.
- Proposals for new provision.

The guidance also identifies that consideration should be given to a fifth component - land or facilities which are surplus to requirements and therefore no longer needed. Further clarification of the above is outlined below.

Existing provision to be protected

Existing open spaces or sport and recreation facilities which should be given the highest level of protection by the planning system are those which are either:

- Critically important in avoiding deficiencies in accessibility, quality or quantity and scored highly in the value assessment; **or**
- Of particular nature conservation, historical or cultural value.

The priorities emerging from this study focus on those facilities which avoid deficiencies, as those facilities with nature conservation, historical or cultural value already afford protection through the planning system.

Existing provision to be relocated

In some areas it may be possible to make better use of land by relocating an open space or sport and recreation facility, especially if this will enhance its quality or accessibility for existing users, or use land which is not suitable for another purpose.

Existing provision to be enhanced

This includes those spaces or facilities which:

- Are critically important in avoiding deficiencies in diversity, accessibility or quantity, **but**
- Scored poorly in the quality or value assessment.

Proposals for new provision

New provision may be required where there will be a planned increase in population:

- In areas outside the distance thresholds of each different type of open space or sport and recreation facility in the adopted provision hierarchy containing sufficient people to justify new provision; **or**

- Where the level of existing provision fails to accord with the quantity standard.

This section brings together the information from all parts of the study and considers each of the components above. It is also important to recognise that additional supporting evidence and recommendations are provided in other parts of the report, including the area profiles, the playing pitch study and the built facilities review. A summary of these main findings is also outlined in this section.

All of the above information should be used to form the basis of any new planning policies related to the study, and be used to inform any Greenspace Strategy and Built Facility Strategy, as and when they are required.

8.2 Strategic Options

This section outlines the recommendations or policies (**R**) in relation to each of the strategic options identified above for open space provision. Strategic options for built facilities are outlined at section 8.6 and in Part 4 of the study.

Strategic Option 1: Existing provision to be protected

- R1** There are no areas of the District where there are significant overlaps in the access standards for any of the typologies of open space. Therefore, no open space should be lost unless alternative access can be made.
- R2** Table 7.1.1 outlines specific areas where there are gaps in access to open space. Provision to 'fill the gaps' should be sought through new development when the opportunity arises.
- R3** Future LDDs and possible SPDs should consider the opportunities for creating both utility and recreation routes for use by foot and bike in both urban and rural areas. Creative application of the informal open space and the natural green space components of the proposed overall standard in respect of new development should be explored.
- R4** There is an under supply of provision for young people across the District. Loss of any existing provision should be avoided, unless alternative new provision can be provided.
- R5** The only typology where there is 'sufficient supply' across the District is natural greenspace. It is unlikely any of this is 'surplus to requirement' as it is largely protected. However, it does offer an opportunity to provide alternative provision, e.g. creation of natural play areas, BMX tracks and signed routeways where there is existing under supply of those facilities.

Strategic Option 2: Existing provision to be relocated

- R6** There are no significant opportunities for relocating open space within the District. New policy could allow for 'land swaps', for example a development of housing on a recreation ground on the edge of a settlement could be considered if a new facility could be provided in another location (as long as it meets the Winchester standards).

Strategic Option 3: Existing provision to be enhanced

- R7** Section 7.2 makes recommendations for improving the quality of open space across the District. A long term strategy for achieving improvements is required (to be delivered through a Greenspace Strategy).
- R8** Priorities for improvement include the development and implementation of improvement plans for Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds and improving signage within open spaces across the District.
- R9** A Greenspace Strategy should outline options for funding improvements, the most significant opportunities being developer contributions, grant funding, council funding, and sale of land.

Strategic Option 4: Proposals for new provision

- R10** New provision of open space will be required as part of new development and to meet any deficiencies in provision in both quantity and access (as outlined in section 7 and Part 2 of the report). Development should provide open space in line with the proposed open space standards, and provide off site contributions to meet the standards where possible (see boxes below).
- R11** The priority for new provision is for young people's space. This can be achieved through on-site and off-site developer contributions.
- R12** Consideration needs to be given to the supply of allotments as part of new developments, particularly where housing densities are high, and houses may have small gardens. New provision should be made in line with the proposed standard.

The following gives further consideration to the decision making process in relation to proposals for new provision:

New versus existing provision

Q. In meeting the needs of new development should there be a decision to provide all-new facilities, or should the focus be on upgrading existing facilities?

A. The answer has to be a combination of the two approaches, which is similar to that already pursued by the Council in negotiating developer contributions, and is therefore reaffirmation of current practice, although not in the case of built facilities which are not covered by the Council's existing standards.

Generally, individual housing developments within the District are on a relatively small scale, and are not sufficiently large to justify new provision in their own right. In these circumstances it often may be more appropriate for contributions arising from such development to be invested in the improvement of existing off-site provision within easy reach.

Any large scale development could require new or substantially improved local provision on or near site.

On or off-site provision

Q. In meeting the needs of new development should there be a strategic decision to provide new or improved provision on or off the development site?

The Council already pursues an approach whereby it will promote investment in new and/or improved local facilities off-site, where appropriate; although not in the case of built facilities not covered by the Council's existing standards.

The main consideration in this respect is whether in estimating the requirements of new development by applying standards of provision the relevant 'Accessibility' component(s) can be met. In such cases it may be appropriate to accept financial contributions from developers in lieu of direct (on-site) provision.

The study demonstrates there are certain major facilities that can be provided (or enhanced) off site but still meet the needs of new residents. Some of these facilities will have large catchments that can straddle local authority boundaries. In these circumstances it may be appropriate for local authorities to work together in planning the provision of new and improved facilities of a strategic nature, and in the manner described above.

The greatest potential for such cooperation will be in areas where development is proposed close to local authority boundaries, and where there

is scope for residents in one area to travel 'over the border'. Respective local authorities and their residents would enjoy the shared benefit of better planned and rational provision of opportunities.

This approach might be pursued in relation to opportunities such as:

- Major 'built' sports facilities.
- Major parks (including country parks).
- Important outdoor sports provision.
- Major accessible natural and semi natural green space.
- Important recreation corridors and recreation routes.

With regard to 'built facilities', rather than build new provision, every opportunity should be taken to explore the possibilities for either expanding the capacity and/or improving the quality of existing built venues; and, or opening up school facilities to greater community use. This may be especially appropriate in rural areas where, for example, the opening up of school provision could help to overcome some of the issues relating to lack of access from some areas to the existing 'major' venues.

8.3 Facilities that are Surplus to Requirement

In addition to the strategic options outlined above, the PPG17 guidance also recommends that consideration should be given to facilities that are surplus to requirement. This section considers this for both open space and built facilities.

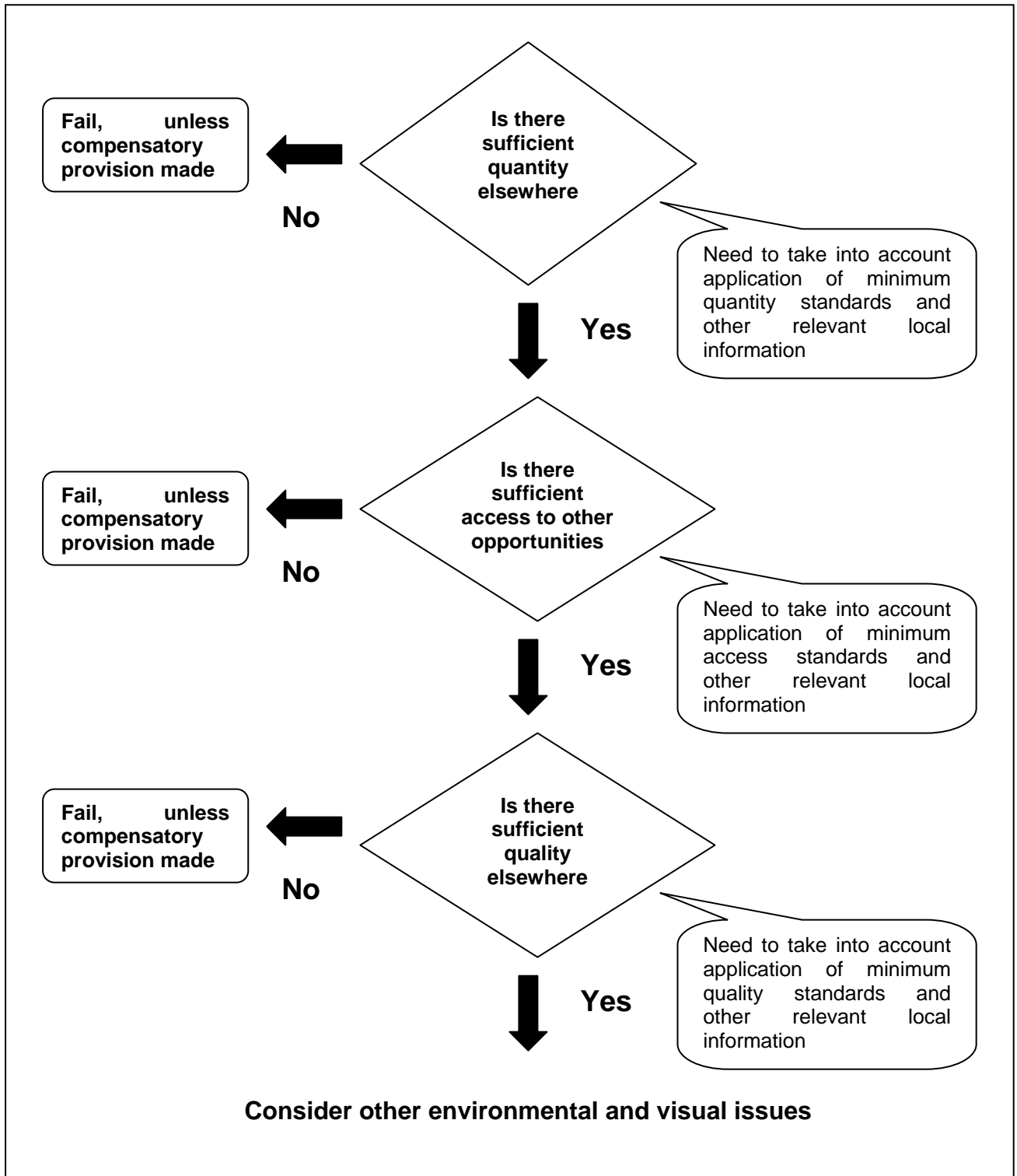
8.3.1 Surplus Open Space

There are important issues to resolve in terms of getting the correct balance of open spaces across Winchester District before any disposal can be contemplated. The Sub Area Profiles in Part 2 of this report suggest that whilst there is under provision relative to the minimum standards in some areas, there are other areas where provision compares favourably with the standards. However, it is once again emphasised that the proposed standards are for *minimum* levels of provision. Factors to be taken into account before any decision to release open space for alternative uses can be taken include:

- The local value and use of a given open space - as it may be a locally popular resource.
- Whether future local development/population growth might generate additional demands for open space.
- Whether there is a demonstrable need for some other type of open space within the locality that a given space (subject to a change of management regime) would be well placed to meet.
- Other non-recreational reasons that suggest a space should be retained (which might include ecological and visual reasons).

The following figure suggests an outline of the decision process to go through before development of an open space can be seriously contemplated.

Figure 8.3.1: Outline decision making process in relation to sanctioning the (re)development of open space



A hypothetical example of how this might be applied follows, and relates to an area of informal open space.

Q. Is there sufficient quantity?

A. If the minimum quantitative standard for informal open space is achieved in a defined geographical area, the relative provision of other forms of open space must then be considered. (Informal open space can in principle be converted into other forms of open space where the need arises). Provided:

- a) provision meets the minimum quantitative standard;
- b) there is no significant local information suggesting a need to retain the site; and
- c) there is not a perceived lack of other forms of open space.

The next question can then be addressed.

Q. Is there sufficient access to other opportunities?

A. Within the defined geographical area there may be good overall provision of informal open space relative to the quantity standard, but is it in the right place and can it be easily reached? Applying the accessibility component of the minimum standards will help to answer this question. If other similar open space cannot be easily reached, the site's disposal for other uses may be unacceptable.

Q. Are other accessible and similar opportunities elsewhere of sufficient quality?

A. If it can be demonstrated that alternative opportunities are sufficient both in quantity and accessibility, there may still exist issues with the quality of these alternative provisions. The quality component of the proposed standards may indicate that certain improvements to alternative opportunities must be made which should be funded and secured before development is sanctioned.

Even if these three tests are passed there may be other reasons for the site to remain as open space. For example, it may have value as a natural habitat or be visually important. Such considerations are important, but beyond the scope of this report.

8.4 Summary of Strategic Priorities by Sub Area

The following section summarises the strategic priorities from the area profiles in Part 2 of the report. It is important however to ensure that the detailed findings outlined in Part 2 of the report are used in conjunction with the quality audit data (appendix 2) in determining priorities within each area. Further information related to built facilities by sub area is outlined in the built facilities study (Part 4), and summarised at section 8.6.

8.4.1 Sub Area 1: Winchester and area

- Produce management plans for larger open spaces to ensure a co-ordinated approach to investment and management.
- Enable investment in the basic infrastructure of open spaces as well as ongoing investment in play facilities and sports provision.
- Develop a house style for the provision of signage and information in open spaces, and carry out improvements at priority sites.
- Promote the network of natural greenspace within the area, through information provision on key sites (e.g. St. Catherines Hill), and potentially through a website or leaflet.
- Use the playing pitch strategy to consider if there is a need for additional outdoor sports facilities to the west of the City.
- Provide additional facilities for young people, particularly in the centre of the City.
- Provide additional children's play facilities in the central area of the City.
- Seek the provision of an additional park or recreation ground in the north and south of the city, particularly if new development for housing is to take place in these areas.

8.4.2 Sub Area 2: Kings Worthy and area

- Support Parish Councils and local people to develop management plans for the main recreation grounds in their Parish. Sites have the potential to be multi-functional and meet a wide range of community needs.
- Target funds to improve the management and maintenance of key areas of open space, with a focus on informal open space, where better maintenance is required.
- Work with providers of sports facilities with limited public access to ensure high quality provision of facilities, and where possible seek opportunity for making facilities openly accessible to the public.
- Provide additional facilities for children and young people in Kings Worthy.

8.4.3 Sub Area 3: New Alresford and area

- Develop site improvement plans in consultation with local people for sites where there is a need to improve play areas, and implement a programme of investment in site infrastructure and play facilities.
- Improve the provision of infrastructure and changing facilities at Arlebury Park.

- Carry out further consultation with Parish Councils to determine if there is a need for facilities in areas where there is a lack of provision (such as Beauworth, Bishops Sutton and Kilmeston).
- Assess the potential for 'achieving the quantity standard' for Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds in New Alresford. This could potentially be met by extending current facilities (e.g. Arlebury Park), or securing a community dual use agreement with Perins School.
- Produce a management plan and support the Parish Council in an application for a green flag award for Arlebury Park.

8.4.4 Sub Area 4: Bishops Waltham and area

- Develop management plans for the key Parks, Sport and Recreation Grounds for each Parish within the area.
- Continue to invest and improve the quality of children's play areas across the area, with a need to prioritise the identified sites with most need.
- Seek to provide facilities for young people in Bishops Waltham, which should be developed in consultation with local people (a new skate park has been installed since the audit which goes some way to meeting the need).
- Carry out improvements to open spaces in Bishops Waltham where a number of sites have been identified as having significant potential for improvement.
- There is a lack of accessible natural greenspace in the area, and opportunities to secure natural areas for public use should be maximised.

8.4.5 Sub Area 5: Colden Common and area

- Maximise the opportunity for providing additional facilities for young people as resources become available. This should be implemented in close consultation with Parish Councils and local people.
- Produce management plans for the key Parks, Sports and Recreation Grounds within each Parish in the Sub Area.

8.4.6 Sub Area 6: Wickham and area

- There is an under supply of Parks, Sports and Recreation grounds within the area, and therefore investment in the quality of existing provision should be a priority. This should be delivered through the development and implementation of a site management plan.
- New open space should be provided as part of any new development within the sub area, particularly more formal provision such as Parks and Recreation Grounds.
- There is a need to improve the management and maintenance of existing facilities across the sub area.
- There is an undersupply of children's and young people's provision in Wickham. This could be met through extending and improving existing provision, or providing new play facilities as part of any new development.

8.4.7 Sub Area 7: Whiteley area

- There is a need to rationalise provision for children's play, with the potential of providing fewer, larger, better quality facilities rather than several small play areas. Consideration needs to be given to this in any future development in the area.
- There is a perceived shortfall in football pitches in the area. This could be resolved through increasing the capacity of existing pitches (which are currently poorly drained), or providing new facilities (e.g. an ATP if further development occurs in the area).
- There is no provision for allotments in the area, land should be allocated for provision, particularly resulting from any proposed new development;
- A management plan is required for the main recreation ground (Meadowside), to co-ordinate future investment and management.
- There is potential to provide an additional facility for young people in the south of the Parish.

8.4.8 Sub Area 8: Denmead and area

- Carry out programme of improvements to play areas across the sub area, ensuring complementary improvements are made to wider site infrastructure. There is potential to make these play areas larger to meet the shortfall in quantity of play space across the area.
- Produce a management plan for Ashling Park, Denmead and support the Parish Council in an application for a green flag award.
- Seek to address the under supply of open space in the area. This can be achieved through a number of measures:
 - Ensuring new development provides open space in line with the new standards. Where this is not possible on site, additional facilities should be provided off site.
 - Identifying new areas of land which could be allocated as open space.
 - Securing access to open space which currently has limited public access (e.g. dual use agreement with schools).

8.5 Priorities from the Playing Pitch Strategy

The Playing Pitch Strategy (see Part 3) conducted for the District has examined the supply of pitches relative to the numbers and requirements of teams at times of peak demand. The following statements represent some of the key messages from the Study.

- Winchester has the potential to **secure an adequate supply of pitches** to meet current and future demand. If school sites are secured for community access through Community Use Agreements, the District could meet predicted demand.
- **Quality of pitches** is the main concern of both suppliers and users. It follows from the above, that after securing community access, those pitches which best fit the requirements of both the users and providers should receive more concentration of resources to improve quality.
- Provision of **sustainable sports facilities**. Parks-based, open access facilities are vulnerable to vandalism and misuse. Resources are wasted in attempting to maintain large numbers of historical sites.
- Provision of **appropriate changing facilities**. In order to provide for a range of users, changing facilities need to be fit for purpose. The need for segregation and flexibility to accommodate young children, girls and women, and disabled users cannot be achieved in outdated changing facilities which were designed for a former age.
- **Insufficient junior pitches**. This generally relates to the need to provide more small pitches, the dimensions of which must be appropriate for the age of users. Most of this can be achieved by reducing the number of senior pitches and reconfiguring them as juniors.
- **Insufficient hockey pitches** within the District boundary. Current requirement of this sport also points to the need for hockey to be played on artificial turf pitches.
- Provision of **floodlit STPs for training**. In order to take the pressure off of grass pitches and to allow them time to recover after use, it is essential to provide an alternative for training purposes.

8.6 Priorities from the Built Facilities Study

A number of key issues have emerged during completion of the audit of facilities and from discussions with neighbouring authorities and with NGB officer representatives.

These are summarised below in no order of priority:

8.6.1 New housing development

Identify new community, sport and recreation built facility requirements linked to major housing development

Development at West of Waterlooville, and potential development at Winchester City (North) and possibly North Whiteley will require the provision of new community halls and sports facilities.

8.6.2 Hierarchy of provision

- **Adoption by the Council of an agreed hierarchy of provision for Winchester District (Quantity)**

Based upon the outcomes of this Study and agreed levels of geographically based hierarchies of provision.

- **The role of the public, education, private and voluntary sectors and neighbouring authorities in contributing to this hierarchy of built facility provision (Accessibility)**

There is a need to establish formal Community Use agreements with secondary schools which play an important role for community sport and recreation.

8.6.3 Community halls

The role and quality of village halls/community centres and identification of 'hub' centres in contributing to the hierarchy of provision at a local parish level particularly in the rural areas (Quantity, Quality, Accessibility)

More detailed assessments of quality, quantity, and accessibility will contribute towards establishing a Community Halls Strategy for the District. Advice is available from Action with Communities in Rural England and their Corporate Report (2007-2010) and there is a village halls advisor for Hampshire.

8.6.4 Community Transport

The need to develop sustainable community transport commensurate with accessibility to built community and specialist sports facilities

In view of the difficulties of logistics and cost of leisure focused community transport extending into rural areas, there is a need, addressed though this Study, to provide accessible community/village halls of sufficient size and quality to accommodate a range of recreational sporting activities within key settlements. This need not preclude the development of a possible

community/leisure bus within the District that could operate and be costed in association with planned sport specific programmes and events, as well as provision of safe cycle paths and footpaths.

8.6.5 Existing local authority stock

- **Ageing Stock – River Park Leisure Centre**

River Park Leisure Centre has been redeveloped and upgraded including resources being provided by the leisure contractors DC Leisure. A recent condition survey indicates that ongoing works will be required in order to maintain the building to an acceptable standard. An appraisal of future options for the Centre is needed including scope for a capital receipt being generated from the site.

- **Limitations of Meadowside Leisure Centre**

The Centre was originally provided for use as a community centre and has been adapted for use as a leisure centre - there are a number of limitations which restrict use. Consideration should be given to provision of a pool at North Whiteley as part of new housing development, if new development takes place there, and the opportunity to provide dryside facilities should be explored. This would provide purpose built/appropriate provision for this part of the District.

In the interim there is scope to provide funding to improve or expand the venue short term to enable other activities to take place and increase income. The Parish Council uses the venue and specifically the meeting rooms for Council meetings and it is understood that alternative arrangements could be considered in the future.

There is a potential opportunity to link the proposal for a new swimming pool with the Amateur Swimming Association's Draft Regional Strategy for Swimming.

8.6.6 Education sites

- **Differing range and quality of facilities at Education sites**

The quality of provision provided at school and other education sites in the District varies considerably and those schools without adequate provision are all considering opportunities to improve provision – Henry Beaufort, Westgate and Sparsholt College are perhaps those in the greatest need to improve provision particularly for pupils and students. Sparsholt College is considering options for development including provision of indoor recreation space following confirmation of capital funding for improvement of facilities onsite.

The issue of school swimming pools has recently been reviewed by Hampshire CC and a decision has been made to close a significant number – one of the pools located in the Winchester District will stay open – Ridgemede Junior School which will benefit with the other 13 sites that are staying open from funding of £700k for improvements.

- **Potential conflict issue at Westgate between the school and the Badminton Centre**

There is a potential conflict/issue between the Badminton Centre and Westgate School over the arrangements for usage and management/maintenance of the Centre. In addition the Centre is looking to increase the number of courts and this will not be achieved without the support of the School and the City Council.

The School is exploring opportunities for development of outdoor provision and upgrading of indoor provision, some of which is in a poor state of repair.

- **Establishment of BSF Stakeholder Group**

Advice on Building Schools for the Future is that one of the first steps is to establish a local stakeholder group linking with the relevant Community Sports Partnership and with the local SPAA.

8.6.7 Synthetic turf pitches

Proposals for STP developments

A number of facilities are exploring the development of Synthetic Turf Pitches – the main development is proposed at Henry Beaufort School– the proposal is for an STP (90 % of the full size). Planning permission has recently been granted. In addition, Winchester Rugby Club and Winchester Football Club are both considering STP developments. There is scope to consider a joint development which both clubs and others could use. Consideration needs to be given to the requirements of potential users and the best location.

8.6.8 Ministry of Defence

Access to Army sites for community use

The two army sites in the District are used by local clubs, although most of the use is at the Sir John Moore Barracks. There are operational issues, particularly over security; however, the changes proposed for usage of the camps - in particular that Sir John Moore Barracks - is for the training of junior soldiers. This provides an opportunity to develop links with other facility providers such as Sparsholt College and local clubs. Good links have already been established between the Army and Winchester Rugby Club with regard to Army apprentices making use of the club for sports activity.

8.6.9 Winchester District SPAA (Sport and Physical Activity Alliance)

- **Scope for joint working between facility providers and clubs**

There is perhaps an opportunity to encourage/develop co-operation and joint working between facility providers in the District – perhaps under the auspices of the SPAA and also the establishment of a facilities forum or sub group to share information and co-operate on projects and initiatives.

- **Opportunity to develop a strategy under the auspices of the Winchester SPAA**

The development of a Strategy for Sports Facilities could be undertaken by the SPAA working with other key partners. This would enable ownership across a range of partners and perhaps would provide enhanced opportunities for co-operation and joint-working.

8.6.10 Joint working

Sub regional working – joint planning, procurement and future management

The work being undertaken by both Winchester and East Hampshire authorities could also link into projects being undertaken or being considered on a countywide basis by the Hants and IOW CLOA (Culture and Leisure Officers Association). This could include joint planning of facilities, particularly specialist provision, joint procurement of contracts which could result in cost savings and development/buy in to common management systems and processes including client monitoring and management of sports facilities.

8.6.11 Governing Bodies of Sport

Consultee on Regional Strategies and Plans

The Regional ASA and the Hampshire FA are currently drafting new or revised regional strategies and there is scope to input into these documents as a consultee – the ASA are about to circulate their draft Strategy.

8.6.12 Benchmarking

More formalised benchmarking

More formalised benchmarking against similar built facilities with neighbouring authorities and/or with the council's 'family' of authorities could be introduced. The Council could consider undertaking the National Benchmarking Survey and service provided by Sport England (ref. Test Valley) at a cost in the order of £1,500 to £4,000 per centre subject to whether surveys are conducted by internal or external personnel.

An alternative might be to benchmark across Hampshire through CLOA, the Culture and Leisure Officers Association, or through the District's leisure management contractor (DC Leisure).