
Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council:

Open Space Assessment



Produced by

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Open Space Assessment

Contents:

1. Introduction [\[pg 1\]](#)

- 1.1 An Introduction to the Report [\[pg 1\]](#)
- 1.2 The need for an open space assessment [\[pg 1\]](#)
- 1.3 The guiding principles of PPG17: A five-stage process [\[pg 2\]](#)
- 1.4 How is open space defined? [\[pg 3\]](#)

2. The Strategic Context [\[pg 4\]](#)

- 2.1 Introduction [\[pg 4\]](#)
- 2.2 Local Strategies [\[pg 4\]](#)
 - 2.2.1 Local Plan – June 2006 [\[pg 4\]](#)
 - 2.2.2 Qualitative Audit (2005) [\[pg 7\]](#)
 - 2.2.3 Outdoor Play Strategy (2005 – 2013) [\[pg 8\]](#)
 - 2.2.4 Sport and Active Recreation Plan (2003 – 2007) [\[pg 8\]](#)
 - 2.2.5 Open Space Assessment (2003) [\[pg 8\]](#)
 - 2.2.6 Playing Pitch Strategy (2000) [\[pg 9\]](#)
- 2.3 Regional Strategies and Key Documents
 - 2.3.1 Warwickshire County Council Structure Plan (2001) [\[pg 9\]](#)
 - 2.3.2 Warwickshire: A Vision for our Future; Local Cultural Strategy 2003-2006 [\[pg 10\]](#)
- 2.4 National Strategies and Key Documents [\[pg 10\]](#)
 - 2.4.1 The Green Flag Award (1996 to present) [\[pg 10\]](#)
 - 2.4.2. The NPFA Six Acre Standard [\[pg 11\]](#)
 - 2.4.3 English Nature: Accessible Natural Greenspace Model (2001) [\[pg 12\]](#)
 - 2.4.4 Green Spaces, Better Places
(The Urban Green Space Taskforce, 2002) [\[pg 12\]](#)
 - 2.4.5 Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener (ODPM, 2002) [\[pg 12\]](#)
 - 2.4.6 Manifesto for Better Public Spaces (CABE Space 2004) [\[pg 13\]](#)
 - 2.4.7 “Decent Parks? Decent Behaviour? The link between the Quality of Parks and User Behaviour.” (CABE Space, 2005) [\[pg 13\]](#)

3. Undertaking the Assessments: Methodology [\[pg 14\]](#)

- 3.1 Identifying the scope of the assessment [\[pg 14\]](#)
- 3.2 Stage 1: Identifying local needs [\[pg 14\]](#)
 - 3.2.1 ‘Open Space and Indoor Sport Facilities’ questionnaire [\[pg 15\]](#)
 - 3.2.2 Schools questionnaire [\[pg 15\]](#)
- 3.3 Stage 2: Auditing local provision [\[pg 16\]](#)
 - 3.3.1 Quantitative assessments of open space [\[pg 16\]](#)
 - 3.3.2 Qualitative assessments of open space [\[pg 16\]](#)
 - 3.3.3 Value assessments of open space [\[pg 19\]](#)
 - 3.3.4 Accessibility assessment [\[pg 20\]](#)
- 3.4 Stage 3: Setting provision standards [\[pg 22\]](#)

4. Overview of Open Space Provision within the Borough [pg 23]

5. Parks and Gardens [pg 24]

5.1 Identifying local needs [pg 24]

5.2 Auditing local provision [pg 25]

5.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites [pg 25]

5.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites [pg 26]

5.2.3 Qualitative and value results [pg 27]

5.2.4 Accessibility [pg 27]

5.2.5 Analysis of provision [pg 28]

5.3 Setting provision standards [pg 28]

5.3.1 Quantitative standard [pg 28]

5.3.2 Qualitative standard [pg 29]

5.3.3 Accessibility standard [pg 32]

5.4 Policy Implications [pg 34]

6. Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace [pg 35]

6.1 Identifying local needs [pg 35]

6.2 Auditing local provision [pg 36]

6.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites [pg 36]

6.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites [pg 37]

6.2.3 Qualitative and value results [pg 38]

6.2.4 Accessibility [pg 38]

6.2.5 Analysis of provision [pg 39]

6.3 Setting provision standards [pg 39]

6.3.1 Quantitative standard [pg 39]

6.3.2 Qualitative standard [pg 40]

6.3.3 Accessibility standard [pg 40]

6.4 Policy Implications [pg 43]

7. Green Corridors [pg 44]

7.1 Identifying local needs [pg 44]

7.2 Auditing local provision [pg 45]

7.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites [pg 45]

7.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites [pg 46]

7.2.3 Qualitative and value results [pg 47]

7.2.4 Accessibility [pg 47]

7.2.5 Analysis of provision [pg 48]

7.3 Setting provision standards [pg 48]

7.3.1 Quantitative standard [pg 48]

7.3.2 Qualitative standard [pg 48]

7.3.3 Accessibility standard [pg 49]

7.4 Policy Implications [pg 51]

8. Outdoor Sports Facilities [pg 52]

8.1 Identifying local needs [pg 52]

8.2 Auditing local provision [pg 53]

8.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites [pg 53]

8.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites [pg 54]

8.2.3 Qualitative and value results [pg 55]

8.2.4 Accessibility [pg 55]

8.2.5 Analysis of provision [pg 56]

8.3 Setting provision standards [pg 56]

8.3.1 Quantitative standard [pg 56]

8.3.2 Qualitative standard [pg 57]

8.3.3 Accessibility standard [pg 57]

8.4 Policy Implications [pg 60]

9. Amenity Greenspace [pg 61]

9.1 Identifying local needs [pg 61]

9.2 Auditing local provision [pg 62]

9.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites [pg 62]

9.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites [pg 63]

9.2.3 Qualitative and value results [pg 64]

9.2.4 Accessibility [pg 64]

9.2.5 Analysis of provision [pg 65]

9.3 Setting provision standards [pg 65]

9.3.1 Quantitative standard [pg 65]

9.3.2 Qualitative standard [pg 65]

9.3.3 Accessibility standard [pg 66]

9.4 Policy Implications [pg 68]

10. Provision for Children and Young People [pg 69]

10.1 Identifying local needs [pg 69]

10.2 Auditing local provision [pg 70]

10.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites [pg 70]

10.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites [pg 71]

10.2.3 Qualitative and value results [pg 72]

10.2.4 Accessibility [pg 72]

10.2.5 Analysis of provision [pg 73]

10.3 Setting provision standards [pg 73]

10.3.1 Quantitative standard [pg 73]

10.3.2 Qualitative standard [pg 74]

10.3.3 Accessibility standard [pg 76]

10.4 Policy Implications [pg 78]

11. Allotments, Community Gardens and Urban Farms [pg 79]

- 11.1 Identifying local needs [pg 79]
- 11.2 Auditing local provision [pg 80]
 - 11.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites [pg 80]
 - 11.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites [pg 81]
 - 11.2.3 Qualitative and value results [pg 82]
 - 11.2.4 Accessibility [pg 82]
 - 11.2.5 Analysis of provision [pg 83]
- 11.3 Setting provision standards [pg 83]
 - 11.3.1 Quantitative standard [pg 83]
 - 11.3.2 Qualitative standard [pg 84]
 - 11.3.3 Accessibility standard [pg 84]
- 11.4 Policy Implications [pg 86]

12. Cemeteries, Disused Churchyards and other Burial Grounds [pg 87]

- 12.1 Identifying local needs [pg 87]
- 12.2 Auditing local provision [pg 88]
 - 12.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites [pg 88]
 - 12.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites [pg 89]
 - 12.2.3 Qualitative and value results [pg 90]
 - 12.2.4 Accessibility [pg 90]
 - 12.2.5 Analysis of provision [pg 91]
- 12.3 Setting provision standards [pg 91]
 - 12.3.1 Quantitative standard [pg 91]
 - 12.3.2 Qualitative standard [pg 91]
 - 12.3.3 Accessibility standard [pg 92]
- 12.4 Policy Implications [pg 94]

13. Scope for further work [pg 95]

- 13.1 Applying Provision Standards and Drafting Policies [pg 95]
- 13.2 Undertaking Additional Consultation and Research [pg 96]

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: Qualitative audit criteria
- Appendix 2: Value assessment criteria
- Appendix 3: Site visit results
- Appendix 4: Sample 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' questionnaire
- Appendix 5: 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' Questionnaire results
- Appendix 6: School questionnaire
- Appendix 7: School questionnaire responses
- Appendix 8: Spreadsheet of Site Data
- Appendix 9: Indoor Sport Audit Results

1. Introduction

1.1 An introduction to the report

In March 2006, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council appointed **Jones Plus Limited** to undertake an assessment of open space provision within the Borough, in accordance to the principles and recommendations made within Planning Policy Guidance 17, 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' (2002), and its companion guide, 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities' (2002). At the core of this planning guidance is the notion that:

'Local authorities should undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sports and recreational facilities'. (PPG17)

In its broadest sense PPG17 provides the planning policy framework for open space, sport and recreation facilities. It provides policy guidance for local Planning Authorities to determine individual planning applications and develop local development plans, based upon audits of existing provision and an assessment of local needs. Within this guidance there is clear emphasis on a need to work towards local standards. However, as part of this, the guidance acknowledges that national standards may still have an important function as they can be used as benchmarks to inform the development of local standards.

1.2 The need for an Open Space Assessment.

The companion guide to PPG17 provides a clear framework for assessing open space, sport and recreation (this framework is described in further detail within section 1.3). Following this recommended framework will ensure that Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council have taken the appropriate steps to complete a robust assessment of all open space within their Borough.

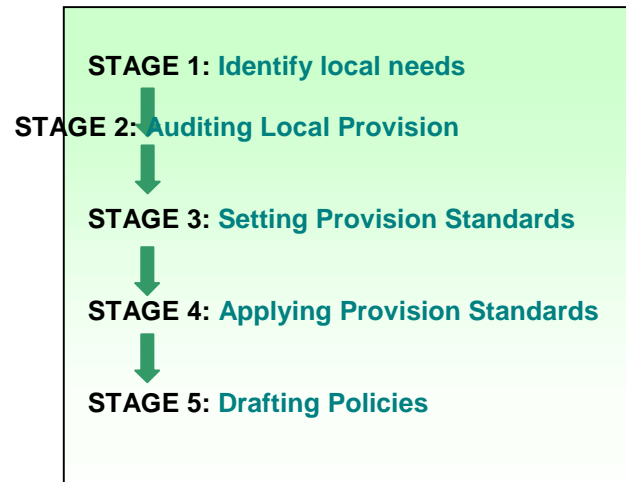
Such information will have meaningful benefits as it will feed directly into both the Council's Urban Capacity Study and Development Plan, providing detailed qualitative and quantitative data, as well as spatial analysis of open space provision. This will also be important when considering the new Local Development Framework, as it will help in the preparation of an evidence base to support key policies within the Core Strategy and other associated documents, thus ensuring that the Council can plan open space provision, for both present and future needs.

Aside from planning policy implications, this report will also have benefits for other Council services. For instance, there will be direct links to the production of the Council's proposed Green Space Strategy, providing a comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of open space and recreational facilities within the Borough. Furthermore, consultation undertaken as part of this assessment will also be of use for such strategies as it will provide an overview of existing attitudes and aspirations concerning open space provision.



1.3 The guiding principles of PPG17: A five-stage process

In order to undertake an assessment of open space and recreation facilities, the Companion Guide to PPG17 recommends undertaking a five stage process:



For the purpose of this report, *Jones Plus Limited* have completed stages 1 to 3, and have touched on stage 4 (see section 13). The final stage, 'drafting policies' will be undertaken by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council in light of the findings presented within this report, and following the due political processes.

Aside from the five-stage process, the Companion Guide to PPG17 suggests that there are four 'guiding principles' for undertaking local assessments.

- Local needs will vary spatially, even within a single authority area, according to different socio-demographic and cultural characteristics
- The delivery of high quality open spaces and sport recreational facilities is not solely dependent upon good planning, but also creative urban and landscape design and effective management and maintenance.
- Providing high quality open spaces will depend more on improving and enhancing the accessibility and quality of existing spaces, as opposed to providing new provision.
- The value of open spaces or sport and recreation facilities, irrespective of ownership depends on the extent to which they meet clearly identified local needs and the wider benefits they provide for people, wildlife, biodiversity and the wider environment.

From this it can be seen that local circumstances and needs are crucial considerations when planning open space assessments, and so PPG17 advocates that local approaches will need to be undertaken, appropriate to each specific local authority area.

1.4 How is open space defined?



Open Space is defined in the *Town and Country Planning Act 1990* as “land laid out as a public garden, or used for the purposes of public recreation, or land which is a disused burial ground”. Furthermore, the Urban Task Force (DTLR 2002) has derived a comprehensive typology for categorising open space, which PPG17 also recommends within its Companion Guide.

Therefore, for the purpose of this assessment, the typology of open space provided by the Urban Task Force is used throughout the report. This is summarised in the table below.

TYPE	PRIMARY PURPOSE
<i>Parks and Gardens</i>	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events e.g. urban parks, formal gardens and county parks
<i>Natural and semi-natural greenspaces (including urban woodland)</i>	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness e.g. woodland, grassland, wetland, and open or running water.
<i>Green Corridors</i>	Linear feature for walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel, and which provide opportunities for wildlife migration e.g. along cycleways, towpaths, and disused railway lines.
<i>Outdoor Sports facilities</i>	Participation in outdoor sports, such as pitch sports, tennis, bowls, athletics, golf courses and water sports
<i>Amenity Greenspace</i>	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas
<i>Provision for children and young people</i>	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
<i>Allotments, community gardens and urban farms</i>	Opportunities for people, who wish to do so, to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion
<i>Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds</i>	Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

2. The Strategic Context

2.1 Introduction

Prior to identifying local needs, it is necessary to review the implications of existing local, regional and national strategies. This may have significant land use implications in terms of open space, sport and recreation, impacting upon provision within the Borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth. Therefore at this stage it is appropriate to provide a review of existing strategies that may influence the assessment process.

2.2 Local Context

At the local level, the following key policy documents are relevant when considering an open space assessment:

2.2.1 Local Plan (June 2006)

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council's Local Plan was adopted in June 2006 and sets out land use policy and proposals for the Borough up to 2011. This adopted plan has the following key policies when considering the wider impact of this open space assessment:

Policy R1: Recreational Priority Areas

"Recreational Priority Areas are identified in the following sites:

1. *The Pingles Leisure Centre*
2. *Bedworth Leisure Centre*
3. *Jubilee Centre*
4. *Nuneaton Rugby Club*
5. *Bedworth Rugby Club*
6. *Harry Cleaver Sports Ground*
7. *Griff and Coton Sports Club."*



Implications: These sites have been identified as Recreational Priority Areas to allow for the upgrading and enhancement of existing facilities.

Policy R3: Playing Fields

"Proposals which involve small scale buildings and works on existing playing fields and sports grounds not within the Green Belt will be permitted provided that the development is ancillary to the main use."



Implications: The Local Plan recognises that existing playing fields within the Borough are under-utilised due to a lack of adequate changing facilities.

Policy R4: Playing Fields

“Developments on or change of use of playing fields, (including school playing fields and private playing fields) and other open spaces not within the Green Belt will not be permitted unless:

- (a) Sports pitches and ancillary facilities can best be retained and enhanced through redevelopment of a small part of the site; or*
- (b) The proposal is part of a scheme to develop new and improved facilities of equivalent community benefit which can continue to serve players, especially juniors and women from the immediate locality. An agreement will be required to ensure that the new sports pitches and facilities will be provided and be in readiness for use before any redevelopment of the existing pitches; or*
- (c) The site is identified in the Open Space Assessment as having little open space value.*

➡ Implications: Through the application of the above criteria, this policy seeks to protect playing fields and other open spaces not within the Green Belt, irrespective of their size, as the Council recognises the contribution that open space makes to the character and function of an area.

Policy R10: Bermuda Community Park

“5.97 hectares of land at Paradise Farm, Bermuda Road are allocated as informal open space.”

➡ Implications: This is a former landfill site that has been deemed to be unsuitable for housing. Recommendations within the Local Plan are for this area of land to be improved and developed as a community park for informal public open space use.

Policy R11: Allotments

“Existing allotment provision will be protected. Proposals to redevelop allotments for other uses will not be permitted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- (a) Their loss will not result in an unmet demand for allotments within a reasonable walking distance*
- (b) Adequate replacement allotments are proposed*
- (c) Landscaping the vacant land is not feasible.*

➡ Implications: The Council has a statutory duty to provide allotments for people wishing to use them. Within the Local Plan the Council recognises that allotment usage has declined, but still remains committed to promoting the use of allotments, given that they encourage healthy activity and function as important areas of green space within urban areas. Where development is sought, proposals should ensure that there will be enhancement of open space within the immediate area, either through improvement of an undeveloped portion of the site or by compensatory provision nearby. If alternative provision is proposed, this should be conveniently accessible to existing allotment holders.

Policy R13: Protection of Open Spaces

“A comprehensive assessment of all open space areas within the Borough has been undertaken. Development on open space identified in the assessment as being of high value will not be permitted.”

➡ **Implications:** The assessment, to which this policy relates to, identified all sites above 0.4 ha in size and was not compliant to PPG17. Therefore, this report produced by **Jones Plus Limited** will be beneficial as it identifies specific needs and quantitative and qualitative assessments. A more detailed examination of the Open Space Assessment that took place in 2003 is provided in section 2.2.5.

Policy ENV1: Green Belt

“Within the Green Belt development will not normally be permitted unless it is for:

- Agriculture and forestry
- Essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation, for cemeteries and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt, and which do not conflict with the purpose of including land in it.
- Limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings
- Limited infilling or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in adopted local plans.

➡ **Implications:** The Green Belt has an important role in restricting urban sprawl by helping to maintain a significant area of open space between Nuneaton, Bedworth, Bulkington and Coventry, and as such, the Local Plan only allows for development in certain situations, as stated above.

Policy ENV 2: Areas of Restraint

“In Areas of Restraint, as defined on the Proposals Map, development will only be permitted where the development would not adversely affect the open character or appearance of the area, taking into account any possible cumulative effects.”

➡ **Implications:** The Local Plan acknowledges that Areas of Restraint do not have the same permanence as land designated as Green Belt, and therefore, there is potential for development of such areas, following the guidance stated above. Longer term, in order to identify land suitable for future development, previously developed land will be considered prior to greenfield sites.



Policy ENV 3: Rural and Urban Countryside Policy

"Planning permission will only be granted for development in the countryside if it:

- a) is necessary to meet the needs of farming, forestry, agriculture, recreation, tourism and other enterprises with an essential requirement to locate in the countryside; or
- b) represents a land use for which there is a demonstrable need which cannot be met within the urban area; or
- c) relates to the reuse of existing buildings, provided the proposed uses are generally acceptable in the countryside and in accordance with Env5; or
- d) relates to the limited extension or alteration of an existing building.

Development satisfying a, b, c or d above, will only be permitted provided that:

- It would not harm the overall character and quality of the countryside.
- The type and amount of traffic generated would not cause harm to the surroundings.
- It presents a sustainable opportunity for development.
- The design and materials of the development should be of a high standard in keeping with the scale and character of the locality; and
- The loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land is minimised."

➡ Implications: This policy seeks to protect the rural and urban countryside, ensuring that any development is sustainable and in keeping with the local surroundings.

Policy ENV 27: Cemeteries

Land off Eastboro Way, Nuneaton, and Heath Road, Bedworth are allocated for cemetery purposes as identified on the Proposals Map. The Council will investigate using part of these allocations for "green" burials and has also allocated land off Church Lane, Exhall which may also include land for "green" burials.

➡ Implications: The Council has land available for ten years of burials. However, additional land will be required after this period, and potential sites have been earmarked.

2.2.2 Qualitative Audit (2005)


A Borough-wide qualitative audit of all Council maintained open space was undertaken in 2005 by **Jones Plus Limited**, on behalf of the Council's Public Amenities Service, linked to the future development of a Green Space Strategy. Emphasis was placed on primarily auditing children's play areas and recreation grounds, with the assessment based upon criteria and classification stated within Annex B of the Companion Guide to PPG17. The findings indicated that the quality of open space within the Borough was unsatisfactory, as the average score based on all site visits was 38.30 %. When analysing the marks for equipped play areas the report highlighted that the quality and play challenge provided by play areas in several Wards was limited, suggesting that there is scope for improvement and this is recognised within the Outdoor Play Strategy 2005 – 2013, which is discussed in the following section (2.2.3).

➡ Implications: This work provides an excellent basis for Stage 2 of this open space assessment: 'auditing local provision'. However, it does need to be expanded to include all open space irrespective of ownership in order to provide a robust background to existing and future planning policies.



2.2.3 Outdoor Play Strategy (2005 – 2013)


This strategy was produced following play value, accessibility and risk assessment audits of all play area within the Borough. It highlighted that the Borough Council presently maintains in excess of sixty equipped play areas, although these vary in terms of play value and maintenance. This strategy acknowledges that distribution of play areas has been based on a location methodology rather than on ease of access for particular areas of population, and this has resulted in an unbalanced level of provision across the Borough.

 **Implications:** The strategy highlights that existing play facilities have limited play value and fall short of providing clean, safe, stimulating and accessible play areas within easy reach of all children throughout the Borough. To address this, the Council is determined to provide play areas of the highest quality, within the resources available. With this in mind, Public Amenities plan to reduce the number of play areas to forty-four with £2 million to be spent on improving these play areas over the life-span of the eight year programme.

2.2.4 Sport and Recreation Plan (2003 – 2007)

This plan developed from wide-ranging consultation with the local community, working in conjunction with key stakeholders in the delivery of sport and recreation. When looking to explore how sport and recreation could be improved over the five year period of the plan, the following themes emerged:

- Difficulties in accessing public transport
- Difficulties in gaining access to information about services
- Lack of provision, or of access to, opportunities which are available for young people, older people and people with disabilities.
- Desire to see improved communication between the Borough Council and the Community.

 **Implications:** At the time of undertaking this open space assessment it should be noted that a new Sport and Recreation Plan is presently being produced, with extensive consultation having recently been undertaken, the findings of which will be reflected in the new plan. Therefore, the 2003-2007 plan will have minimal impact on this assessment.

2.2.5 Open Space Assessment (2003)

The Open Space Assessment carried out in 2003 was undertaken in order to assist in the preparation of policies for the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Local Plan. Open spaces above a threshold of 0.4 hectares were included within the audit, with the assessment focusing on each site's importance at the local, ward and Borough level, with equal weighting given to all three aspects.

The findings of this assessment were that all wards within the Borough comply with the National Playing Fields Association minimum standards of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population, except for the wards of Bulkington and Mount Pleasant, although it should be noted that the ward boundaries have since changed. (At the time the previous assessment was completed there were fifteen wards in the Borough, which has subsequently risen to seventeen).

➡ **Implications:** The previous assessment was not as extensive or as detailed as this assessment as it did not look at provision across the Borough, instead concentrating on the major urban areas of the Borough; Nuneaton, Bedworth and Bulkington. The threshold of 0.4 hectares also created problems as it omits many smaller open spaces that may have an important contribution to meeting local needs. Whilst PPG17 does not stipulate a specific threshold, the Companion Guide does suggest auditing all open space above 0.2 hectares. Thus, the information provided from this previous assessment cannot directly feed into this report as the criteria used were not compliant to PPG17.

2.2.6 Playing Pitch Strategy (2000)

A Playing Pitch Strategy was produced in 2000 and focused on assessing football, junior football and cricket provision across the Borough. The research highlighted that school playing fields played a very important role in meeting the demand for grass pitch provision at the time the survey was completed. Although pitch provision generally satisfied demand, there were spatial inequalities with provision varying between Wards. Furthermore, use of some outdoor playing fields was not being maximised due to a lack of adequate changing facilities, which put increasing pressures on playing fields that were equipped with good ancillary facilities.

➡ **Implications:** Although reviewed every two years, the intended lifespan of this Strategy is ten years. Therefore, the information gained from this assessment should help to up-date information gained during the production of this playing pitch strategy.

2.3 Regional Strategies & Key Documents:

2.3.1 Warwickshire County Council Structure Plan (2001)


Warwickshire County Council has prepared a Structure Plan for the period up to 2011. This sets out strategic land policies for Warwickshire. The Plan was adopted in August 2001 and linked to this, Nuneaton and Bedworth's Local Plan (section 2.2.1) has to be prepared in accordance with the adopted Structure Plan.

➡ **Implications:** The County-wide structure plan provides the framework for developing the Borough's Local Plan. However, it is also recognised that community influences are important at the local level, something that cannot be accounted for at the national and regional level. It is important to gauge local opinions regarding open spaces, and so identifying local needs is a key component of this assessment

2.3.2 Warwickshire - A Vision for our Future: Local Cultural Strategy 2003-2006

This joint Strategy was produced by a county-wide partnership including Warwickshire County Council and the five Borough/District Councils, including Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council. The strategy outlines priorities for culture and seeks to generate support for a wide range of cultural projects and initiatives under four common themes:

- Taking pride in Warwickshire
- Growing the grassroots
- Increasing cultural opportunities
- Investing in culture

 **Implications:** This open space assessment will provide a range of important information that could inform the future development of a Borough, or Regional Cultural Strategy, as the audits of provision will provide information concerning a range of cultural opportunities such as outdoor sports facilities, children's play provision, and the natural environment.

2.4 National Strategies & Key Documents

Within the past few years, national policies and guidance has highlighted the importance of greenspace, with clear emphasis placed on its importance in enhancing the environment, particularly the urban environment. Aside from Planning Policy Guidance 17, other important documents and standards include:

2.4.1 The Green Flag Award (1996 to present)


The Green Flag award scheme began in 1996 as a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country, and has since progressed to be recognised as the national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales. As an example of the awards rising status, in 1996 only 16 parks submitted an application for Green Flag status, compared to 529 applications submitted in 2006.

The objective of this scheme is to 'encourage the provision of good quality public parks and green spaces that are managed in environmentally sustainable ways'. Applications are submitted on an annual basis and assessed against the following criteria:

- A welcoming place
- Healthy, safe and secure
- Well-maintained and clean
- Sustainability
- Conservation and heritage
- Community involvement
- Marketing
- Management

In addition to these criteria, site management plans should also be in place, including important information such as partnership working, maintenance regimes, etc. Where possible, management plans should also be linked to an overarching ‘Open Space Strategy’.

Two other award schemes exist in conjunction with the Green Flag Award. Firstly, there is the Green Pennant Scheme, which is a national award that recognises high quality green spaces in England and Wales that are managed by voluntary and community groups. Secondly, there is Green Heritage Site Status, which ‘promotes the value of, and best practice in, the care and upkeep of parks and green spaces in England that are of local or national historic interest.’ In order to be eligible, sites must be at least 30 years old, but do not have to be on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.


 **Implications:** The Green Flag Award scheme is recognised as the national benchmark for quality parks and green spaces. With this in mind, the Green Flag Award criteria provide an important framework when establishing a set of quality standards for greenspace based upon this audit’s findings

2.4.2 The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) Six-Acre Standard (2001)

The six-acre standard recommends a minimum standard for ‘outdoor playing space’ of 2.4 ha per 1000 population. ‘Outdoor playing space’ is defined by the NPFA as land “that is safely accessible and available to the general public and of suitable size for sport, active recreation or children’s play”.

The value of this national benchmark is that it functions as an effective planning tool, helping to ensure that there is sufficient land set aside in appropriate locations to enable people of all ages, especially the young, to participate in outdoor play, games, sports and other physical recreation. The recommended provision standard of 2.4 ha is broken down into two key parts, as shown below:


OUTDOOR SPORT	CHILDREN'S PLAYING SPACE
(i) Pitches, greens, courts, athletics tracks and other miscellaneous sites owned by local authorities at all tiers	(i) Designated areas containing a range of facilities -that has been designed to provide focused opportunities for outdoor play
(ii) Facilities described in (i) within the education sector which are available for public use	(ii) Casual or informal playing space within housing areas
(iii) Facilities described in (i) within the voluntary, private, industrial and commercial sectors which serve the leisure time needs of members, or the public.	
1.6 ha / 1000 population	0.8 ha / 1000 population

 **Implications:** This is an important benchmark which can be used to compare local provision levels identified within this assessment.



2.4.3 English Nature: Accessible Natural Greenspace Model (2001)


English Nature has provided a recommended standard for natural greenspace, through its 'Accessible Natural Greenspace' model. Within this, it is recommended that there should be at least 2 hectares (ha) of accessible natural greenspace per 1000 population.

 **Implications:** This is an important benchmark which can be used to compare local provision levels identified within this assessment

2.4.4 Green Spaces, Better Places (The Urban Green Space Taskforce, 2002)

This report contained 52 recommendations for achieving a better future for urban parks and green spaces. This report was based on the findings, conclusions and recommendations of six working groups, which reviewed a range of information and examples of good practice.


As part of this, an open space typology was developed, which has already been discussed in section 1.4. The importance of this typology is that it has been widely used as the basis for undertaking local assessments of need, audits of existing provision, and to ensure comparability of data collection across local authorities.

 **Implications:** This open space typology is a recognised classification of open space, and as such, is used throughout this report.

2.4.5 Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener (ODPM, 2002)


This report recognises that safe, well-maintained and attractive public spaces have a critical role in creating pride in the places where people want to live which, in turn, is essential to building community cohesion and successful communities. With this in mind, the report suggests ways in which high quality public spaces can be achieved, with an emphasis on committed leadership, strong partnerships, community involvement, innovation, communication and sharing of best practice all cited as important factors.

Furthermore, the report highlights that parks and green spaces should meet the needs of everyone, particularly children and young people, older people, those with disabilities, minority groups and people in disadvantaged areas.

 **Implications:** It is important that open space provision meets the needs of the local community.


2.4.6 Manifesto for Better Public Spaces (CABE Space, 2004)

The importance of good quality public open spaces has been demonstrated by initiatives such as CABE Space's 'Manifesto for Better Public Spaces.' This initiative highlighted the important, positive role that open space has on issues such as health and well-being, ecology, and cohesive communities. This initiative emphasised that there needs to be improved access to natural spaces, parks, play areas, and public spaces.

 **Implications:** Access is one of the key issues that is assessed as part of this Open Space Assessment

2.4.7 "Decent Parks? Decent Behaviour? The link between the Quality of Parks and User Behaviour." (CABE Space, 2005)

This publication provides examples of where neglect and poor maintenance of parks and open spaces, can in turn, attract vandalism and anti-social behaviour. However, to counter this, it also provides supporting case-studies that demonstrate how a combination of good design and appropriate management and maintenance have helped to raise standards within open spaces, helping to increase usage levels and reduce the threat of crime and anti-social behaviour.

 **Implications:** This publication emphasises the importance of 'quality' of open spaces. As part of this assessment, local qualitative standards will be established for different types of open space.

3. Undertaking the Assessments: Methodology

3.1 Identifying the scope of the assessment

At the outset of this project, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council stated that the open space assessment must identify all open space sites that are peripheral to, or within the urban areas / settlements of the Borough. In addition to this, the assessment also had to comply with PPG17 and the Companion Guide. With this in mind, *Assessing Needs and Opportunities: a Companion Guide to PPG 17* provides a clear framework for undertaking local assessments of open space, namely that audits of provision should encompass:

- All existing open spaces and sport and recreation facilities larger than 0.2 hectares in size, irrespective of ownership and the extent of public access
- All primary and secondary schools and other educational institutions.

The Companion Guide also recommends excluding minor open spaces that are not intended for a specific use. Based upon this, the following open spaces were not included within this assessment:

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

The above criteria were used to identify open space peripheral to, or within the Borough's urban areas. This information was gained by using the Council's Geographical Information System. When undertaking this task it was noted that some types of provision, such as play areas, were smaller than 0.2 hectares; thus an exception to the rule was made for sites less than threshold that make an important contribution to local provision.

In addition to assessing open space, additional information was gathered relating to the provision of indoor sport facilities. Although not part of the brief, this information was obtained as PPG17 also advocates an assessment of indoor sport facilities. Therefore, the information displayed in Appendix 9 could be of future use.

3.2 Stage 1: Identifying local needs

Within PPG17 considerable emphasis is placed on identifying local needs to ensure that there is adequate provision of accessible, high quality open spaces, which importantly meet the needs of its local communities and visitors. To achieve this, Borough wide consultation has been conducted to support other recent questionnaires conducted by the Council.

3.2.1 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' questionnaire

It is impossible to identify local needs without consulting with local communities. Therefore, an 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' questionnaire was sent out to all households across the Borough to ensure that the consultation process was as open and transparent as possible. This questionnaire was designed by **Jones Plus Limited**, but amended by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council to ensure that key corporate issues were covered. Out of 51,255 questionnaires that were distributed, 2200 completed questionnaires were returned in pre-paid envelopes to the Council Office, a return rate of 4.29%. All relevant Council departments were included in developing the questionnaire including Parks and Recreation, Leisure Trust, and Planning Policy. From these discussions, the purpose of this consultation exercise was to establish the following:

- Attitudes to existing provision across the Borough.
- Attitudes to the quality of provision across the Borough.
- Factors that prevent people from using and visiting different types of open space and sport facilities.
- How people travel to different types of open space, and how far they are prepared to travel.

A borough-wide approach was adopted to enable analysis on accessibility, quality and quantity to be based on equality of provision, rather than be influenced by factors such as affluence, deprivation, etc. The Council may wish to explore how attitudes vary spatially at a later date by consulting with specific communities.

3.2.2 Schools questionnaires

All nurseries, schools and colleges within the Borough were sent a questionnaire asking them to provide details of any outdoor open space / sports facilities that they provide. The purpose of this was to update existing Council information including the following:

- Number of school playing fields.
- Number of school playing fields that are available outside of school hours for the community or sports clubs to use.
- Existing amenities that are available for use when using school playing fields e.g. toilets, changing rooms, etc.

3.3 Stage 2: Auditing local provision

3.3.1 Quantitative assessments of open space

A quantity assessment of open space provision was undertaken to identify trends in provision across the Borough. All open spaces identified within the audit were recorded on the Council's GGP system, a Geographical Information System capable of displaying and storing digital maps and spatial data. By utilising GGP, the following information was obtained for each type of open space:

- Total number of sites within the Borough (based upon primary and secondary purpose)
- Total number of sites within each Ward.
- Total area of provision within the Borough.
- Total area of provision within each Ward

However, this information becomes more useful when combining it with population demographics. By utilising information contained within the 2001 Census, it was then possible to calculate the amount of provision per 1000 population for each type of open space. Initially, this was calculated at Borough level, but was then broken down into Ward level.

3.3.2 Qualitative assessments of open space

The companion guide to PPG 17 states that 'any assessment of the quality or nature of existing open spaces or sport and recreation facilities needs a clear set of benchmarks, related to set standards, and, ideally, some form of scoring system.'

The scoring system outlined within Annex B of the Companion Guide forms the basis of the qualitative assessment used in this report, representing an effective, repetitive procedure for assessing a large number of open spaces. In order to provide a more detailed approach to assessing quality of open space, a further five factors were included. Thus, the following seventeen factors formed the basis of the quality assessment:

- Entrances
 - Site Boundaries
 - Roads, paths and access
 - Planted Areas
 - Grass Area
 - Bins
 - Seats
 - Toilets
 - Parking
 - Lighting
 - Information
 - Cleanliness
 -
 - Fencing
 - Play Area
 - Security
 - Signage
 - Disability Discrimination Act Compliance
- Factors included within Annex B of the Companion Guide*
- Additional factors included*

The additional five factors were chosen based on the fact that they are linked, either partly or fully, to the broad assessment criteria used in the government supported Green Flag Award - an award scheme that is increasingly recognised as representing the national standard for parks and open spaces.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) is particularly relevant, as it requires service providers to have made changes to the way they deliver their services. Expanding on this, as of the 1st October 2004, it is now their responsibility to ensure that they have made 'reasonable adjustments' to the physical features of their premises. This is a positive step to help overcome barriers to access and thus ensure that all users are provided for. Therefore, as part of this Qualitative Audit, evidence was sought that showed relevant adaptation of facilities, provision of appropriate access, (both into and through all open spaces), and provision of appropriate play facilities.

Each of the seventeen factors are associated with a scoring system based upon set criteria (again drawing upon the example highlighted within Annex B of the Companion Guide, with a full list of the criteria provided within Appendix 1). To demonstrate this, the example on the following page shows one of the quality factors, 'Site Boundaries'.



Factor: SITE BOUNDARIES:

DESCRIPTION	SCORE
All clearly defined and appropriately maintained	3
Clearly defined although maintenance of the boundary features could be improved in some instances	2
Well defined around most of the site perimeter, with only a limited area not clearly defined	1
Not clearly defined - maintenance needed	0

If a site had clearly defined boundaries which all appeared to be in good condition, then the score attributed to this feature based upon the above scoring system would be '3'. During each site visit, the most appropriate description for each factor was selected, and the corresponding score recorded. Therefore, each open space has a set of quality scores for all applicable factors, which in turn have been used to calculate an overall percentage score for quality.

This type of quality assessment was used for all open space, irrespective of typology, although in some instances not all of the seventeen factors were applicable. To illustrate, it would be unreasonable to expect formal play provision to be provided within an allotment or cemetery. Therefore, such a factor would be assessed as 'not applicable' within the quality assessment for this particular type of open space, and therefore not included when calculating the overall quality score.

Although this type of assessment provides an excellent way of comparing different open spaces, it should be noted that the function of any of the given factors may vary depending upon typology. A case-in point of this is the factor 'grass areas'. In order to score highly within an amenity greenspace, the grass would need to be cleanly cut and weed free. However, within a natural or semi-natural greenspace, grass areas have a different function, and these differences are reflected within maintenance regimes e.g. the management plan may advise leaving the grass area to grow over a period of years to encourage a range of floral species, and so it would be unfair to penalise such a site for not being cleanly cut. Therefore, for factors such as this, the criteria allow for the assessor to award a relevant mark given the open space typology.

3.3.3 Value assessments of open space

The Companion Guide to PPG17 states:

“Quality and value are fundamentally different and can be completely unrelated. For example, a high quality facility or open space may be located where it is inaccessible and therefore of little value; while if a run-down or derelict facility is the only one in an area it may be immensely valuable.”

With this in mind, the Companion Guide advises that quality and value are assessed separately, and recommends that value assessments are based on three ‘core’ factors, namely:

- *Context* – e.g. Inaccessible spaces have little meaningful value to potential users. Similarly, if there is an abundance of provision within an area, the value of any given space may be reduced, or conversely, if there is a lack of provision, the value of a space may be high.
- *Level and type of use* – e.g. Poorly used spaces or facilities may be of little value, whilst well-used facilities will be of higher value.
- *Wider benefits* – Includes the benefits there are for people, biodiversity and the wider environment.

The Companion Guide advises that evaluating ‘context’ and ‘level and type of use’ is relatively simple, but evaluating wider benefits is more complicated, given that it incorporates a range of issues. Things to consider when evaluating ‘wider benefits’ include:

- Structural and landscape benefits
- Ecological benefits
- Education benefits
- Social inclusion and health benefits
- Cultural and heritage benefits

The value assessments undertaken as part of this assessment follow the guidance and structure recommended by the Companion Guide (see Appendix 2 for the framework used to undertake the value assessments). This assessment sheet identifies specific areas in which to assess the value of open space, based upon the three ‘core factors’ identified, thereby providing a snapshot of existing open space value.

It should be noted that trying to gauge the true value of all open space would require more detailed investigation than is possible within the time-frame of this report. **For instance, the value attributed to an open space will vary from person to person, and so ideally, extensive consultation aimed at understanding local views regarding specific open spaces should be undertaken. In addition, detailed analysis looking at the economic value of open space could also be undertaken.** However, for the purpose of this investigation, the value assessments undertaken by *Jones Plus Limited* are compliant with PPG17 and provide an effective means of comparing open spaces, as well as highlighting areas where more can be done to raise the value of an open space: value is not fixed and can be enhanced over time through improvements to the open space.

3.3.4 Accessibility assessment

(i) Identifying the Effective Catchments

Distance thresholds provide a flexible guide as to how far people are prepared to travel to a particular facility or open space. The Companion Guide to PPG 17 recognises this as a particularly effective tool for planning, when used in conjunction with a Geographical Information System, as it enables catchments to be visually displayed around different facilities and types of open space.

Distance thresholds were identified for all types of open space based upon the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' questionnaire that was distributed to all households within the Borough. As part of this, respondents were asked how far they would be prepared to travel to different types of open spaces, and by what mode of transport. The responses showed that the dominant ways of getting to open spaces was on foot or by car. Unfortunately, there were insufficient responses from people who cycle to open spaces and so these results were not used to calculate cycling thresholds. However, the Council may wish to pursue additional consultation with local cycle forums to identify distance thresholds for cyclists, particularly when considering sustainable transport.

Rather than taking the average time that people were prepared to travel as the basis for calculating the distance threshold, the Companion Guide to PPG17 recommends calculating the *effective catchment*; this is the time that 75-80% of respondents are prepared to travel (for the purpose of this report the catchment was set to 75%).

It is important to understand that when working out the time that 75% of respondents were prepared to travel, those that were prepared to travel a long time to a particular type of open space (e.g. 30 minutes), would prefer to travel to open space in a shorter time. In contrast, those who were only willing to travel a short time, such as 5 minutes, would not be prepared to travel longer than this. This had to be taken into account when calculating the time at which 75% of respondents would be prepared to travel.

(ii) Calculating distance thresholds based on average walking speeds

Using the identified effective catchment time, this then had to be converted into an appropriate distance threshold, using information related to walking speeds. In 2001, CABE produced a report, 'By Design: Better Places to Live – Planning Guide to



PPG3', that recommends that a walking distance from residential areas to facilities should be a maximum of ten minutes, or an equivalent distance of 800 metres. This equates to a walking speed of 80 metres / minute, and a range of other research undertaken by English Nature, English Heritage and the National Playing Fields Association have all come up with figures that are the same or similar to this. Therefore, for the purpose of this report an average walking speed of 80 metres / minute was used in calculating distance thresholds. The only exception to this rule was for provision for children and young people, where the average walking speed was adjusted to 50 metres / minute, as it is unreasonable to expect a child to walk at the same rate as an adult.

By multiplying the 'effective catchment' time with the average walking speed, this calculates the 'actual' distance that respondents were prepared to travel when visiting different types of open space, as opposed to 'as the crow flies' distance. In terms of using Geographical Information Systems, it is far easier to plot the latter, and so a further calculation was required to convert this into a straight line distance threshold. The National Playing Fields Association Six Acre Standard converts the following walking times into actual and straight line distances:

NPFA classification	Time	'Actual' Distance (metres)	'Straight-Line' Equivalent (metres)
LAP	1 minute	100	60
LEAP	5 minutes	400	240
NEAP	15 minutes	1000	600

This research indicates that the straight line equivalent is 60% of the actual distance and so this was used for all actual distances of 1000 metres or less. For any distances over 1000 metres, a multiplier of 70% was used (based on research by Kit Campbell Associates who argue that detours from 'as the crow flies' route tend to be proportionally more significant in shorter than longer journeys, and so they recommend that the straight line equivalent should be in the order of 70% of the actual distance for all distances greater than 1000 metres.

(iii) Calculating Distance Thresholds based on average motor-vehicle speeds.

The exact same process was undertaken as in (ii) except that the average speed was adjusted to reflect driving, not walking patterns. Warwickshire County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP) has actual figures for average vehicle speeds within Nuneaton and Bedworth. Given that most car journeys to open spaces will take place outside of rush-hour periods, the average off-peak speed according to this LTP in Nuneaton was calculated as 18.87 km/h for the period 2005-2006, whilst in Bedworth it was 19.82 km/h (for the same time period). The average of these two speeds was taken as a Borough-wide indicator of average speed; which equates to 19.345 km/h, or 0.3224 km/minute.



3.4 Stage 3: Setting Provision Standards

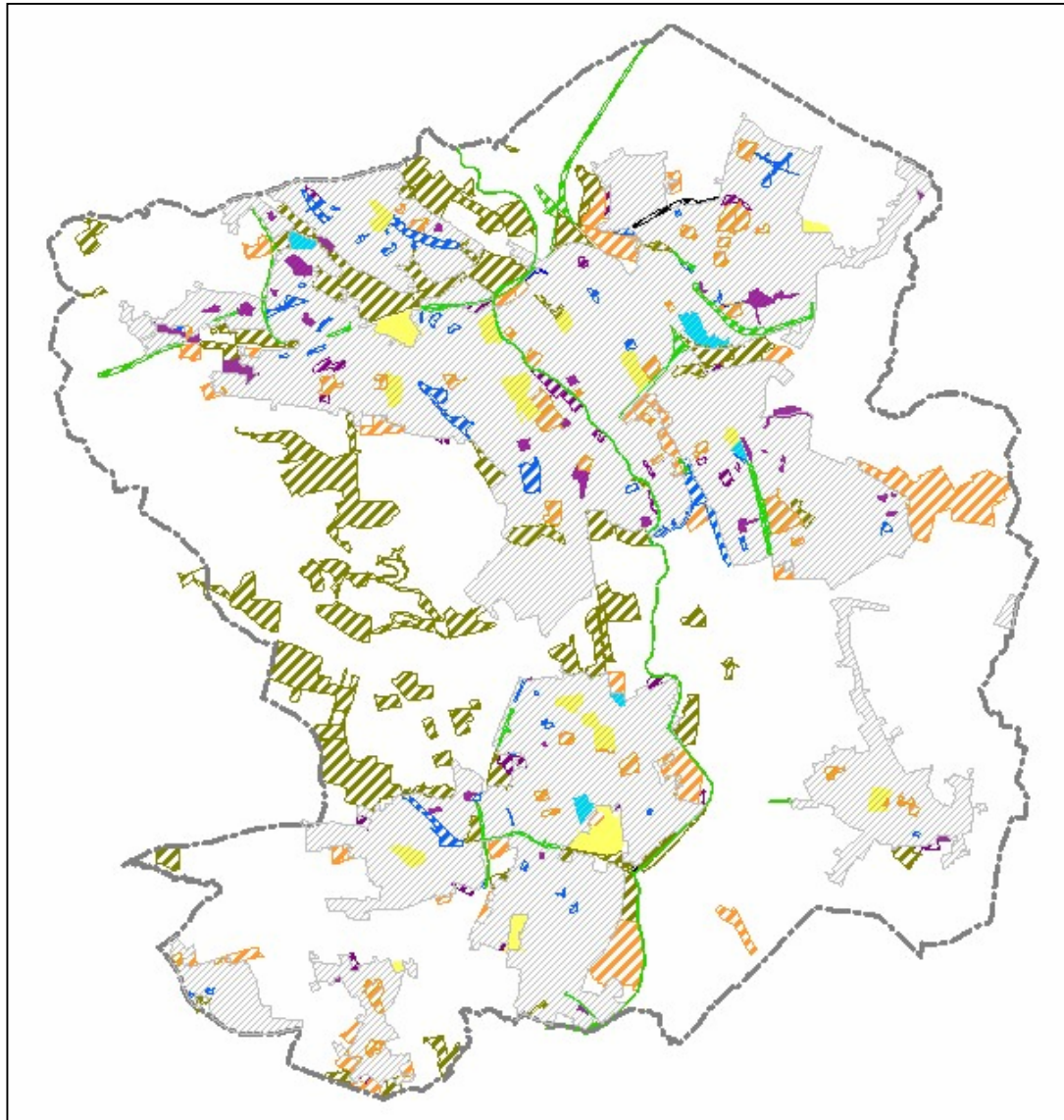
Once the local needs had been identified and the audits of provision completed, it was then possible to establish a set of locally-derived provision standards. PPG 17 advises that local standards should incorporate the following three elements:

- A quantitative standard
- A qualitative standard
- An accessibility standard

Each of these three elements will vary dependent upon type of open space and this has been reflected in the standards that have been developed.

The following sections show the results of the open space audit. Please note a full breakdown of results is provided within Appendix 3 and Appendix 8. These results are summarised within the following sections.

4. Overview of Open Space Provision within the Borough



KEY:

- | | |
|---|---|
|  Outdoor sports facilities |  Parks and gardens |
|  Natural and semi-natural greenspace |  Provision for children & young people |
|  Amenity greenspace |  Cemeteries |
|  Allotments |  Green corridors |
|  Urban Areas | |



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5. Parks and Gardens

5.1 Identifying Local Needs: Open Space and Indoor Sport Questionnaire Analysis

The results from this consultation exercise are displayed in Appendix 5. However, with regard to parks and gardens the following key information was obtained:

- **Usage levels:** Of the 2010 respondents to this question, 51.1% visit parks and public gardens at least once a month, with only 9.0% stating that they never visit this type of open space.

➡ **Implications:** Based on this consultation, parks and public gardens are regularly visited by residents of the Borough indicating that there is local demand for this type of space.

- **Quality:** When asked to assess the quality of provision within the Borough using a scale of 1 to 5, analysis shows that the average mark awarded to parks and public gardens was 3.51 (where 1 was very poor and 5 excellent). When compared with other types of open space within the Borough, this represented the highest average mark.

➡ **Implications:** The Borough-wide consensus is that the existing quality of parks and public gardens is very good, particularly when compared with other types of open space.

- **Quantity:** Out of the 1861 that provided a response, 74.1% stated that there was adequate provision of parks and public gardens within the Borough. Only 25.7% stated that there was insufficient provision.

➡ **Implications:** Based on this consultation, respondents feel that there is sufficient provision of parks and gardens to meet demand.

- **Mode of Transport:** Slightly more than 1 in 20 respondents use public transport as their main method of transport to this type of open space (5.5%). More commonly, users either walk, cycle or use a motor vehicle, with response levels very similar - 840 stated that their main method of transport was by motor vehicle compared to 874 who either walk or cycle.

➡ **Implications:** The consultation indicates that people use a variety of available transport methods to access parks and public gardens.

5.2 Auditing Local Provision

5.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites

By combining site surveys with desktop research, the following quantitative information was gathered for parks and gardens:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Number of 'primary purpose' sites	Number of 'secondary purpose' sites	Total area of open space (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	1	0	2.409	0.333
Arbury	5482	0	0	0	0
Attleborough	7564	1	0	0.876	0.116
Bar Pool	7451	3	0	21.112	2.833
Bede	6760	1	0	6.169	0.913
Bulkington	6303	1	0	1.313	0.208
Camp Hill	7325	1	0	3.144	0.429
Exhall	7381	2	0	2.984	0.404
Galley Common	7593	0	0	0	0
Heath	6377	1	0	3.142	0.493
Kingswood	6878	1	0	3.772	0.548
Poplar	6850	1	0	8.758	1.279
Slough	7058	1	0	2.177	0.308
St Nicolas	7073	1	0	2.245	0.317
Weddington	7286	0	0	0	0
Wem Brook	7082	1	0	5.16	0.729
Whitestone	7435	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	119132	16	0	63.261	0.531



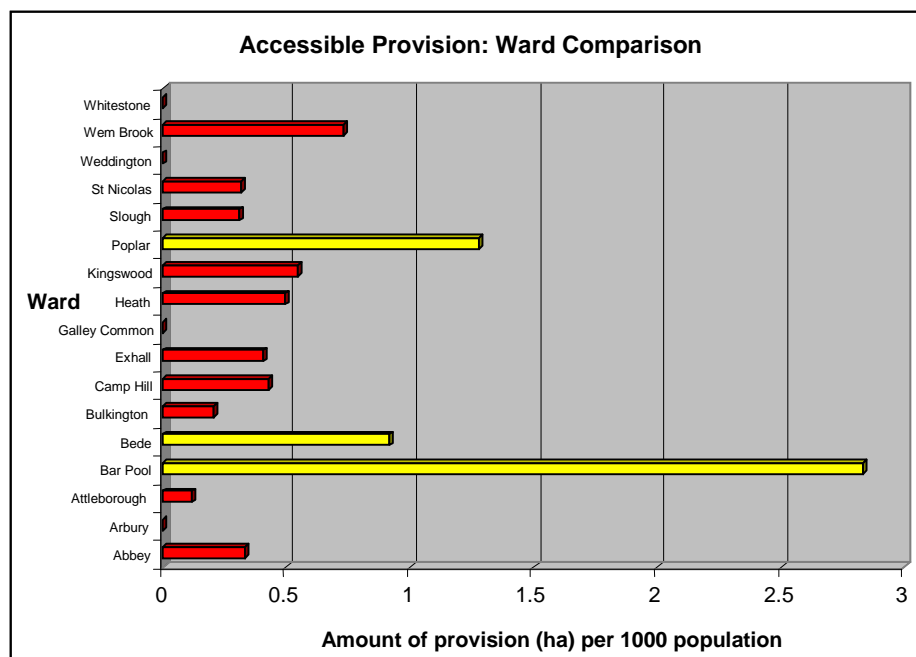
Example of Parks and Gardens:

Riversley Park

5.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites

The number of sites that were deemed to be fully, or partly accessible to the public, were as follows:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Total number of sites	Total area of sites (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	1	2.409	0.333
Arbury	5482	0	0	0
Attleborough	7564	1	0.876	0.116
Bar Pool	7451	3	21.112	2.833
Bede	6760	1	6.169	0.913
Bulkington	6303	1	1.313	0.208
Camp Hill	7325	1	3.144	0.429
Exhall	7381	2	2.984	0.404
Galley Common	7593	0	0	0
Heath	6377	1	3.142	0.493
Kingswood	6878	1	3.772	0.548
Poplar	6850	1	8.758	1.279
Slough	7058	1	2.177	0.308
St Nicolas	7073	1	2.245	0.317
Weddington	7286	0	0	0
Wem Brook	7082	1	5.16	0.729
Whitestone	7435	0	0	0
TOTAL	119132	16	63.261	0.531



5.2.3 Qualitative & Value Results

Quality and value assessments were undertaken at all sites owned and maintained by the Borough Council. The table below summarises the findings:

<i>Ward</i>	<i>Number of Assessed sites</i>	<i>Average Quality Score (%)</i>	<i>Average Value Score (%)</i>
Abbey	1	60.0	66.7
Arbury	0	n/a	n/a
Attleborough	1	50.0	66.7
Bar Pool	3	49.1	63.0
Bede	1	60.3	61.1
Bulkington	1	58.6	61.1
Camp Hill	1	56.9	66.7
Exhall	2	47.4	55.6
Galley Common	0	n/a	n/a
Heath	1	51.7	66.7
Kingswood	1	51.7	66.7
Poplar	1	62.5	77.8
Slough	1	35.2	38.9
St Nicolas	1	46.6	44.4
Weddington	0	n/a	n/a
Wem Brook	1	60.9	77.8
Whitestone	0	n/a	n/a
TOTAL	16	52.3	62.2

5.2.4 Accessibility

As part of the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' questionnaire, respondents were asked how far they would be prepared to travel to parks and gardens. The results were used to calculate distance thresholds for this type of open space by assessing the time that 75% of respondents were prepared to travel. From this, the following thresholds were calculated:

Walking time threshold based on 672 responses:

Time threshold: 10 minutes

Straight-line distance threshold: 480 metres

80m = 1min

10*80m = 10*1min

800m = 10min

800m*60% = 480m

Driving time threshold based on 746 responses:

Time threshold: 10 minutes

Straight-line distance threshold: 2257 metres

10mins = 3224

10mins/10 = 10/3224

1min = 322.4m

10*1min = 10*322.4m

10min = 3224m

3224m*70% = 2256.8m

5.2.5 Analysis of Provision

When assessing this form of provision it was sometimes difficult to determine whether some sites were 'parks and gardens', or other forms of greenspace. The definition provided in 1.4 stated that this type of open space provides, 'accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events e.g. urban parks, formal gardens and country parks.' With this definition in mind, recreation grounds were included as parks as they provide formal and informal sporting and play opportunities, as well as allowing for other activities such as relaxation.

However, sites such as Pauls Land and Sandon Park were not classified as parks, as they are dominated by outdoor playing fields and so were classed as outdoor sports facilities. In addition to this, land at Arbury Park was not classified as parks and gardens. **This was because given the difficulty in accessing land belonging to the Arbury Estate, all land in their ownership was classed as natural and semi-natural greenspace.**

The assessment identified sixteen parks, accounting for 63.261 ha of provision. The vast majority of these parks can be termed neighbourhood parks, consisting mainly of recreation grounds. **Looking at the distribution of parks, it appears that there are spatial inequalities in the distribution of parks and gardens, with a cluster of provision concentrated within the north of the Borough, particularly within Bar Pool and its peripheral areas, where Vale View Recreation Ground, Greenmoor Road Recreation Ground, Stockingford Recreation Ground, and Tomkinson Road Recreation Ground are all located.**

Within the wards of Weddington and St Nicolas there is a lack of provision, with Buttermere Avenue the only open space classified as a park within this immediate area. Furthermore, there are also shortfalls south of Nuneaton, where there is a large area of industrial land at Bermuda Park, and within the north-west of the Borough within Galley Common, where there are pockets of small play areas; sites that do not have the same status as parks and recreation grounds.

Regarding the quality and value of parks and gardens, many are of suitable quality, although it was noticeable that in some instance the quality of play opportunities provided at these sites limited their overall quality percentage score, such as the **dilapidated children's play area at Stockingford Recreation Ground.** Furthermore, the audit identified that there are two parks that have significantly high



value, thus indicating their importance at the Borough-wide level. These are Riversley Park, located in Nuneaton, and Miners Welfare Park, situated in Bedworth.

5.3 Setting Provision Standards

5.3.1 Quantitative standard

The Audit has identified that the Borough has:

TOTAL PROVISION: 63 ha (0.531 ha / 1000 population)

ACCESSIBLE PROVISION: 63 ha (0.531 ha / 1000 population)

When looking to establish local quantitative standards, it is important to consider local opinion as well as national benchmarks. Looking at the former, when asked to assess provision of parks and gardens within the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' questionnaire, 74.1% stated that there is adequate provision, indicating a large majority of respondents feel that existing provision meets demand. However, this may mask local differences of opinion (something which is not possible to identify from the consultation), particularly when it has already been shown that provision varies across the Borough.

Other local circumstances that need to be considered include specific policies within the Local Plan. Policy R10 states that "5.97 hectares of land at **Paradise Farm, Bermuda Road are allocated as informal open space,**" and has been **earmarked as a potential community park.** This would automatically increase the quantity of parks and gardens within the Borough.

At the **national level, there are no definitive standards for parks and gardens.** The NPFA six acre standard is broken down into 'outdoor sport' and 'playing space', and whilst parks and gardens link to both of these, no benchmark can be taken from this.

Therefore, given that there are no definitive national standards for parks and gardens, the local standard must be set to reflect local circumstances. Therefore, it is proposed that there should be a slight increase of provision from existing levels of 0.531 ha / 1000 population, to 0.6 ha per 1000 population. This figure is recommended as it works on the basis that a community park will be provided at Bermuda Road, and also works on the assumption that a smaller site will be enhanced in an area that is currently deficient in provision. **For instance, Jones Plus Limited recommends enhancing Orford Rise to a community park in Galley Common. Providing community parks at Bermuda Road and Orford Rise would increase total provision from 63ha to in excess of 71 ha, which in turn equates to 0.6 ha / 1000 population.** Therefore, the recommended local quantitative standard is:

0.6 ha per 1000 population



The implications of this proposed quantity standard are discussed further in section 5.4.

5.3.2 Qualitative Standard

A suitable qualitative standard should reflect the views and aspirations of the public, as well as drawing upon best practice to ensure that targets are realistic and achievable. When asked to assess the open space which they visit most regularly, the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' questionnaire highlighted that the Borough's residents score dog-bins, litterbins, seating facilities and disabled facilities poorly, whilst site access points and safety scored well. With this in mind, the following standard is proposed:

Parks and gardens should be free of litter and dog foul, whilst appropriate measures should be in place to address anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Sites should be maintained to a high standard providing suitable ancillary facilities, as well as a range of formal and informal recreational and leisure opportunities.

To help achieve this standard, examples of best-practice should be followed. For instance, **management and maintenance of parks and gardens should consider the Green Flag Award** and some of its key criteria, including:

(i) A Welcoming Place:

Green Flag States:

- "Road signs in the surrounding neighbourhoods are important in assisting people to find a park and also in introducing the park to new visitors. Signs at park entrances should be of good quality, easy to read, and well maintained and kept clear of graffiti."
- "The signs throughout a green space should conform to a coherent design. A jumble of different signs for different purposes should be avoided. Out-of-date signs should be removed. New signs should fit with the existing design. Signs situated around the site on gates and fences at strategic points should be robust and durable"
- "People could be encouraged to cycle to parks and green spaces. If appropriate, persuade the local highway authority to put the park on a designated and signposted cycle route. If cycling is not allowed within the park, then perhaps there could be safe lock-up facilities for cycles close to the entrances."
- "Cycling within (at least part of) the site should be considered as a way of encouraging greater use and access. Segregated cycle-ways along shared paths may be necessary or in some cases separate dedicated cycle-ways."
- "Safe and secure car parking can help to improve general accessibility to a park or green space. Parking for vehicles for people with disabilities should be provided near to parks entrances and key facilities such as toilets, cafes and information points. Any new investment in these types of facilities should be made in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995."

- “Vehicle access (including maintenance and staff vehicles) could be limited to certain areas so that parents, children and pet owners do not always have to be vigilant about traffic safety dangers. The speed limit in a park should always be 10 mph or less.”
- “Park gateways can be attractively designed to entice people in - they should not give the appearance of being erected to keep people out. However, entrances may need some form of barrier to prevent the illegal incursion of cars.”
- “Where possible, gates could open on to safe, busy areas of a neighbourhood to enhance people’s feeling of security and hence encourage use.”
- “Clear sightlines can make people feel safer - seeing the way out of a park can be as important as seeing the way in.”

(ii) Healthy Safe and Secure

Green Flag States:

- “Toilet facilities should be provided where the size of the park, or the extent of facilities, demands them. Under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 these must now be accessible to people with disabilities, and should be safe, secure and well maintained.”
- “Drinking-water fountains should be provided close to sports facilities and children’s playgrounds.”
- “Information on where to go for first aid in an accident should be provided on notice and signboards and in park leaflets.”
- “Emergency equipment, such as lifebelts next to water, should be provided where appropriate and should be maintained to the correct standard.”
- “Tree planting should be considered to provide shade, particularly around areas where children will play, although consideration must be given to preserving sight lines to promote safety.”
- “Children’s play equipment should be both functional and imaginative. It should be situated in a safe area of the park well away from main roads. Dogs should be excluded and there should be adequate seating and litter bins.”
- “Equipment, such as children’s outdoor play equipment, should be designed to the highest standard and should meet the relevant British or international standards. Safety is of paramount importance and any loose fittings or fixtures should be immediately fenced off from public use and repaired as soon as possible.”
- “Hard surfacing, particularly in children’s playgrounds, should be of an appropriate material, well drained, clean and free from hazards. There should be no step changes in levels, protrusions, raised lips and other hazards to users.”
- “Equipment should function correctly. If it does not and cannot be repaired, then consideration should be given to its removal.”
- “Risk assessments might include potential alternative use of structures and natural features by children.”
- “Consider zoning the park into dog-free areas (these should include children’s playgrounds and the area around a playground), dog-controlled areas (i.e. dogs on leads) and dog-exercise areas (i.e. dogs off leads). Be aware, however, that dog-free areas can only be created with by-laws and that the Home Office will not confirm such by-laws until the area is fenced.”

- “Provide dog waste bins in areas where dog walking is allowed and make available ‘poop-scoops’ and bags if practicable.”

(iii) Well-maintained and Clean

Green Flag States:

- “There should be a specific policy on how to address vandalism, dog mess, used needles and syringes, chewing gum, fly posting, fly tipping and graffiti, including target response times.”
- “Infrastructure and other facilities should be brought into a schedule of cyclical maintenance that endeavours to retain them at a high standard.”
- “Graffiti should be removed as soon as possible and preventative measures considered.”
- “Fly posting should be removed immediately it is discovered.”
- “Notices should be securely fastened and fencing erected around any faults and hazards that cannot be addressed immediately.”
- “Sports facilities should be maintained to a standard that allows them to be used for the purpose for which they were designed.”
- “Paths and hard surfaces should be well maintained and regularly swept to suppress weed growth.”

5.3.3 Accessibility Standard

Analysis of the Open Space and Indoor Sport questionnaire produced walking and driving thresholds for parks and gardens (see 5.2.4). These results form the basis of the accessibility standard.

- **For premier Borough parks**

For open spaces that have significant local importance e.g. Miners Welfare Park and Riversley Park, it is reasonable to expect that people will be prepared to travel a greater distance to such sites. With this in mind, the driving threshold is set for these sites. Therefore, the recommended local standard is:

10 minute drive (2257 metre catchment)

- **For localised provision e.g. neighbourhood parks**

For sites deemed to be localised provision, it is reasonable to expect that the public will primarily access such spaces on foot. For these sites, the recommended local standard is:

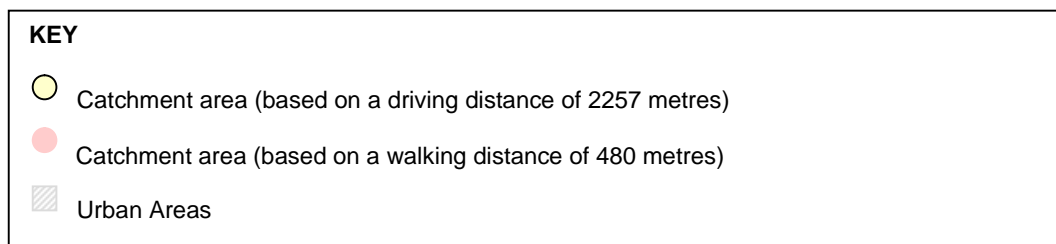
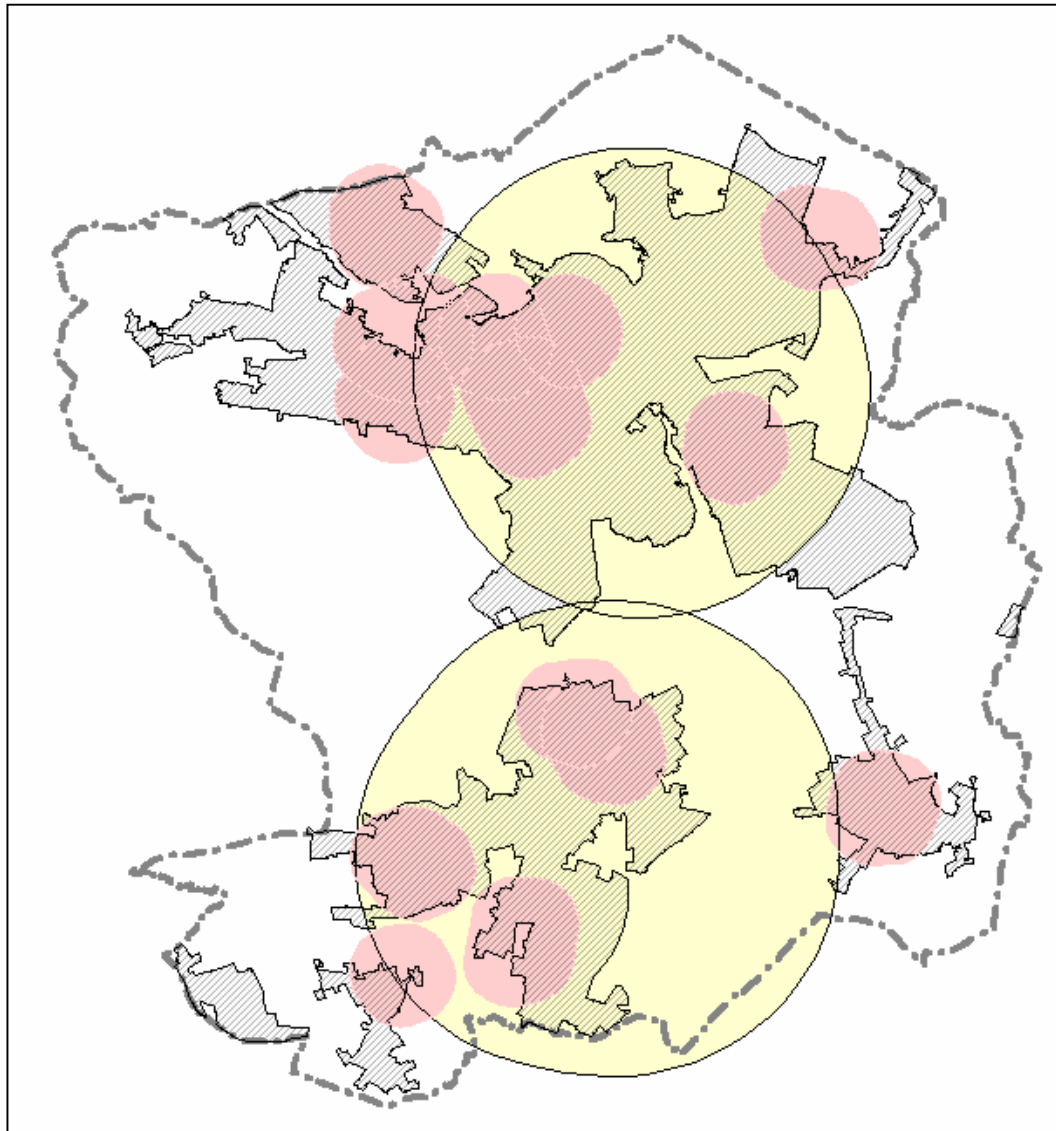
10 minute walk (480 metre catchment)

There are no definitive national standards concerning accessibility of parks and gardens. However, work undertaken by the London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC) is often used as a point of comparison. Within LPAC’s ‘*Advice on Strategic Planning Guidance for London*’ (1994), they recommend a hierarchy of open space provision whereby:

- Regional Parks are within 3.2 – 3.8 km of home
- Metropolitan Parks are within 3.2 km of home
- District Parks are within 1.2 km of home
- Local Parks are within 0.4 km of home
- Small Local Parks and other open spaces within less than 0.4 km of home

Whilst this report is based on open space within London, it has often been used to compare or modify thresholds. For localised provision, LPAC's suggested accessibility thresholds of 400 metres closely match those proposed within this report: 480 metres (see 5.2.4). An accessibility threshold of 2257 metres has been calculated for premier Borough parks – this falls between the recommended thresholds of metropolitan and district parks, and this would seem to be correct given the high value attached to Riversley Park and Miners Welfare Park.

By applying the accessibility standard to provision within the Borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth, the following map is produced.



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5.4 Policy Implications

Existing parks and gardens should be protected, and importantly, the sites identified within this assessment should form the basis of the proposed parks and open spaces



strategy. In addition, despite local opinion stating that there is adequate provision of parks and gardens, the audit identified that there are spatial inequalities in the Borough-wide distribution, resulting in some deficiencies of provision.

Raising existing quantity of provision from 0.531 ha / 1000 population to 0.6 ha / 1000 population will allow for the provision of a community park at Bermuda Park. In addition, it will also allow for increased provision elsewhere within the Borough, particularly within areas where there are deficiencies in provision, such as Galley Common. **However, this does not mean that more open space has to be found. Indeed, existing open spaces could be enhanced, and Jones Plus Limited has recommended a site such as Orford Rise open space in Galley Common.**

Further specific consultation is proposed within communities where there is a lack of park and gardens to assess whether there is the demand for such provision – the Open Space and Indoor Sport questionnaire only provides a broad, Borough-wide overview – **additional consultation is required to acquire information at the community level.**

6. Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace

6.1 Identifying Local Needs – Open Space and Indoor Sport Questionnaire Analysis

The results from this consultation exercise are displayed in Appendix 5. However, with regard to natural and semi-natural greenspace the following key information was obtained:

- **Usage levels:** Of the 1911 respondents to the question, 40.3% visit natural and semi-natural greenspace at least once a month. However, nearly 1 in 5 respondents have never visited this type of open space (373 people).

➡ **Implications:** Based on these findings, it appears that usage levels are good, although this could be improved given that approximately 20% have never visited this type of site.

- **Quality:** When asked to assess the quality of provision within the Borough using a scale of 1 to 5, analysis shows that the average mark awarded was 3.35 (where 1 was very poor and 5 excellent). When compared with the seven other types of open space provision, this was the third highest average score.

➡ **Implications:** Based on these findings, the quality of natural and semi-natural greenspace is deemed to be good.

- **Quantity:** Out of the 1861 that provided a response, 40.1% stated that there is insufficient provision of natural and semi-natural greenspace, compared to 59.8 who stated that there is adequate provision.

➡ **Implications:** Based on these findings, the consultation shows that local opinion is divided when considering the quantity of this type of open space within the Borough, although the majority feel that there is adequate provision.

- **Mode of Transport:** There was an approximate equal split between those who travel to this type of open space by motor vehicle (46.5%) compared with those that walk or cycle (50.1%). Only 3.4% use public transport to visit natural and semi-natural greenspaces.

➡ **Implications:** The consultation indicates that the majority of people travel to such sites by motor vehicle, walk or cycle.

6.2 Auditing Local Provision

6.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites

By combining site surveys with desktop research, the following quantitative information was gathered for natural and semi-natural greenspace:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Number of 'primary purpose' sites	Number of 'secondary purpose' sites	Total area of open space (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	4	0	10.829	1.497
Arbury	5482	9	0	143.772	26.226
Attleborough	7564	2	0	5.598	0.740
Bar Pool	7451	1	0	3.457	0.464
Bede	6760	0	0	0	0
Bulkington	6303	5	0	21.66	3.436
Camp Hill	7325	9	0	90.79	12.395
Exhall	7381	7	0	14.816	2.007
Galley Common	7593	6	0	30.32	3.993
Heath	6377	1	0	5.027	0.788
Kingswood	6878	1	0	4.044	0.588
Poplar	6850	6	0	15.774	2.303
Slough	7058	14	0	122.462	17.351
St Nicolas	7073	2	0	16.826	2.379
Weddington	7286	3	0	8.993	1.234
Wem Brook	7082	5	0	28.724	4.056
Whitestone	7435	1	0	0.386	0.052
TOTAL	119132	76	0	523.478	4.394

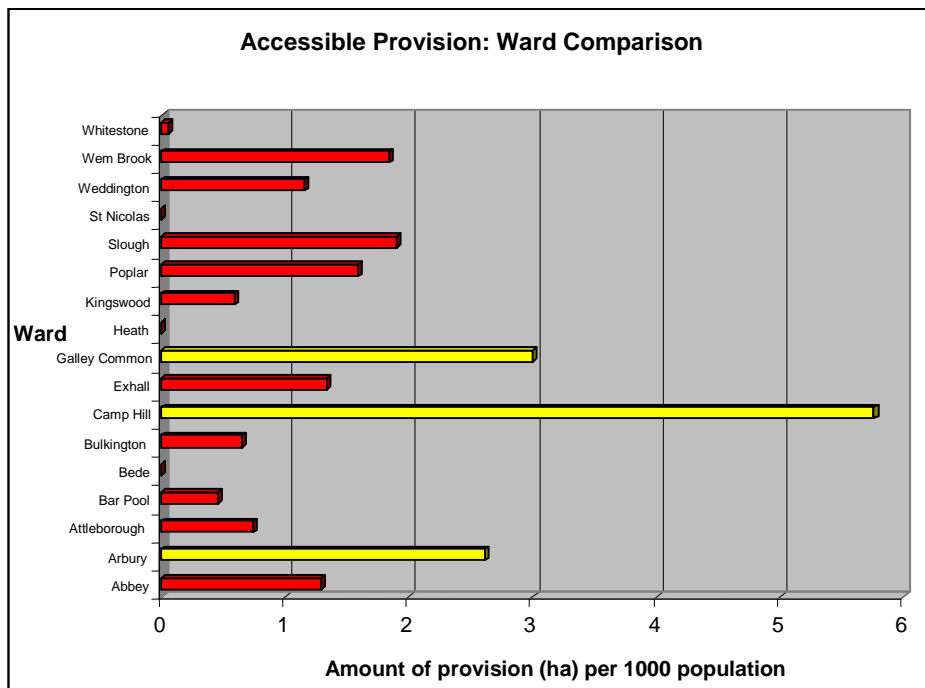


6.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites

The number of sites that were deemed to be fully, or partly accessible to the public, were as follows:



Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Total number of sites	Total area of sites (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	2	9.333	1.290
Arbury	5482	2	14.306	2.610
Attleborough	7564	2	5.598	0.740
Bar Pool	7451	1	3.457	0.464
Bede	6760	0	0	0
Bulkington	6303	1	4.154	0.659
Camp Hill	7325	5	42.169	5.757
Exhall	7381	4	9.907	1.342
Galley Common	7593	4	22.778	3.000
Heath	6377	0	0	0
Kingswood	6878	1	4.044	0.588
Poplar	6850	3	10.893	1.590
Slough	7058	3	13.416	1.901
St Nicolas	7073	0	0	0
Weddington	7286	2	8.475	1.163
Wem Brook	7082	3	13.074	1.846
Whitestone	7435	1	0.386	0.052
TOTAL	119132	34	162.000	1.360



6.2.3

Qualitative and Value Results



Quality and value assessments were undertaken at all sites owned and maintained by the Council. Additional assessments were undertaken at private sites where prior permission had been granted. The table below summarises the findings:

Ward	Number of Assessed sites	Average Quality Score (%)	Average Value Score (%)
Abbey	1	30.0	38.9
Arbury	2	49.0	58.4
Attleborough	2	38.5	38.9
Bar Pool	1	45.8	55.6
Bede	0	n/a	n/a
Bulkington	1	51.8	50.0
Camp Hill	4	38.7	48.6
Exhall	4	29.0	33.4
Galley Common	4	35.6	44.4
Heath	0	n/a	n/a
Kingswood	1	31.5	55.6
Poplar	3	49.3	35.2
Slough	2	50.9	55.6
St Nicolas	0	n/a	n/a
Weddington	2	37.4	33.3
Wem Brook	2	37.3	36.1
Whitestone	1	56.0	33.3
TOTAL	30	37.1	43.0

6.2.4 Accessibility

Within the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' questionnaire, respondents were asked how far they would be prepared to travel to natural and semi-natural greenspaces. The results were used to calculate distance thresholds for this type of open space by assessing the time that 75% of respondents were prepared to travel. From this, the following time thresholds (or effective catchments), were calculated:

Walking time threshold based on 493 responses in the consultation:

Time threshold: 15 minutes

Straight-Line Distance threshold: 840 metres

80m = 1min

15*80m = 15*1min

1200m = 15 min

1200m*70% = 840m

Driving time threshold based on 842 responses in the consultation:

Time threshold: 15 minutes

Straight-Line distance threshold: 3385 metres

10 mins = 3224m

10 mins/10 = 3224m/10

1 min = 322.4m

15* 1min = 15* 322.4m

15mins = 4836m

4836m * 70% = 3385.2m

6.2.5 Analysis of Provision

523 ha of natural and semi-natural greenspace is identified in the quantitative audit, but only 31% of this is deemed to be accessible to the public (162 ha), with much of the remaining land owned by the Arbury Estate, and therefore inaccessible except where limited rights of way exist.

There are high levels of provision within the north-west and west of the Borough; the wards of Camp Hill, Galley Common and Arbury having the highest levels of provision. Away from these areas, provision is much more scattered, with small clusters of provision north of Bedworth, and only limited areas recorded in the south of the Borough in villages such as Bulkington and Exhall. However, to counter this, there are large areas of open countryside that surround these areas, provision that is not included within the assessment.

Quality and value of the provision that exists varies, although in many instances the mark awarded for quality is limited by the fact that many sites lack basic amenities such as litter bins and appropriate seating.

6.3 Setting Provision Standards

6.3.1 Quantitative standard

The Audit has identified that the Borough has:

TOTAL PROVISION: 523 ha (4.394 ha / 1000 population)

ACCESSIBLE PROVISION: 162 ha (1.360 ha / 1000 population)

When looking to establish local standards, it is important to consider local opinion as well as national benchmarks. When asked to assess provision of natural and semi-natural greenspace, 59.5% stated that there is adequate provision, whilst 40.1% stated that there is insufficient provision. This indicates that the Borough-wide consensus is split, with the slight majority believing that there is adequate provision.

When comparing the audit findings with national standards it is apparent that the Borough has a shortfall of accessible provision. The leading national standard is English Nature’s ‘**Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard**’ and this suggests that there should be at least 2ha of accessible natural greenspace per 1000 population; at present there is only 1.36 ha per 1000 population

With this in mind, the local standard has been set to reflect the national standard, recognising the need to increase the amount of accessible provision at the Borough level. Therefore, the quantitative standard for natural and semi-natural greenspace is:

2 ha per 1000 population

6.3.2 Qualitative Standard

A suitable qualitative standard should reflect the views and aspirations of the public, as well as drawing upon best practice to ensure that targets are realistic and achievable. When asked to assess the open space which they visit most regularly, the ‘Open Space and Indoor Sport’ questionnaire highlighted that the Borough’s residents score dog-bins, litterbins, seating facilities and disabled facilities poorly, whilst site access points and safety scored well. With this in mind, the following standard is proposed:

Natural and semi-natural greenspaces should be free of litter and dog foul and appropriate measures should be in place to address anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Where necessary, ancillary facilities should be in place including appropriate signage, but these features should not detract from, or adversely impact upon the natural environment. Furthermore, sites should be managed in a suitable manner in accordance to site-specific management plans.

To help achieve this standard, examples of best-practice and guidance should be followed. For instance, English Nature should be consulted when developing site-specific management plans for areas of natural and semi-natural greenspace.

6.3.3 Accessibility Standard

Analysis of the Open Space and Indoor Sport questionnaire produced walking and driving thresholds for natural and semi-natural greenspaces (see 6.2.4). These results form the basis of the accessibility standard.

- **For local nature reserves:**

For open spaces that have significant local importance e.g. local nature reserves (Ensor’s Pool, Galley Common Nature Reserve, Bedworth Sloughs), it is reasonable to expect that people will be prepared to travel a greater distance to such sites. With this in mind, the driving threshold is set for these sites. Therefore, the recommended local standard is:



15 minute drive (3385 metres catchment)

- **For localised provision**

For sites deemed to be localised provision, it is reasonable expect that the public will primarily access such spaces on foot. For these sites, the recommended local standard is:

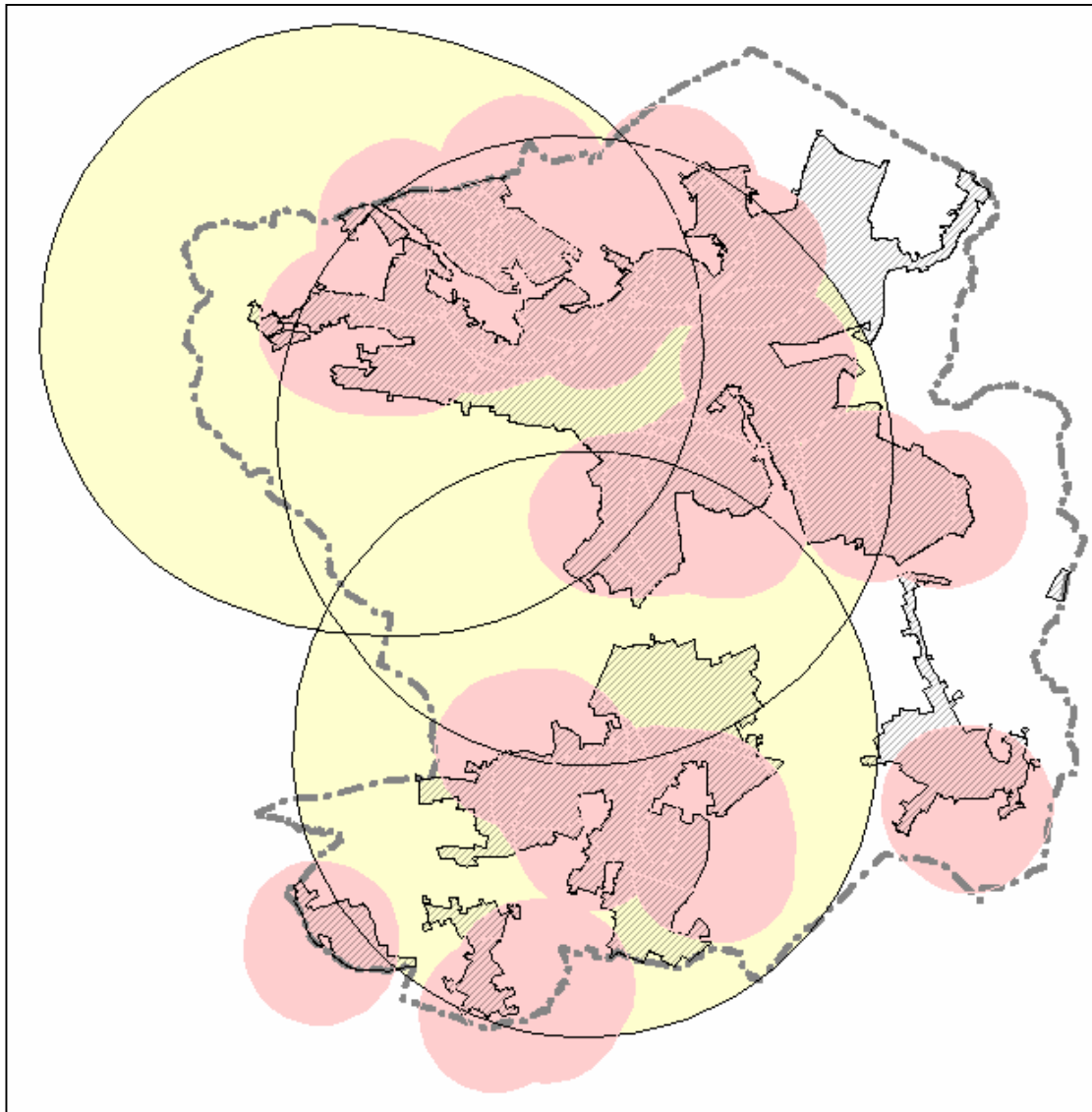
15 minute walk (840 metres)

English Nature has recommended national standards concerning accessible natural greenspace. Within their ANGSt model, they propose that:




- No person should live more than 300m from their nearest area of natural greenspace
- There should be at least one accessible 20ha site within 2km from home
- There should be one accessible 100ha site within 5km
- There should be one accessible 500ha site within 10km

This standard is commonly cited as being unrealistic, failing to take into account geographical differences. For instance, within this Borough, the higher levels of the natural green space hierarchy i.e. 100 ha sites and 500 ha sites, may not be applicable in the towns of Nuneaton and Bedworth given that there is good quality countryside on their doorstep. Therefore, whilst this model can be used for comparative targets, it is important that there is scope for local flexibility to reflect local circumstances and with this in mind, accessibility thresholds have been linked to Borough-wide consultation findings.

By applying the accessibility standard to provision within the Borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth, the following map is produced.



KEY

-  Catchment area (based on a driving distance of 3385 metres)
-  Catchment area (based on a walking distance of 840 metres)
-  Urban Areas

N



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6.4 Policy Implications

The 76 identified natural and semi-natural greenspaces form an important open space contribution, having a large role to play in nature conservation and biodiversity, and this is recognised by the fact that many sites have SINC status.

At present, the quantitative standard set out in 6.3.1 is not being met due to the fact that a large proportion of the Borough's natural and semi-natural greenspace is not accessible. Therefore, when considering policy implications emphasis should be placed on protecting existing provision whilst seeking to increase access within privately owned sites. For instance, 36 ha of open space at Newdigate Colliery has been classed as inaccessible. By allowing access, this would increase the amount of accessible natural and semi-natural greenspace provision from 1.36ha / 1000 population to 1.66 ha / 1000 population.

In addition to this, working with Warwickshire County Council to increase access to open space within schools that is set aside for wildlife and nature conservation could also be considered i.e. having weekend work parties for children, volunteers, etc. During the audit process, outdoor sport facilities were assessed at schools, but it was noted that some schools do have 'wildlife areas' where small areas of woodland, and meadows are created (these areas were not recorded within the audit).

Furthermore, in line with current policy, surplus allotment land could compensate for deficiencies in natural and semi-natural greenspace. If demand for allotment use increased then this land could then be converted back for allotment use in the future.

7. Green Corridors

7.1 Identifying Local Needs – Open Space and Indoor Sport Questionnaire Analysis

The results from this consultation exercise are displayed in Appendix 5. However, with regard to green corridors the following key information was obtained:

7.1.1 Open Space and Indoor Sport Questionnaire

- **Usage levels:** 39.2% of the 1907 respondents to the question visit green corridors on an occasional basis, with a further 28.6% never visiting green corridors. As a result of this, the results show that only 1 in 3 respondents visit this type of open space at least once a month.

➡ **Implications:** This consultation indicates that at present, green corridors appear to be under-utilised.


- **Quality:** When asked to assess the quality of provision within the Borough using a scale of 1 to 5, analysis shows that the average mark awarded to green corridors was 3.17 (where 1 was very poor and 5 excellent). When compared with other types of open space, this was the sixth highest average score out of the eight different types.

➡ **Implications:** The Borough-wide consensus is that there is scope for improving the quality of green corridors

- **Quantity:** Out of the 1557 that provided a response, 73.7% stated that there is adequate provision of green corridors, compared to 25.7% who stated that there is insufficient provision.

➡ **Implications:** Based on this consultation, local opinion is that there is sufficient provision to meet demand.

- **Mode of Transport:** 61.6 % of respondents that visit green corridors on foot or by bicycle. This is a far greater number compared to those that travel by motor vehicle (35.2%).

 **Implications:** The consultation indicates that the majority of people travel to green corridors on foot or by bicycle.

7.2 Auditing Local Provision

7.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites

By combining site surveys with desktop research, the following quantitative information was gathered for green corridors:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Number of 'primary purpose' sites	Number of 'secondary purpose' sites	Total area of open space (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	3	0	4.857	0.671
Arbury	5482	0	0	0	0
Attleborough	7564	3	0	5.965	0.789
Bar Pool	7451	5	0	4.191	0.562
Bede	6760	0	0	0	0
Bulkington	6303	3	0	4.88	0.774
Camp Hill	7325	2	0	0.591	0.081
Exhall	7381	1	0	1.856	0.251
Galley Common	7593	4	0	9.936	1.309
Heath	6377	0	0	0	0
Kingswood	6878	0	0	0	0
Poplar	6850	3	0	4.538	0.662
Slough	7058	1	0	1.679	0.238
St Nicolas	7073	1	0	6.769	0.957
Weddington	7286	3	0	10.275	1.410
Wem Brook	7082	12	0	8.416	1.188
Whitestone	7435	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	119132	41	0	63.953	0.537

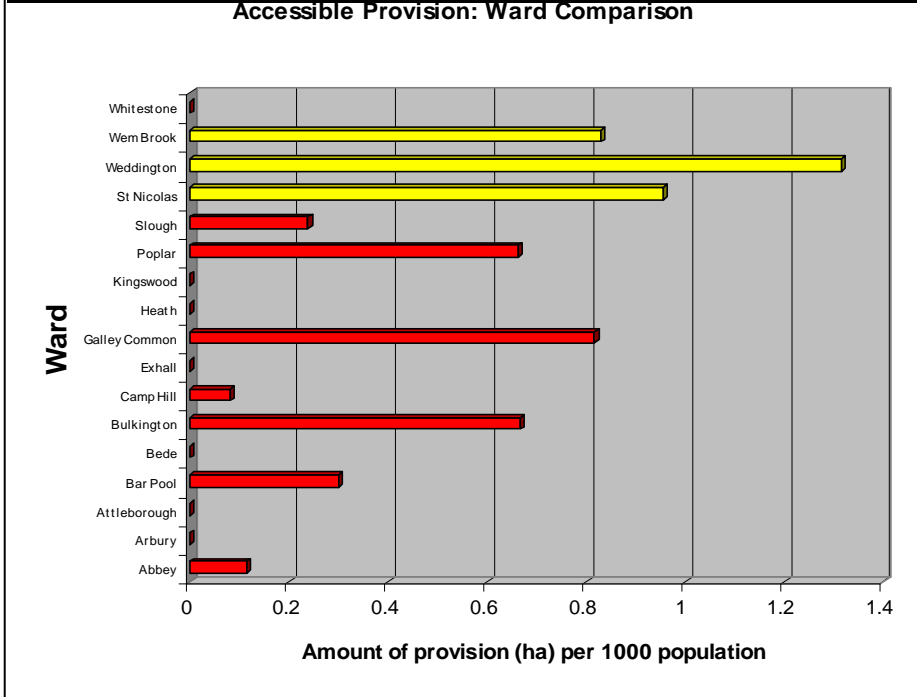


7.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites

The number of sites that were deemed to be fully, or partly accessible to the public, were as follows:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Total number of sites	Total area of sites (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	2	0.818	0.113
Arbury	5482	0	0	0
Attleborough	7564	0	0	0
Bar Pool	7451	4	2.233	0.300
Bede	6760	0	0	0
Bulkington	6303	2	4.199	0.666
Camp Hill	7325	2	0.591	0.081
Exhall	7381	0	0	0
Galley Common	7593	3	6.207	0.817
Heath	6377	0	0	0
Kingswood	6878	0	0	0
Poplar	6850	3	4.538	0.662
Slough	7058	1	1.679	0.238
St Nicolas	7073	1	6.769	0.957
Weddington	7286	2	9.585	1.316
Wem Brook	7082	11	5.871	0.829
Whitestone	7435	0	0	0
TOTAL	119132	31	42.49	0.357

Accessible Provision: Ward Comparison



7.2.3 Qualitative and Value Results

Quality and value assessments were undertaken at all sites owned and maintained by the Council. As a result of this, many sites were not assessed from a quality and value perspective, given the difficulty in acquiring access from the landowners (for instance the Coventry Canal corridor is owned by British Waterways). The table below summarises the findings:

Ward	Number of Assessed sites	Average Quality Score (%)	Average Value Score (%)
Abbey	0	N/A	N/A
Arbury	0	N/A	N/A
Attleborough	0	N/A	N/A
Bar Pool	1	22.0	22.2
Bede	0	N/A	N/A
Bulkington	0	N/A	N/A
Camp Hill	0	N/A	N/A
Exhall	0	N/A	N/A
Galley Common	3	32.7	25.9
Heath	0	N/A	N/A
Kingswood	0	N/A	N/A
Poplar	1	41.3	27.8
Slough	1	22.0	22.2
St Nicolas	1	34.6	38.9
Weddington	1	48.1	50.0
Wem Brook	1	56.0	27.8
Whitestone	0	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	9	35.6	29.6

7.2.4 Accessibility

Within the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport Facilities' questionnaire, respondents were asked how far they would be prepared to travel to green corridors. The results were used to calculate distance thresholds for this type of open space by assessing the time that 75% of respondents were prepared to travel. From this, the following time thresholds (or effective catchments), were calculated:

Walking time threshold based on 637 responses:

Time threshold: 10 minutes

Straight-Line Distance threshold: 480 metres

Driving time threshold based on 524 responses:

Time threshold: 10 minutes

Straight-Line distance threshold: 2257 metres

7.2.5 Analysis of Provision

A total of 42.49 ha of accessible green corridor provision has been identified from the assessment, with the Coventry Canal corridor contributing slightly more than $\frac{1}{3}$ of this provision – consequently there is a good network running through the middle of the Borough given that the canal meanders through here. Aside from this, there is pockets of additional provision linked predominantly to dismantled railway lines, such as the Nuneaton – Ashby disused railway line which is part of the national sustrans cycle network, and accounts for over 8 ha of provision within Weddington.

Looking at areas where there is a lack of provision, it is evident that there are no corridors within Bulkington or the south-west of the Borough, within the ward of Exhall.

In terms of quality and value of the identified green corridors, it is difficult to provide much insight as very few assessments were undertaken given that the vast majority of green corridors were not owned by the Council, hence the difficulty in acquiring permission to undertake site assessments. However, based on the nine quality assessments made, it appears that there is scope for improving Borough Council maintained provision. In particular, it was noticeable that in many instances, there is a lack of facilities such as litterbins and dog bins, as well as appropriate signage. This is important when considering that these open spaces function as corridors for walking and cycling.

7.3 Setting Provision Standards

7.3.1 Quantitative standard

The Audit has identified that the Borough has:

TOTAL PROVISION: 64 ha (0.537 ha / 1000 population)

ACCESSIBLE PROVISION: 42 ha (0.357 ha / 1000 population)

The figures above show the quantity of green corridors located in the Borough. However, there is no need to convert this into a local standard, as acknowledged by the Companion Guide to PPG 17.

“The need for green corridors arises from the need to promote environmentally sustainable forms of transport, such as walking and cycling within urban areas. This means that there is no sensible way of stating a provision standard, just as there is no way of having a standard for the

proportion of the land in an area which it will be desirable to allocate for roads.”

7.3.2 Qualitative Standard

A suitable qualitative standard should reflect the views and aspirations of the public, as well as drawing upon best practice to ensure that targets are realistic and achievable. When asked to assess the open space which they visit most regularly, the ‘Open Space and Indoor Sport’ questionnaire highlighted that the Borough’s residents score dog-bins, litterbins, seating facilities and disabled facilities poorly, whilst site access points and safety scored well. With this in mind, the following standard is proposed:

Green corridors should be free of litter and dog foul, whilst appropriate measures should be in place to address anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Where possible, ancillary facilities should be in place such as appropriate signage, and cycle paths should be clearly identifiable.

There are no specific examples of best practice relating to Green Corridors, although the Green Flag Award criteria are relevant in some instances including:

(i) A Welcoming Place:

Green Flag States:

- “The signs throughout a green space should conform to a coherent design. A jumble of different signs for different purposes should be avoided. Out-of-date signs should be removed. New signs should fit with the existing design. Signs situated around the site on gates and fences at strategic points should be robust and durable”
- “Cycling within (at least part of) the site should be considered as a way of encouraging greater use and access. Segregated cycle-ways along shared paths may be necessary or in some cases separate dedicated cycle-ways.”

(ii) Health and Well-Being

- “Improvements could be made to the existing walking and cycling routes to, from and within the green space.”

7.3.3 Accessibility Standard

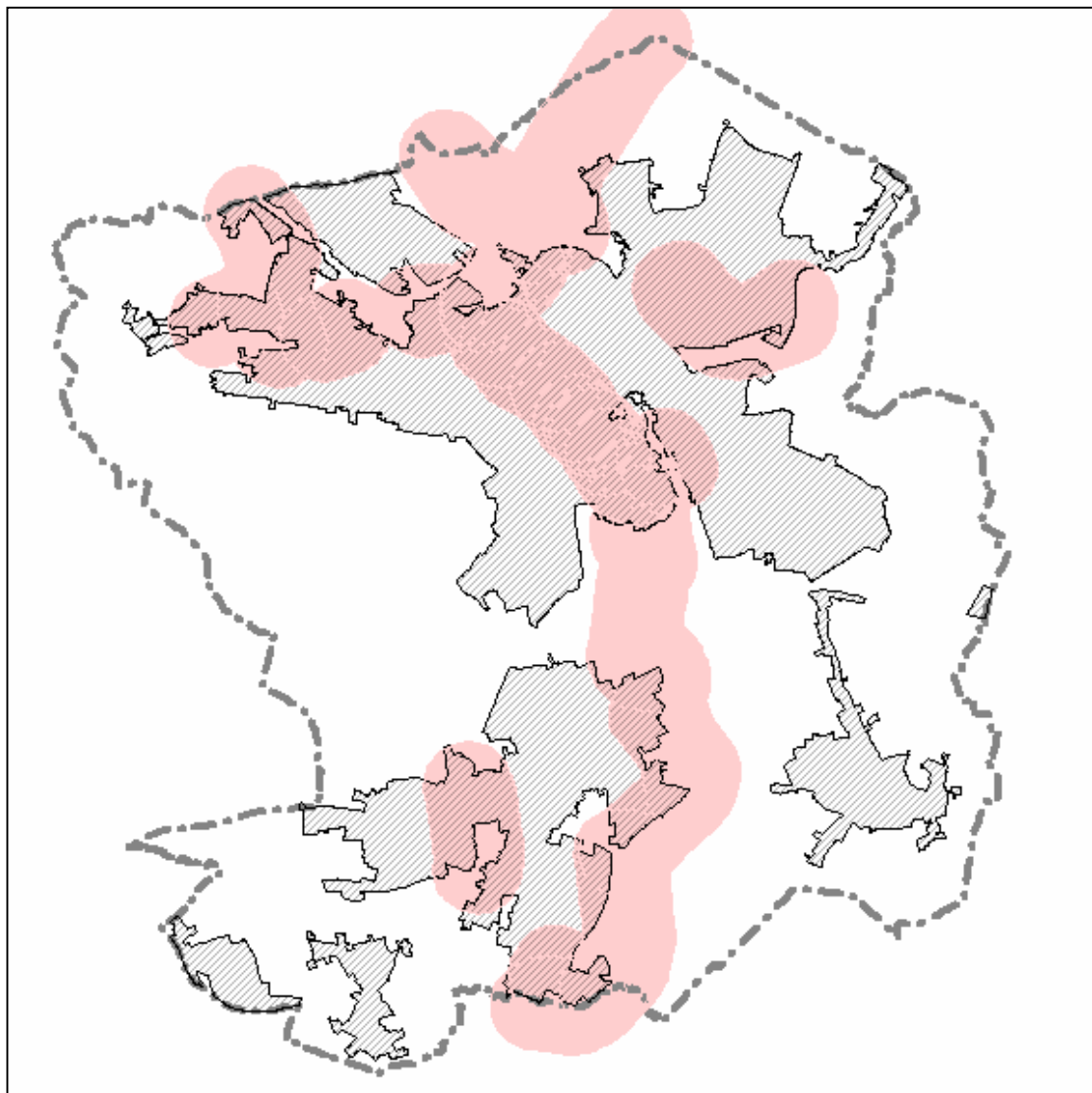
Analysis of the Open Space and Indoor Sport questionnaire produced walking and driving thresholds for green corridors (see 7.2.4). Given that green corridors predominantly serve the local population, a walking threshold has been set. Based on the consultation results, the recommended standard is:

10 minute walk (480 metre catchment)




There is no applicable national standard for comparing accessibility of green corridors.

By applying the accessibility standard to provision within the Borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth, the following map is produced.



Key

 Catchment Area (based on a walking distance of 480 metres)

 Urban Areas



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7.4 Planning Implications

Despite no quantity standard being established for green corridors, this should not detract from the fact that the Council should continue to promote the use of green corridors, particularly within new housing developments, where they can have an important function in linking housing to urban areas. Importantly, a good network already exists linked to the nine mile accessible Coventry Canal corridor, which is in turn complemented by several linear such as disused railway lines.

8. Outdoor Sports Facilities

8.1 Identifying Local Needs – Open Space and Indoor Sport Questionnaire Analysis

The results from this consultation exercise are displayed in Appendix 5. However, with regard to outdoor sports facilities the following key information was obtained:

- **Usage levels:** More than 50% of the 1797 respondents never visit or use outdoor sports facilities. Of those that do, the majority only use or visit this type of open space on an occasional basis (513 people).

➡ **Implications:** Based on this consultation, outdoor sports facilities appear to be under-utilised with high numbers never visiting such facilities. Although only a broad generalisation, this could be explained by the fact that there were far more responses from people over the age of 45; people who are less likely to participate in outdoor sporting activities compared to people under the age of 45.


- **Quality:** When asked to assess the quality of provision within the Borough using a scale of 1 to 5, analysis shows that the average mark awarded to outdoor sports facilities was 3.33 (where 1 was very poor and 5 excellent). When compared with other types of open space, this represents the equal fourth highest average score out of the eight typologies.

➡ **Implications:** Of the 1081 people that provided a response, it would appear that quality of outdoor sports facilities is satisfactory.

- **Quantity:** Out of the 1302 people that provided a response, 71.6% stated that there is adequate provision of outdoor sports facilities within the Borough; a figure that far outweighs those who believe that there is insufficient provision (only 26.0%)

➡ **Implications:** Based upon these findings, existing supply of outdoor sport facilities is meeting the Borough's demands.

- **Mode of Transport:** The dominant mode of transport used by visitors to outdoor sports facilities is motor vehicle; this accounts for 56.6% of users, with the remainder tending to walk or cycle.

 **Implications:** The majority of users travel to outdoor sports facilities by car, although high numbers also walk or cycle.

8.2 Auditing Local Provision

8.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites

By combining site surveys with desktop research, the following quantitative information was gathered for outdoor sport facilities:

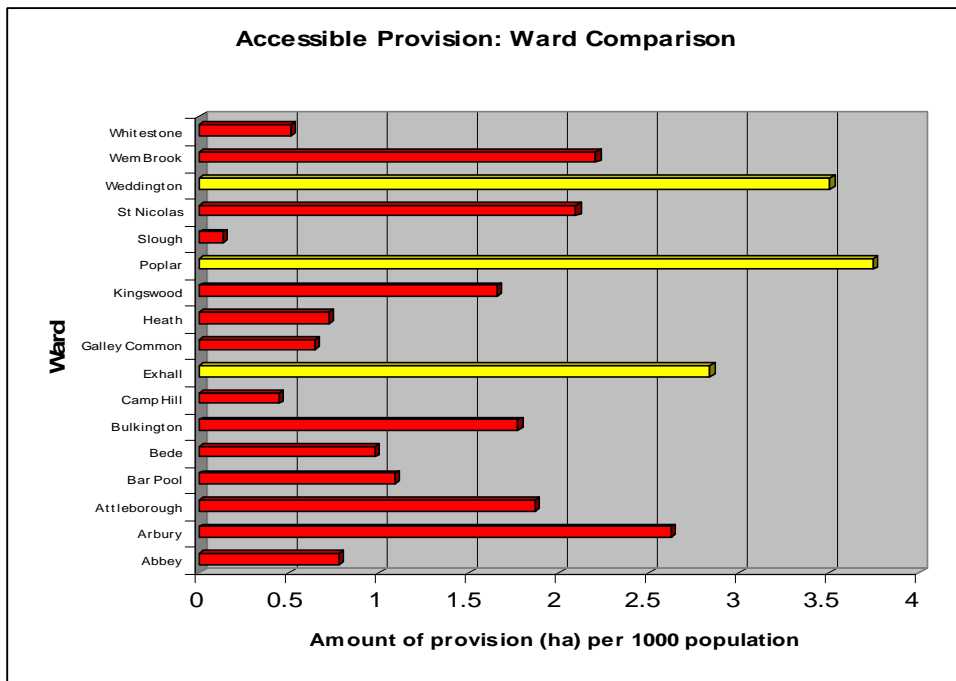
<i>Ward</i>	<i>Ward population (2001 Census)</i>	<i>Number of 'primary purpose' sites</i>	<i>Number of 'secondary and other purpose' sites</i>	<i>Total area of open space (ha)</i>	<i>Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population</i>
Abbey	7234	5	0	9.308	1.287
Arbury	5482	3	0	14.354	2.618
Attleborough	7564	3	1	14.104	1.865
Bar Pool	7451	2	3	9.761	1.310
Bede	6760	4	0	6.605	0.977
Bulkington	6303	4	1	12.801	2.031
Camp Hill	7325	2	1	3.792	0.518
Exhall	7381	10	1	29.931	4.055
Galley Common	7593	2	0	4.907	0.646
Heath	6377	3	1	5.484	0.860
Kingswood	6878	6	1	11.725	1.705
Poplar	6850	5	1	55.052	8.037
Slough	7058	2	0	2.788	0.395
St Nicolas	7073	7	1	15.702	2.220
Weddington	7286	5	0	25.523	3.503
Wem Brook	7082	11	1	18.978	2.680
Whitestone	7435	2	0	61.257	8.239
TOTAL	119132	76	12	302.072	2.536



8.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites

Sephton Drive Golf Course and Nuneaton Golf Club have been excluded from the table below as they account for 84 ha of open space and as such create a false impression of total provision. Therefore, the table below relates to open spaces containing playing fields or artificial turf pitches, including all school provision available outside of school hours. With this in mind, the number of sites that were deemed to be fully, or partly accessible to the public, were as follows:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Total number of sites	Total area of sites (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	3	5.607	0.775
Arbury	5482	3	14.354	2.618
Attleborough	7564	4	14.104	1.865
Bar Pool	7451	4	8.111	1.089
Bede	6760	4	6.605	0.977
Bulkington	6303	4	11.171	1.772
Camp Hill	7325	2	3.279	0.448
Exhall	7381	7	20.958	2.839
Galley Common	7593	2	4.907	0.646
Heath	6377	3	4.616	0.724
Kingswood	6878	6	11.377	1.654
Poplar	6850	3	25.658	3.746
Slough	7058	1	0.955	0.135
St Nicolas	7073	7	14.812	2.094
Weddington	7286	5	25.523	3.503
Wem Brook	7082	9	15.616	2.205
Whitestone	7435	1	3.787	0.509
TOTAL	119132	68	191.44	1.607



8.2.3

Qualitative and Value Results

Quality and value assessments were undertaken at all sites owned and maintained by the Council. Additional assessments were undertaken at private sites where prior permission had been granted. The table below summarises the findings:

Ward	Number of Assessed sites	Average Quality Score (%)	Average Value Score (%)
Abbey	3	48.0	27.8
Arbury	3	62.1	50.0
Attleborough	4	56.9	51.4
Bar Pool	4	49.3	57.0
Bede	4	36.7	30.6
Bulkington	2	57.8	50.0
Camp Hill	2	58.6	47.3
Exhall	5	52.4	48.9
Galley Common	0	N/A	N/A
Heath	3	42.5	51.9
Kingswood	4	41.2	50.0
Poplar	3	55.3	63.0
Slough	2	53.8	38.9
St Nicolas	7	53.9	45.2
Weddington	5	57.6	46.7
Wem Brook	8	61.4	47.2
Whitestone	0	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	59	52.9	47.1



8.2.4 Accessibility

Within the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport Facilities' questionnaire, respondents were asked how far they would be prepared to travel to outdoor sports facilities. The results were used to calculate distance thresholds for this type of open space by assessing the time that 75% of respondents were prepared to travel. From this, the following time thresholds (or effective catchments), were calculated:

Walking time threshold based on 327 responses:

Time threshold: 10 minutes

Straight-Line Distance threshold: 480 metres

Driving time threshold based on 568 responses:

Time threshold: 15 minutes

Straight-Line distance threshold: 3385 metres

8.2.5 Analysis of Provision

It is suggested that since there can only be one game played on a pitch at any given time, the number of pitches is seen as a more valuable indicator than the size, as this helps to determine the maximum use of the provision. However, for the purpose of this report, *Jones Plus Limited* has deviated away from the Companion Guide to PPG 17, and has identified the extent of outdoor sport playing fields (i.e. the area), as opposed to the total number of pitches.

This is because it is not always possible to identify the number of pitches, particularly within educational institutions. School playing fields are often used for multiple sports and usage varies temporally. The Council may wish to calculate the total number of outdoor playing pitches when it reviews its existing Playing Pitch Strategy.

Sixty eight sites were assessed as providing accessible outdoor sports facilities, accounting for 191.44 ha of provision. Of this figure, 74.054 ha is provided within twenty-seven schools or colleges that allow access to their sports playing fields, enabling the local community or sports club to utilise their facilities outside of school hours. Such provision contributes 38.7% of the total accessible provision, thus indicating the important role of educational facilities. This proportion will increase in the future due to the 'extended schools' programme, which will see schools become bases for lots of different activities that will benefit children, parents and local communities. Under this initiative, all schools must offer five key services by 2010. One of the core services is to enable access to sports facilities for at least two hours a week beyond the school day for those who desire it.

Geographically, provision is spread across the entire Borough with no apparent gaps in provision, particularly when considering playing fields. However, one area in

which there is a lack of provision is artificial turf pitches; at present the only artificial pitch is located at Etone Sports Centre (Nuneaton), a high quality facility that is of significant value to the Borough.

School facilities are generally well maintained and have suitable access to changing facilities and toilets, which corresponds to high scoring qualitative marks. Likewise, the same scenario exists with private sports clubs. However, Borough Council maintained facilities generally score less for quality with some pitches over-used and sites lacking in basic facilities.

8.3 Setting Provision Standards

8.3.1 Quantitative standard

The Audit has identified that the Borough has:

TOTAL PROVISION: 302ha (2.536 ha / 1000 population)

ACCESSIBLE PROVISION: 191 ha (1.607 ha / 1000 population)

When looking to establish local standards, it is important to consider local opinion and the Open Space and Indoor Sport questionnaire showed that 71.6% felt that there was adequate provision within the Borough. With this in mind, it is important to consider how Borough-wide provision compares with national standards. One such standard is the NPFA six-acre standard, which is divided into two key components – ‘outdoor sport’, and ‘children’s playing space’. This standard recommends that there should be 1.6 ha / 1000 population of ‘outdoor sport’ provision, and whilst this is acknowledged as a simplistic approach it does mirror provision within this Borough. Therefore, the recommended local quantitative standard is proposed as:

1.6 ha per 1000 population

8.3.2 Qualitative Standard

A suitable qualitative standard should reflect the views and aspirations of the public, as well as drawing upon best practice to ensure that targets are realistic and achievable. When asked to assess the open space which they visit most regularly, the ‘Open Space and Indoor Sport’ questionnaire highlighted that the Borough’s residents score dog-bins, litterbins, seating facilities and disabled facilities poorly, whilst site access points and safety scored well. With this in mind, the following standard is proposed:

Outdoor sports facilities should be free of litter and dog foul, whilst appropriate measures should be in place to address anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Suitable ancillary facilities should be provided such as changing facilities. Sites should be well maintained and encourage inclusive play.



This broad statement provides a framework for management and maintenance of outdoor sports facilities. For information relating to specific sites, Sport England should be consulted with to help provide technical advice and guidance.

In addition, the NPFA also provide guidance within their Six-Acre Standard, including the following technical information:

- “Grounds that are incorrectly laid out, especially those of an east-west orientation, place significant restrictions on pitch and court use. Good planning and selection can reduce the disadvantages and hazards presented by the setting sun.”
- “Adequate secure changing accommodation encourages demand, while inferior facilities can turn users away.”

8.3.3 Accessibility Standard

Analysis of the Open Space and Indoor Sport questionnaire produced walking and driving thresholds for outdoor sports facilities (see 8.2.4). These results form the basis of the accessibility standard.

- **For Premier Sporting Facilities:**

For outdoor sports facilities that have significant local importance e.g. Etone Artificial Turf Pitch, Pingles Athletic Track, and Nuneaton Golf Club, it is reasonable to expect that people will be prepared to travel a greater distance to such sites. With this in mind, the driving threshold is set for these sites, and so the recommended local standard is:

15 minute drive (3385 metres catchment)

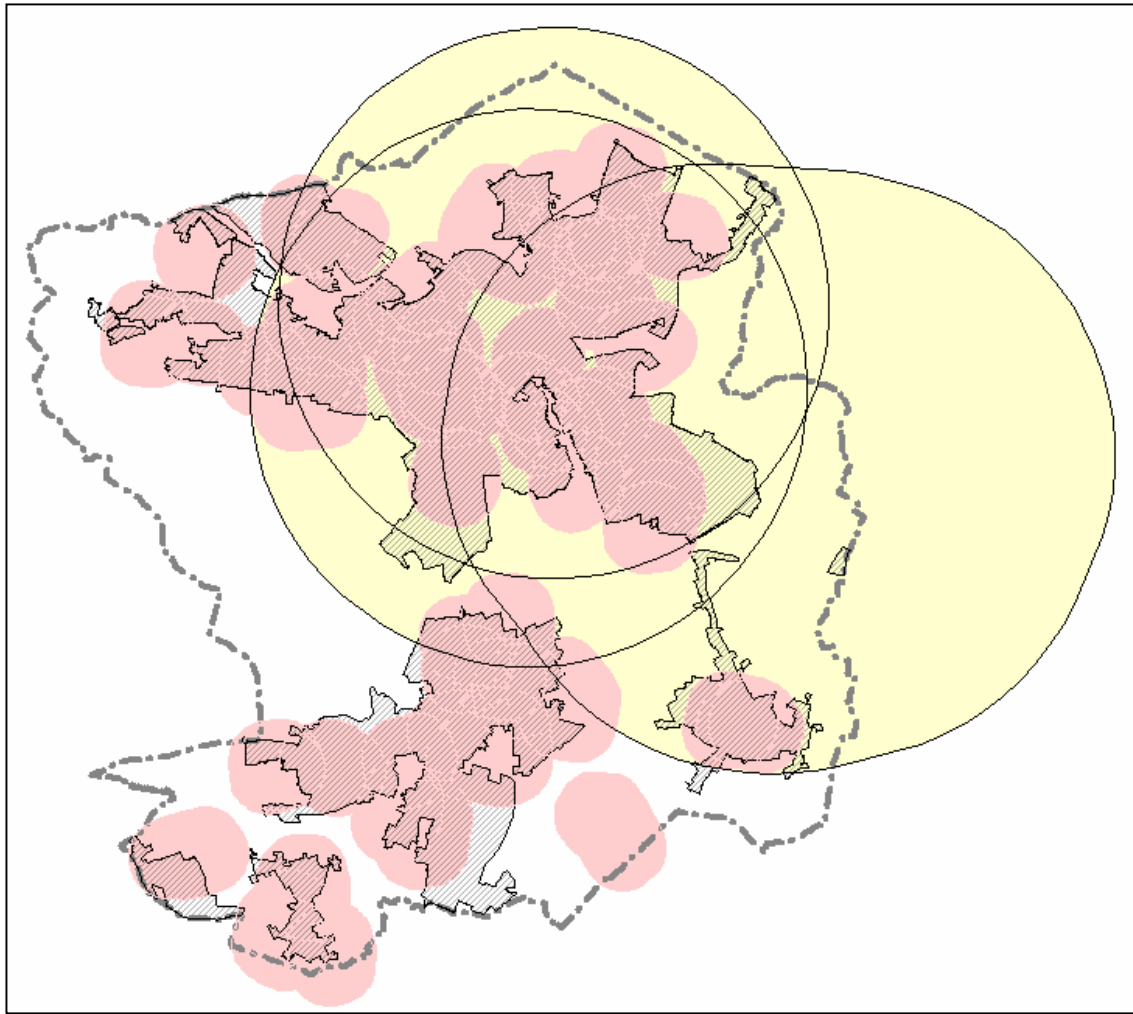
- **For localised provision**

For sites that do not have the same status as premier sporting facilities, it is reasonable expect that the public will primarily access such spaces on foot. For these sites, the recommended local standard is:




10 minute walk (480 metres)

There is no clear national benchmark or standard to which this accessibility standard can be compared.

By applying these accessibility standards to provision within the Borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth, the following map is produced.



KEY

-  Catchment area (based on a driving distance of 3385 metres)
-  Catchment area (based on a walking distance of 480 metres)
-  Urban Areas



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8.4 Planning Implications:



Whilst this assessment provides an excellent overview of provision, there is scope for additional work to be undertaken within the next Playing Pitch Strategy, utilising Sport England's Playing Pitch Model and other toolkits. Furthermore, the Borough-wide consultation provides broad overviews of attitudes to provision; more specific consultation and user surveys could be undertaken at specific sites to assess issues such as usage patterns, as well as targeting young people under the age of 24, as response levels were low for this particular age bracket.

This assessment makes no assumption about existing demand on specific pitches. Visual inspection of sites shows that certain sites are used more regularly than others – this statement applies to all sites irrespective of ownership. For instance, Nicholas Chamberlaine School and George Eliot School have several pitches and these are used on an almost continual basis, whereas other school facilities are not used as regularly. Similarly, Borough Council maintained pitches such as Sandon Park appear to be well-used. If sites are used excessively then pitch quality will be sacrificed as pitches cannot cope with the demand.

Therefore, thought should be given to the possibility of increasing artificial turf provision (ATP) within the Borough. Sport England Facilities Planning Model suggests that there should be one ATP per 60,000 population. Given that the Borough has a population of 119132, but only one ATP, it would appear that there is scope for an additional facility. This in turn may reduce the strain placed on grass playing fields, and lead to an increase in quality. With this in mind, it is suggested that further consultation is undertaken in the future to assess whether there is the demand for such a facility. Consultation should target potential users such as football clubs, and schools.

9. Amenity Greenspace

9.1 Identifying Local Needs – Open Space and Indoor Sport Questionnaire Analysis

The results from this consultation exercise are displayed in Appendix 5. However, with regard to amenity greenspace the following key information was obtained:

- **Usage levels:** 1 in 4 people that responded to the question visit amenity greenspace on a daily or weekly basis (451 people). Of the remainder, 32.3% visit amenity greenspace on an occasional basis whilst 37.1% never visit this type of open space.

➡ **Implications:** Based on these findings, it appears that usage levels are good, although this could be improved given that more than 1 in 3 people never visit this type of site.

- **Quality:** When asked to assess the quality of provision within the Borough using a scale of 1 to 5, analysis shows that the average mark awarded to amenity greenspaces was 3.15 (where 1 was very poor and 5 excellent). When compared with other types of open space, this is the second lowest average score out of the eight typologies.

➡ **Implications:** Based upon these findings, users feel that there is scope for quality improvements within amenity greenspaces.

- **Quantity:** Out of the 1363 that provided a response, 65.0% stated that there is adequate provision of amenity greenspace within the Borough.

➡ **Implications:** These findings show that existing supply of amenity greenspace is meeting demand.

- **Mode of Transport** As expected, the vast majority of people travel on foot / by bicycle when visiting amenity greenspaces (821 responses), with only 346 opting to travel by motor vehicle.

➡ **Implications:** The consultation indicates that the majority of people travel to amenity greenspaces on foot.

9.2 Auditing Local Provision

9.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites

By combining site surveys with desktop research, the following quantitative information was gathered for amenity greenspace:

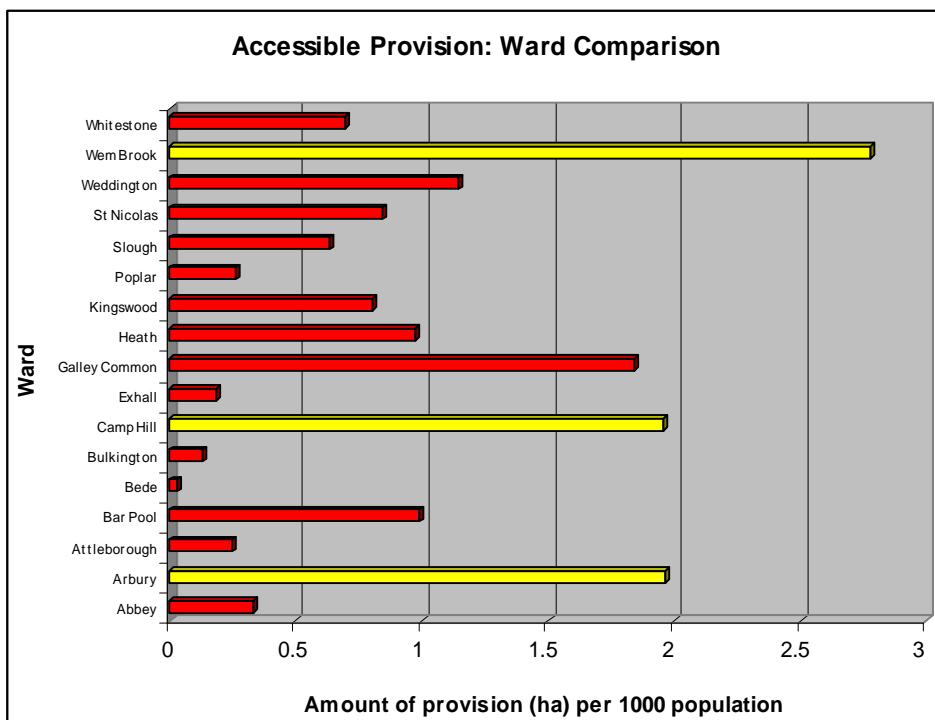
Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Number of 'primary purpose' sites	Number of 'secondary purpose' sites	Total area of open space (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	3	0	2.385	0.330
Arbury	5482	2	2	10.76	1.963
Attleborough	7564	2	1	1.863	0.246
Bar Pool	7451	5	1	7.372	0.989
Bede	6760	1	0	0.204	0.030
Bulkington	6303	1	1	0.842	0.134
Camp Hill	7325	5	3	14.335	1.957
Exhall	7381	3	2	1.348	0.183
Galley Common	7593	5	7	13.996	1.843
Heath	6377	2	0	6.192	0.971
Kingswood	6878	2	1	5.518	0.802
Poplar	6850	4	1	1.793	0.262
Slough	7058	5	4	4.459	0.632
St Nicolas	7073	1	4	5.952	0.842
Weddington	7286	7	0	8.334	1.144
Wem Brook	7082	5	4	19.654	2.775
Whitestone	7435	0	9	5.153	0.693
TOTAL	119132	53	40	110.16	0.925



9.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites

The number of sites that were deemed to be fully, or partly accessible to the public, were as follows:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Total number of sites	Total area of sites (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	3	2.385	0.330
Arbury	5482	4	10.76	1.963
Attleborough	7564	3	1.863	0.246
Bar Pool	7451	6	7.372	0.989
Bede	6760	1	0.204	0.030
Bulkington	6303	2	0.842	0.134
Camp Hill	7325	8	14.335	1.957
Exhall	7381	5	1.348	0.183
Galley Common	7593	12	13.996	1.843
Heath	6377	2	6.192	0.971
Kingswood	6878	3	5.518	0.802
Poplar	6850	5	1.793	0.262
Slough	7058	9	4.459	0.632
St Nicolas	7073	5	5.952	0.842
Weddington	7286	7	8.334	1.144
Wem Brook	7082	9	19.654	2.775
Whitestone	7435	9	5.153	0.693
TOTAL	119132	93	110.16	0.925



9.2.3

Qualitative and Value Results



Quality and value assessments were undertaken at all sites owned and maintained by the Council. The table below summarises the findings:

Ward	Number of Assessed sites	Average Quality Score (%)	Average Value Score (%)
Abbey	3	57.6	40.8
Arbury	3	38.7	37.0
Attleborough	3	63.8	33.3
Bar Pool	6	43.9	30.6
Bede	1	38.0	44.4
Bulkington	2	39.1	33.4
Camp Hill	8	36.0	34.7
Exhall	5	36.3	31.1
Galley Common	12	42.5	34.3
Heath	2	36.9	36.1
Kingswood	3	38.8	29.6
Poplar	5	41.2	34.4
Slough	9	34.9	27.2
St Nicolas	5	45.5	37.8
Weddington	7	45.1	32.5
Wem Brook	9	49.3	40.1
Whitestone	9	40.7	32.1
TOTAL	92	42.3	33.8

9.2.4 Accessibility

Within the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport Facilities' questionnaire, respondents were asked how far they would be prepared to travel to amenity greenspace. The results were used to calculate distance thresholds for this type of open space by assessing the time that 75% of respondents were prepared to travel. From this, the following time thresholds (or effective catchments), were calculated:

Walking time threshold based on 590 responses:

Time threshold: 7 minutes

Straight-Line Distance threshold: 336 metres

Driving time threshold based on 248 responses:

Time threshold: 10 minutes

Straight-Line distance threshold: 2257 metres

9.2.5 Analysis of Provision

The assessment identified 110.16 ha of amenity greenspace spread across ninety-three sites (this figure did not include spare land left over after planning, nor did it include roadside verges). Looking at the distribution of the provision, there is a good spread across all urban areas, with only limited areas lacking provision such as industrial estates e.g. Bermuda Park.

Amenity greenspace within Abbey and Attleborough was deemed to be the highest quality within the Borough, with average marks of 57.6% and 63.8% respectively, which represented a significantly higher percentage than the other Borough wards, where average percentages fluctuated between 33.8% and 49.3%.

9.3 Setting Provision Standards

9.3.1 Quantitative standard

The Audit has identified that the Borough has:

TOTAL PROVISION: 110 ha (0.925 ha / 1000 population)

ACCESSIBLE PROVISION: 110 ha (0.925 ha / 1000 population)

When looking to establish local standards, it is important to consider local opinion as well as national benchmarks. When asked to assess provision of amenity greenspace, 65.0% stated that there is adequate provision, indicating that the Borough-wide consensus is that there is sufficient provision.

At the national level there is no definitive national standard, although the NPFA six-acre standard can be loosely applied. This standard recommends that there should be 2.43 ha / 1000 population of outdoor playing space, of which 0.8 ha / 1000 population should be 'children's playing space'. Children's playing space includes casual and informal playing space within housing areas, and so 0.8 ha / 1000 population can be used as a very general benchmark.

Therefore, combining the NPFA standard with local opinion, it is felt that the quantity standard should be set to reflect existing provision levels, i.e.

0.9 ha per 1000 population

9.3.2 Qualitative Standard

A suitable qualitative standard should reflect the views and aspirations of the public, as well as drawing upon best practice to ensure that targets are realistic and achievable. When asked to assess the open space which they visit most regularly, the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' questionnaire highlighted that the Borough's residents score dog-bins, litterbins, seating facilities and disabled facilities poorly, whilst site access points and safety scored well. With this in mind, the following standard is proposed:

Amenity greenspace should be free of litter, dog-foul and anti-social behaviour. Sites should also be suitably maintained with appropriate planting and ancillary items available.

To help achieve this standard, examples of best-practice should be followed. For instance, management and maintenance of amenity greenspace should consider the Green Flag Award and some of its key criteria, including:

(i) A Welcoming Place:

Green Flag States:

“The signs throughout a green space should conform to a coherent design. A jumble of different signs for different purposes should be avoided. Out-of-date signs should be removed. New signs should fit with the existing design. Signs situated around the site on gates and fences at strategic points should be robust and durable”

(ii) Healthy, Safe and Secure

Green Flag states:

“Provide dog waste bins in areas where dog walking is allowed and make available ‘poop-scoops’ and bags if practicable.”

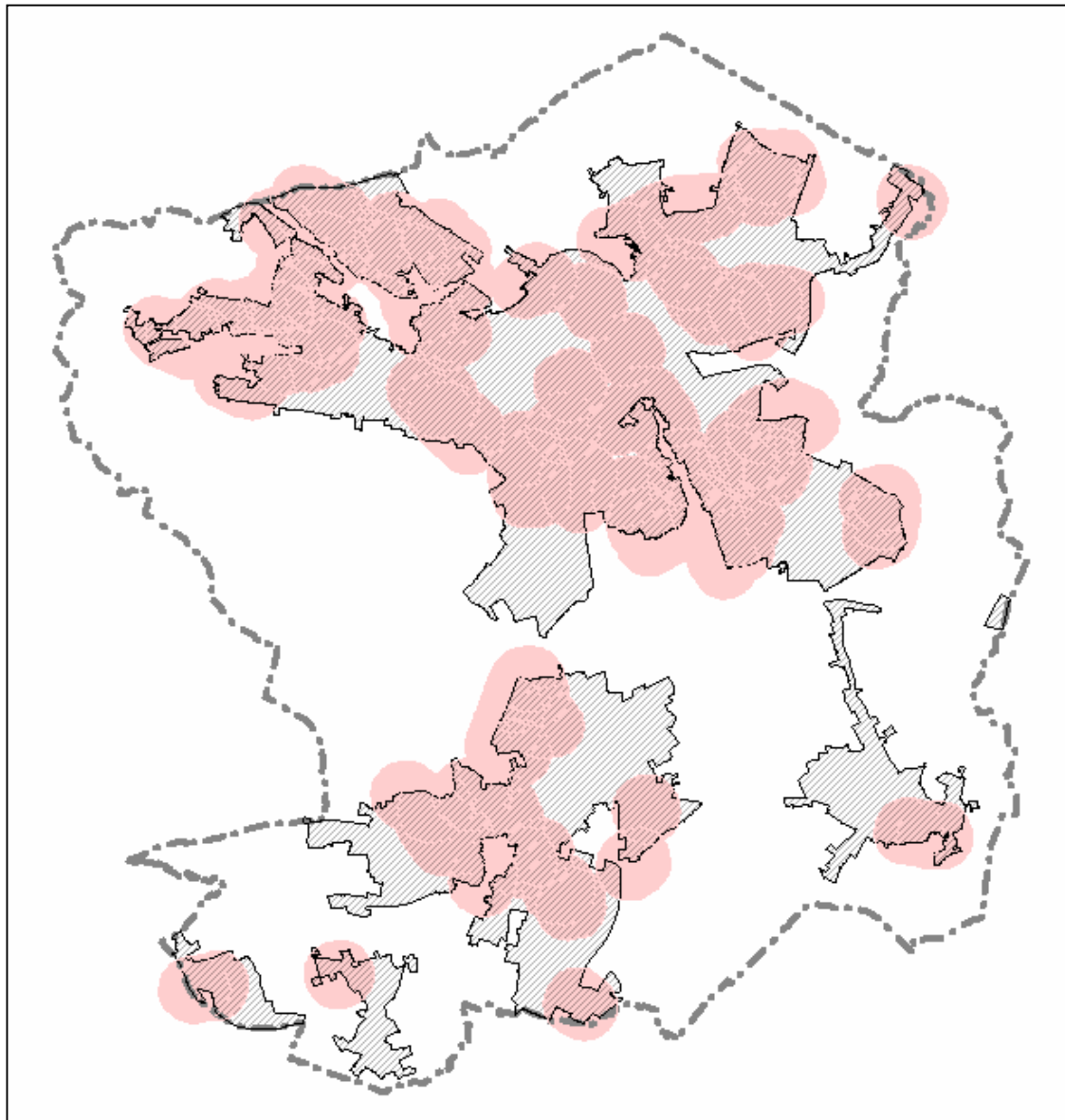
9.3.3 Accessibility Standard

Analysis of the Open Space and Indoor Sport questionnaire produced walking and driving thresholds for amenity greenspace (see 9.2.4). These results form the basis of the accessibility standard. Given that most amenity greenspaces are located within residential areas, such sites tend to have a local impact and so most people will walk to such sites. Therefore, the following accessibility standard is proposed:



7 minute walk (336 metre catchment)

The London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC) has proposed suggested benchmarks concerning open space. For small local parks and other open spaces, they propose that such sites should be within less than 0.4 km of home. Whilst this is based on analysis of provision within London, it compares favourably with the standard proposed for Nuneaton and Bedworth.

By applying the accessibility standard to provision within the Borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth, the following map is produced.



Key

-  Catchment Area (based on a walking distance of 336 metres)
-  Urban Areas



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9.4 Policy Implications

Amenity greenspace has an important role in providing informal play and recreation opportunities such as jogging, dog-walking, etc. At present, it would appear that there is an adequate supply of this type of open space to meet demand. However, this may vary in time associated with more housing developments. Therefore, as the Borough's population increases, it is important to ensure that there is suitable provision of amenity greenspace using the standard identified within this assessment as the benchmark.

10. Provision for Children and Young People

10.1 Identifying Local Needs – Open Space and Indoor Sport Questionnaire Analysis

The results from this consultation exercise are displayed in Appendix 5. However, with regard to provision for children and young people the following key information was obtained:

- **Usage levels:** 45.2% of the 1840 respondents to the question never visit this type of open space although slightly less than 1 in 3 people do visit this type of open space at least once a month (29.1%).

➡ **Implications:** Based upon these findings, nearly half of the respondents do not visit this type of open space – this is to be expected given that this specialised form of open space provision is targeted at children and their parents.

- **Quality:** When asked to assess the quality of provision within the Borough using a scale of 1 to 5, analysis shows that the average mark awarded to open spaces with provision for children and young people was 2.95 (where 1 was very poor and 5 excellent). When compared with other types of open space, this was the lowest average mark.

➡ **Implications:** Based upon these findings, users feel that there is considerable scope for quality improvements in play provision.

- **Quantity:** Out of the 1455 that provided a response, the majority response was that there is insufficient provision for children and young people (54.4%)

➡ **Implications:** Borough-wide consensus is that there is scope for increasing provision for children and young people.

- **Mode of Transport:** 65.4% of visitors travel to these types of open spaces on foot or by bicycle, with only 30.7% opting to travel by motor vehicle.

➡ The majority of users travel to these facilities on foot or by bicycle.

10.2 Auditing Local Provision

10.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites

By combining site surveys with desktop research, the following quantitative information was gathered concerning provision for children and young people:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Number of 'primary purpose' sites	Number of 'secondary and other purpose' sites	Total area of open space (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	0	1	0.065	0.009
Arbury	5482	2	0	0.076	0.014
Attleborough	7564	1	2	0.143	0.019
Bar Pool	7451	0	3	0.148	0.020
Bede	6760	0	1	0.254	0.038
Bulkington	6303	1	1	0.146	0.023
Camp Hill	7325	2	2	0.244	0.033
Exhall	7381	2	3	0.982	0.133
Galley Common	7593	7	1	0.277	0.036
Heath	6377	0	3	0.101	0.016
Kingswood	6878	1	2	0.134	0.020
Poplar	6850	1	2	0.388	0.057
Slough	7058	5	1	0.245	0.035
St Nicolas	7073	4	1	0.288	0.041
Weddington	7286	0	3	0.065	0.009
Wem Brook	7082	3	2	0.38	0.054
Whitestone	7435	8	0	0.219	0.029
TOTAL	119132	37	28	4.155	0.035



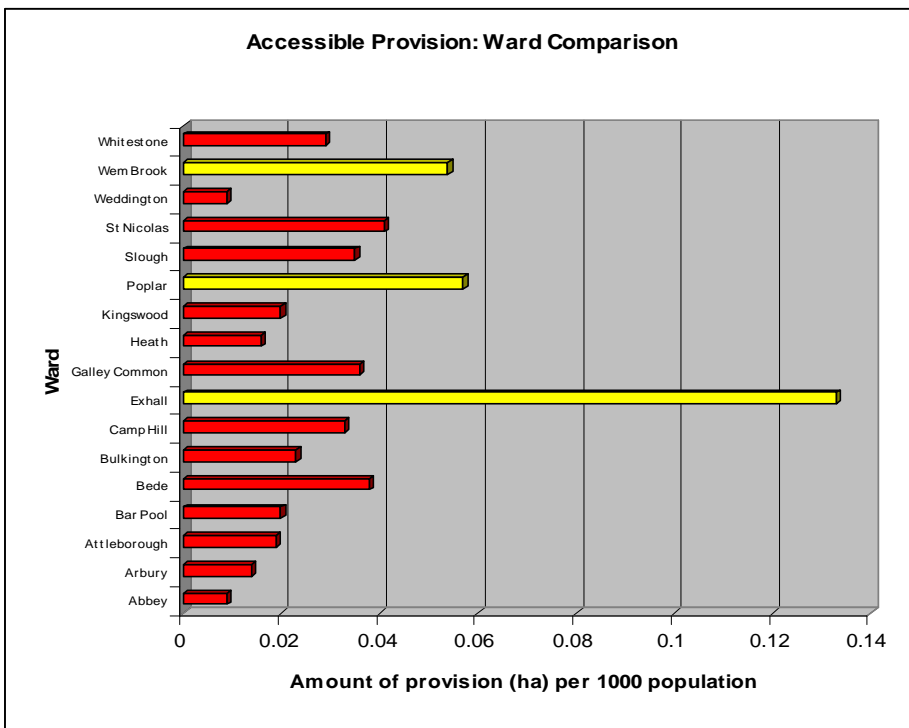
**Example of Provision
for Children & Young
People:**

Middlemarch Road

10.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites

The number of sites that were deemed to be fully, or partly accessible to the public, were as follows:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Total number of sites	Total area of equipped play (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	1	0.065	0.009
Arbury	5482	2	0.076	0.014
Attleborough	7564	3	0.143	0.019
Bar Pool	7451	3	0.148	0.020
Bede	6760	1	0.254	0.038
Bulkington	6303	2	0.146	0.023
Camp Hill	7325	4	0.244	0.033
Exhall	7381	5	0.982	0.133
Galley Common	7593	8	0.277	0.036
Heath	6377	3	0.101	0.016
Kingswood	6878	3	0.134	0.020
Poplar	6850	3	0.388	0.057
Slough	7058	6	0.245	0.035
St Nicolas	7073	5	0.288	0.041
Weddington	7286	3	0.065	0.009
Wem Brook	7082	5	0.38	0.054
Whitestone	7435	8	0.219	0.029
TOTAL	119132	65	4.155	0.035



10.2.3 Qualitative and Value Results

Quality and value assessments were undertaken at all sites owned and maintained by the Council. The table below summarises the findings:

Ward	Number of Assessed sites	Average Quality Score (%)	Average Value Score (%)
Abbey	1	60.0	66.7
Arbury	2	31.1	38.9
Attleborough	3	55.2	59.3
Bar Pool	3	49.1	63.0
Bede	1	60.3	61.1
Bulkington	2	42.3	50.0
Camp Hill	4	39.7	51.4
Exhall	5	41.4	50.0
Galley Common	8	39.0	40.3
Heath	3	43.7	57.4
Kingswood	3	39.7	53.7
Poplar	3	50.2	61.1
Slough	6	36.1	29.6
St Nicolas	5	44.8	41.1
Weddington	3	44.3	50.0
Wem Brook	5	55.6	55.6
Whitestone	8	38.8	31.9
TOTAL	65	43.4	46.7

10.2.4 Accessibility

Within the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport Facilities' questionnaire, respondents were asked how far they would be prepared to travel to access provision for children and young people. The results were used to calculate distance thresholds for this type of open space by assessing the time that 75% of respondents were prepared to travel. From this, the following time thresholds (or effective catchments), were calculated:

Walking time threshold based on 687 responses:

Time threshold: 10 minutes

Straight-Line Distance threshold: 300 metres

Driving time threshold based on 343 responses:

Time threshold: 15 minutes

Straight-Line distance threshold: 3385 metres

10.2.5 Analysis of Provision

The assessment identified sixty-five sites that have provision for children and young people, accounting for 4.155 ha of provision. Play areas are distributed on an irregular basis with clusters of provision noted. For instance, there are several play areas located along the boundary between the wards of Whitestone and Attleborough. However, where these clusters exist it is noted that the quality, and also value of the play areas is often very low.

Furthermore, it was also noted that far too many sites do not have suitable dog-proof measures; examples include New Road Play Area, Long Shoot and Orford Rise, amongst others. However, on a positive note, at sites where play areas have recently been refurbished, (e.g. Marlborough Road and Middlemarch Road), play value has been significantly increased which has led to enhancement of site quality.

Although clusters of provision are observed, it should be noted that there is good provision within the urban areas of the Borough. The most notable exception to this is at Bermuda Industrial Estate and the adjoining new housing estate.

10.3 Setting Provision Standards

10.3.1 Quantitative standard

When considering quantitative standards it is necessary to consider the impact of the Borough Council's adopted Play Strategy. Within this there are plans to reduce the number of play areas; this will be achieved by disbanding the following play areas:

Auden Close, Bettina Close, Cambourne Drive, Chartwell Close (including play areas at Avebury Close and Sheringham Close), Ragley Way, Leam Close, Gleneagles Close, Collycroft Rec, Hollystitches Road, Marston Lane Fields, Changebrook Open Space, Millais Close, Glenwood Gardens, and Carnoustie Close / Dalmahoy Close.

These sixteen play areas account for 0.237 ha of provision. Interestingly, several of these sites are located where there is an existing over-supply in the areas identified within 10.2.5. To illustrate, Ragley Way, Leam Close and Chartwell Close are all located on the boundary between Whitestone and Attleborough.

Working on the assumption that these play areas will be disbanded in the near future, and therefore not available as provision for children and young people, the assessment has identified:

TOTAL PROVISION: 3.918 ha (0.032 ha / 1000 population)

ACCESSIBLE PROVISION: 3.918ha (0.032 ha / 1000 population)

When setting a quantitative standard it is important to carefully consider local opinion. The borough-wide Open Space and Indoor Sport consultation indicated that opinion was mixed when considering existing provision levels, with the slight majority indicating that there is inadequate provision (54.4%). This is in contrast to the approach adopted within the Play Strategy, which has placed an emphasis on

focusing investment on improving and raising the standard of a reduced number of play areas, rather than simply looking to increase the number of sites.

Aside from local circumstances and consultation, it is important to compare Nuneaton and Bedworth's provision with national benchmarks. Within the NPFA's Six-Acre Standard they advocate that there should be 0.8 ha of outdoor playing space, consisting of a range of facilities and casual and informal playing space. This figure far outweighs the total area of provision stated on the previous page. However, this small figure is explained by the fact that this only represents the total area of all of the identified equipped play areas; as opposed to the size of the open space that contains the play areas.

Therefore, in order to compare the Borough's provision against the NPFA standard, it is important to include the additional land found at sites containing provision for children and young people. Therefore, if the play area was part of an amenity greenspace or park landscape, then the sites total area should be included. When doing this for all of the play areas retained within the Borough Council's Play Strategy, a total of 113,129 ha of outdoor play space is calculated. This equates to 0.9496 ha / 1000 population, which is slightly more than the recommended standard of the NPFA.

Therefore, the following quantitative standard is proposed:

0.9 ha of outdoor playing space per 1000 population (which should consist of 0.03 ha of equipped play areas per 1000 population)

By setting this standard in accordance to projected provision levels in line with the Borough Council's Play Strategy, this is in fact supporting a reduction in existing provision – in contrast to the findings of the consultation. However, it should be acknowledged that the Open Space and Indoor Sport questionnaire was probably conducted at an inappropriate time when considering for views on play areas, given that Play Strategy's programme of refurbishments is only in its infancy.

The reason that this standard is recommended is because spatial analysis has shown that projected provision should still ensure adequate supply across the Borough. In addition, the programme of refurbishments outlined within the Play Strategy will significantly enhance quality of provision for children and young people. Therefore, *Jones Plus Limited* would advocate undertaking an additional consultation process at the completion of the play area refurbishments, to assess views on quantity and quality; the consensus would probably be different in light of improved provision across the Borough.

10.3.2 Qualitative Standard

A suitable qualitative standard should reflect the views and aspirations of the public, as well as drawing upon best practice to ensure that targets are realistic and achievable. When asked to assess the open space which they visit most regularly,



the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' questionnaire highlighted that the Borough's residents score dog-bins, litterbins, seating facilities and disabled facilities poorly, whilst site access points and safety scored well. With this in mind, the following standard is proposed:

Facilities for children and young people should be free of litter, dog foul and anti-social behaviour. Furthermore, ancillary items should be provided to ensure that there is suitable provision for children using play equipment, and also for parents supervising. Facilities should have high play value and encourage safe, inclusive play opportunities. Finally, play areas should be located in such a way that ensures the personal safety of both children and parents.

To help achieve this standard, examples of best-practice should be followed. For instance, management and maintenance of provision for children and young people should consider the Green Flag Award and some of its key criteria, including:

(i) Healthy, Safe and Secure

Green Flag States:

- "Children's play equipment should be both functional and imaginative. It should be situated in a safe area of the park well away from main roads. Dogs should be excluded and there should be adequate seating and litter bins".
- "Equipment, such as children's outdoor play equipment, should be designed to the highest standard and should meet the relevant British or international standards. Safety is of paramount importance and any loose fittings or fixtures should be immediately fenced off from public use and repaired as soon as possible".
- "Hard surfacing, particularly in children's playgrounds, should be of an appropriate material, well drained, clean and free from hazards. There should be no step changes in levels, protrusions, raised lips and other hazards to users".
- "Equipment should function correctly. If it does not and cannot be repaired, then consideration should be given to its removal".

The NPFA also provide guidance relating to play areas. Within their Six-Acre Standard they suggest:

"For all new residential developments, the selection of sites for children's play areas must be an integral part of the design process from the outset and not an afterthought. It is important, as part of that process, to consider the patterns of streets, paths and open spaces from a child's perspective."

"Locating a play area close to a road may have benefits in terms of surveillance and community safety, in which case the adjacent road should incorporate traffic calming measures."



They also suggest that successful play areas should also be:

- “Accessible by footpaths with a firm surface.”
- “Surfaced in a manner that is able to withstand the intensity of use.”
- “Provided with seating for parents and carers.”
- “Fitted with play equipment that has been designed, manufactured, installed and maintained in full accordance with EN1176 EN177 and BS7188. Fencing, including gates, seating and all other fixtures should similarly be in accordance.”
- “Designed with appropriate physical features on the perimeter of the activity zone to exclude dogs.”

RoSPA are another leading organisation in the field of children’s play and they should also be contacted when seeking to raise the quality of provision for children and young people.

10.3.3 Accessibility Standard

Analysis of the Open Space and Indoor Sport questionnaire produced walking and driving thresholds for provision for children and young people (see 10.2.4). These results form the basis of the accessibility standard, which is suggested as:

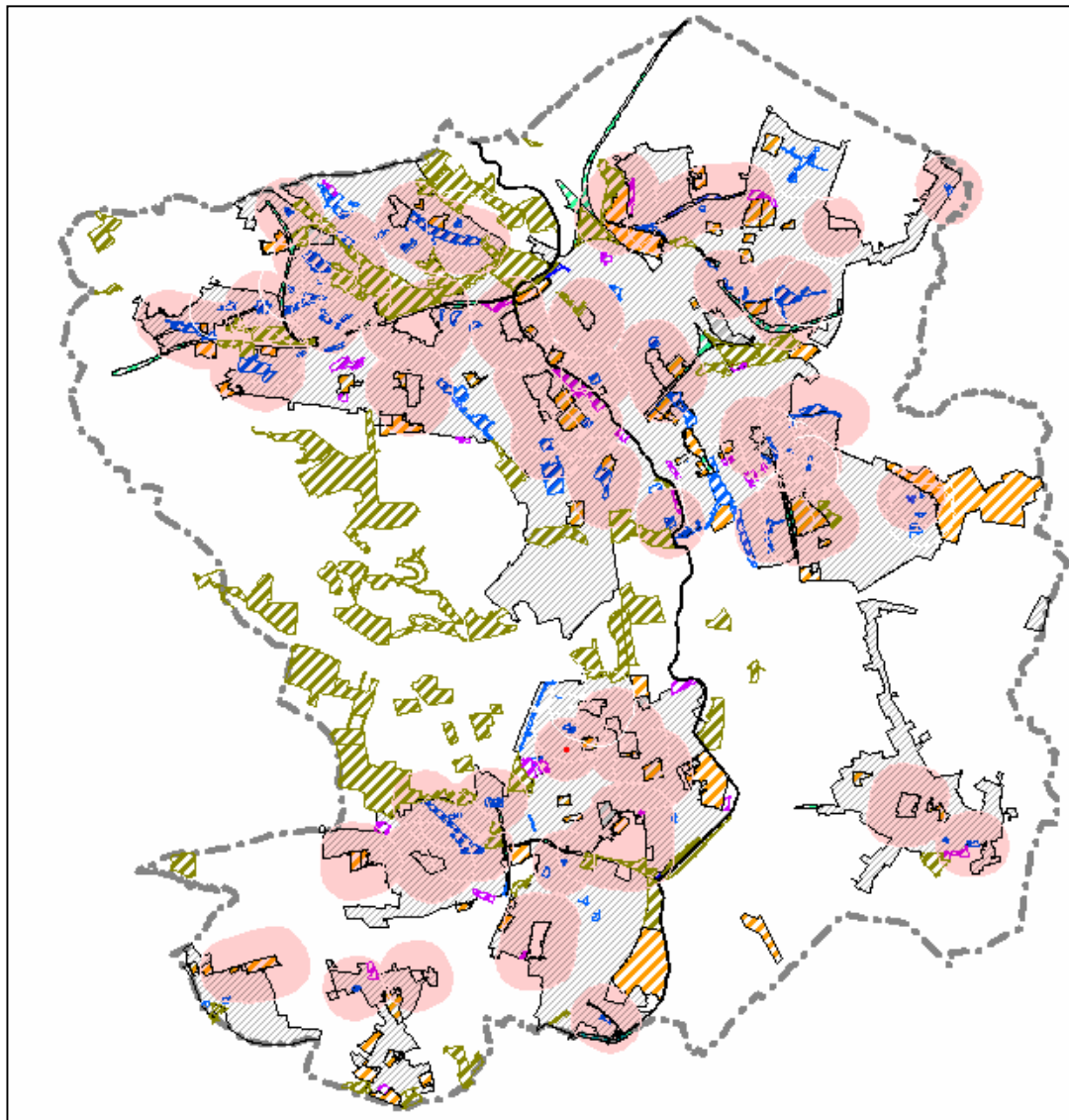
10 minute walk (300 metre catchment)

The NPFA have produced several documents relating to catchment areas of play areas. Within the Six-Acre standard they advocate the following thresholds for different types of provision:



- Local Areas for Play (LAP) – straight line distance threshold of 60 metres
- Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) – straight line distance threshold of 240 metres
- Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) – straight line distance threshold of 600 metres

For the purpose of this report all play areas have been grouped together, and so have proposed catchments of 300 metres. Therefore, this would seem to be a reasonable threshold given that it falls between the NPFA’s, LEAP, and NEAP thresholds.

By applying the accessibility standard to sites retained within the Borough Council's Play Strategy, the following map is produced.



KEY

-  Catchment Area (based on a walking distance of 300 metres)
-  Urban Areas

N



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10.4 Policy Implications

Ensuring high quality provision of open space for children and young people is vitally important, ensuring that they have suitable opportunities for social interaction, as well as developing movement and mobility skills within the equipped play areas. The Borough Council has recently committed to an ambitious programme of play area refurbishments. Linked to this, it is vitally important that suitable maintenance regimes have been set to reflect the need to ensure that these new facilities are maintained to a high standard. In addition to formal play, there is plenty of scope to try and encourage informal play opportunities within existing open spaces such as amenity greenspace.

For the purpose of this report all play areas have been grouped together. This is a particularly relevant issue when considering the application of the accessibility threshold. The reason that all play areas have been grouped together is again linked to the Play Strategy. All of the retained play areas will undergo a programme of refurbishment over the coming years. Therefore, the status of a play area may well change in the near future. With this in mind, it is suggested that this 300 metre catchment is used for planning purposes, which can later be refined and sub-divided along the lines proposed by the NPFA to fully reflect the impact of the Play Strategy.

11. Allotments, Community Gardens & Urban Farms

11.1 Identifying Local Needs – Open Space and Indoor Sport Questionnaire Analysis

The results from this consultation exercise are displayed in Appendix 5. However, with regard to allotments, community gardens and urban farms the following key information was obtained:

▪ Usage levels

64.4% of the 1824 respondents to the question never visit this type of open space, with a further 21.9% visiting only on an occasional basis. 10.3% of respondents visit this type of open space on a daily or weekly basis.

➡ **Implications:** The findings indicate that nearly 2 in 3 people never visit or use allotments – unsurprising given that this is a specialised form of provision.

▪ Quality

When asked to assess the quality of provision within the Borough using a scale of 1 to 5, analysis shows that the average mark awarded to allotments, community gardens and urban farms was 3.33 (where 1 was very poor and 5 excellent). When compared with other types of open space, this represents the equal fourth highest average score out of the eight typologies.

➡ **Implications:** Based on the consultation findings, respondents feel that the quality of allotments is adequate.

▪ Quantity

Out of the 1177 that provided a response, 68.2% stated that there is adequate provision of allotments, community gardens and urban farms, compared to 30.2% who stated that there is insufficient provision.

➡ **Implications:** Borough-wide consensus is that there is sufficient allotment provision in the Borough.

▪ Mode of Transport

54.5% of those that responded will visit this type of open space on foot or by bicycle, a slightly higher figure than those that use motor vehicles (40.3%).

➡ **Implications:** The consultation indicates that people use a variety of available transport methods to access allotments.

11.2 Auditing Local Provision

11.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites

By combining site surveys with desktop research, the following quantitative information was gathered concerning allotments, community gardens and urban farms:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Number of 'primary purpose' sites	Number of 'secondary and other purpose' sites	Total area of open space (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	1	0	0.772	0.107
Arbury	5482	2	0	0.38	0.069
Attleborough	7564	2	0	1.681	0.222
Bar Pool	7451	3	0	8.074	1.084
Bede	6760	1	0	2.135	0.316
Bulkington	6303	1	0	1.554	0.247
Camp Hill	7325	1	0	1.239	0.169
Exhall	7381	3	0	2.441	0.331
Galley Common	7593	0	0	0	0
Heath	6377	2	0	2.792	0.438
Kingswood	6878	2	0	3.46	0.503
Poplar	6850	2	0	0.947	0.138
Slough	7058	2	0	3.525	0.499
St Nicolas	7073	1	0	1.527	0.216
Weddington	7286	1	0	1.93	0.265
Wem Brook	7082	4	0	2.967	0.419
Whitestone	7435	1	0	1.013	0.136
TOTAL	119132	29	0	36.437	0.306



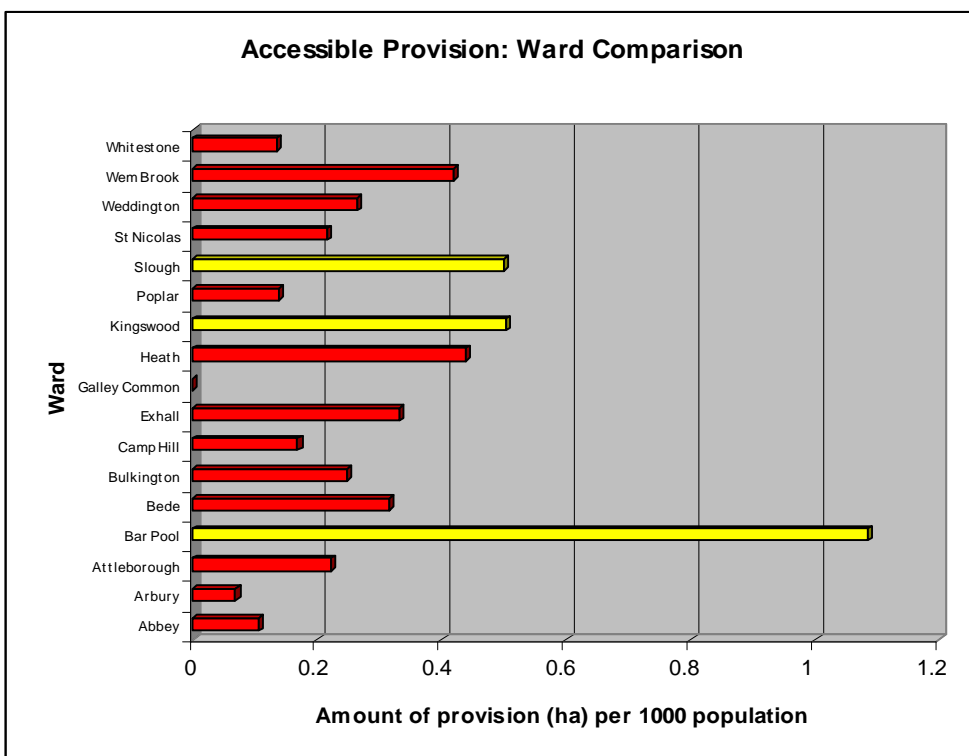
Example of Allotments, community gardens and urban farms:

Barnacle Lane Allotments

11.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites

The number of sites that were deemed to be fully, or partly accessible to the public, were as follows:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Total number of sites	Total area of sites (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	1	0.772	0.107
Arbury	5482	2	0.38	0.069
Attleborough	7564	2	1.681	0.222
Bar Pool	7451	3	8.074	1.084
Bede	6760	1	2.135	0.316
Bulkington	6303	1	1.554	0.247
Camp Hill	7325	1	1.239	0.169
Exhall	7381	3	2.441	0.331
Galley Common	7593	0	0	0
Heath	6377	2	2.792	0.438
Kingswood	6878	2	3.46	0.503
Poplar	6850	2	0.947	0.138
Slough	7058	2	3.525	0.499
St Nicolas	7073	1	1.527	0.216
Weddington	7286	1	1.93	0.265
Wem Brook	7082	4	2.967	0.419
Whitestone	7435	1	1.013	0.136
TOTAL	119132	29	36.437	0.306



11.2.3 Qualitative and Value Results

Quality and value assessments were undertaken at all sites owned and maintained by the Council. The table below summarises the findings:

Ward	Number of Assessed sites	Average Quality Score (%)	Average Value Score (%)
Abbey	1	53.6	50.0
Arbury	0	N/A	N/A
Attleborough	2	52.7	38.9
Bar Pool	3	47.0	42.6
Bede	1	53.6	44.4
Bulkington	1	73.2	55.6
Camp Hill	1	48.2	50.0
Exhall	3	61.9	44.4
Galley Common	0	N/A	N/A
Heath	2	76.8	47.2
Kingswood	2	65.2	47.2
Poplar	2	51.8	44.4
Slough	2	66.1	44.4
St Nicolas	1	58.9	44.4
Weddington	1	48.3	44.4
Wem Brook	3	51.4	40.7
Whitestone	1	51.8	50.0
TOTAL	26	57.4	44.9

11.2.4 Accessibility

Within the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport Facilities' questionnaire, respondents were asked how far they would be prepared to travel to allotments, community gardens and urban farms. The results were used to calculate distance thresholds for this type of open space by assessing the time that 75% of respondents were prepared to travel. From this, the following time thresholds (or effective catchments), were calculated:

Walking time threshold based on 361 responses:

Time threshold: 10 minutes

Straight-Line Distance threshold: 480 metres

Driving time threshold based on 273 responses:

Time threshold: 10 minutes

Straight-Line distance threshold: 2257 metres

11.2.5 Analysis of Provision

36.437 ha of allotment provision have been identified from the assessment, covering twenty-nine allotments sites. Of this, twenty-six sites are owned by the Borough Council, two are owned by Arbury Estates, and an additional site is a private allotment site, although all can be contacted about acquiring plots.

Regarding the distribution of provision, there is a good spread across the Borough. It is particularly noticeable that there is a cluster of provision within Nuneaton, including sites such as Vernons Lane Allotments, College Street Allotments, Greenmoor Road Allotments, Milford Road Allotments, and Sorrell Road Allotments; this corridor of provision in fact follows the course of the Coventry Canal. Within Bedworth, there are no clusters of provision, but again there is good coverage. There is also provision within Bulkington at Barnacle Road.

Quality of provision varies spatially, with higher quality sites located in the south of the Borough; when assessing quality, the highest averaging wards were Heath, Bulkington and Slough. Furthermore, there is a clear spatial trend regarding usage levels, with the majority of sites belonging to the Nuneaton Allotment Federation having plots available (only Woodstock Road, Sorrell Road and The Pavillion Allotments have 100 % usage at their sites).

The opposite situation exists when considering the Bedworth and District Allotment Federation; here all sites are at maximum capacity, except for Wheelwright Lane Allotments, Marston Lane Allotments, Royal Oak Lane Allotments and Bulkington Road Allotments, where some plots are still available.

Barnacle Lane Allotments, which do not belong to either Federation, are at maximum capacity and there is an extensive waiting list here, indicating that there is insufficient provision to meet demand in Bulkington.

11.3 Setting Provision Standards

11.3.1 Quantitative standard

The Audit has identified that the Borough has:

TOTAL PROVISION: 36 ha (0.306 ha / 1000 population)

ACCESSIBLE PROVISION: 36 ha (0.306 ha / 1000 population)

When looking to establish local standards, it is important to consider local opinion as well as national benchmarks. When asked to assess provision of allotments, community gardens and urban farms, 68.2% stated that there is adequate provision.

It is important to try and compare this local provision to national standards. Whilst there is no definitive recognised national quantitative standard, it should be acknowledged that the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners have recommended a standard of 20 allotment plots per 1000 households. However,

given that some individual allotment plots did not provide information relating to plot numbers, this can not be used in this instance. Instead, it is important to use the local consensus, supported by the spatial analysis. After all, allotment provision is a specialised form of open space that is very much demand led. Here, the Borough-wide consultation indicated that respondents felt that there was adequate provision. This in turn is supported by the spatial analysis which shows that there is good distribution of allotments across the Borough.

With this in mind, the local standard has been set to reflect existing provision levels. Therefore, the quantitative standard for allotments, community gardens and urban farms is set as:

0.3 ha / 1000 population

11.3.2 Qualitative standard

A suitable qualitative standard should reflect the views and aspirations of the public, as well as drawing upon best practice to ensure that targets are realistic and achievable. When asked to assess the open space which they visit most regularly, the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' questionnaire highlighted that the Borough's residents score dog-bins, litterbins, seating facilities and disabled facilities poorly, whilst site access points and safety scored well. With this in mind, the following standard is proposed:

Allotments should be free of litter and dog foul and appropriate measures should be in place to address anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Appropriate ancillary facilities should be provided, including water provision, toilets (male and female), as well as signage at entrance points. Access into and through allotments should be improved to enable allotment sites to be fully inclusive.

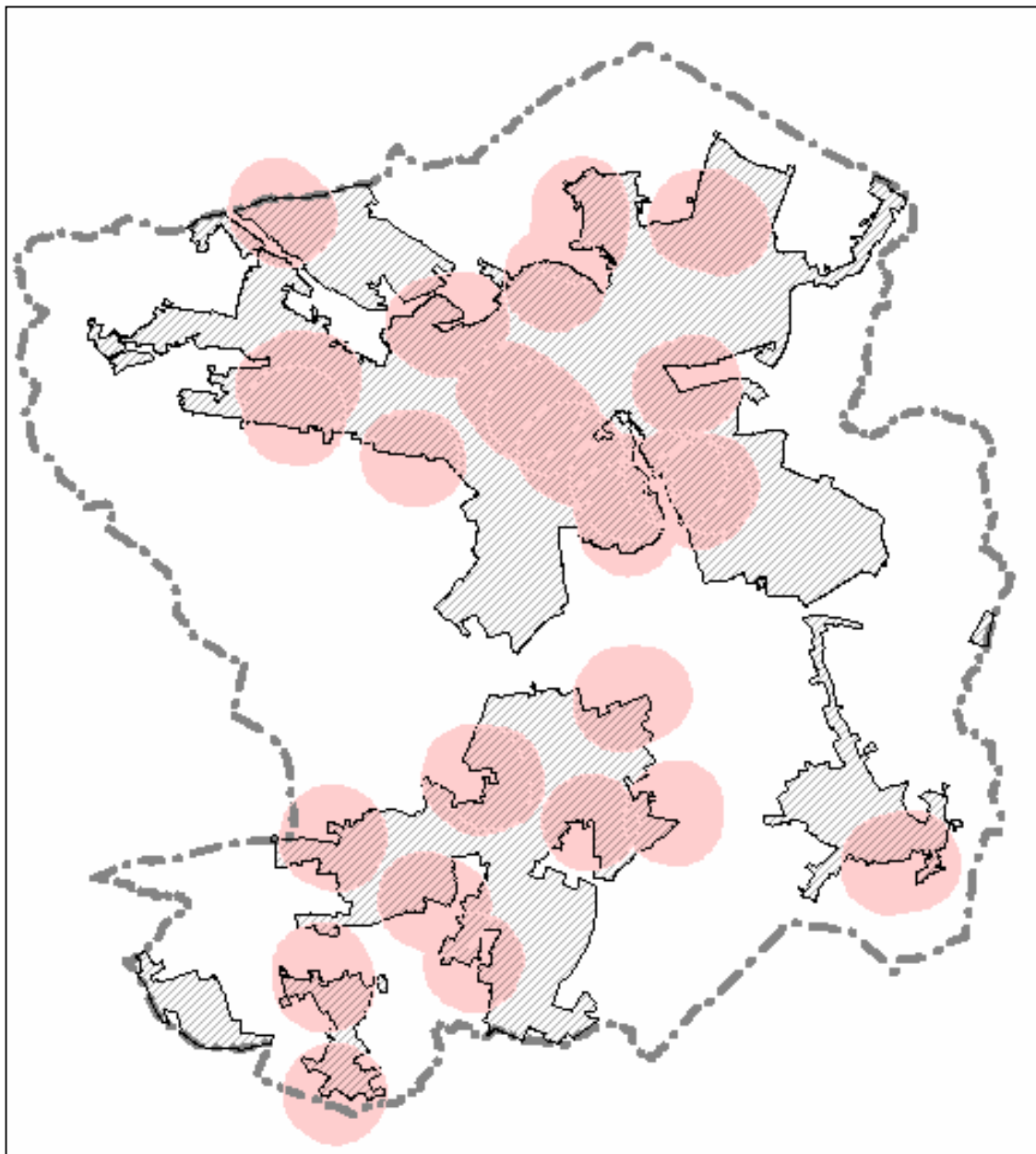
However, because individual allotment sites have the responsibility for the majority of their own infrastructure maintenance, as well as their own long-term development, this quality standard can only be seen as a very broad statement.

11.3.3 Accessibility Standard



Analysis of the Open Space and Indoor Sport questionnaire produced walking and driving thresholds for allotments, community gardens and urban farms (see 11.2.4). Given that allotment sites serve their local area, it is reasonable to expect that most plot holders will live close-by, and therefore be within walking distance of the site. Therefore, in line with the consultation findings, the recommended accessibility standard is:

10 minute walk (480 metre catchment)

By applying the accessibility standard to provision within the Borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth, the following map is produced.



KEY

-  Catchment Area (based on a walking distance of 480 metres)
-  Urban Areas



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11.4 Policy Implications

As recognised in the Local Plan, the Council has a statutory duty to provide allotments. The proposed quantity standard supports the notion of protecting existing provision, recognising the important role that they play in urban environments, whilst acknowledging the important health benefits associated with allotments.

Allotment sites in Nuneaton should be encouraged to increase usage and enhance quality within individual sites. At present, many are not being used to their maximum potential, indicating that there is not necessarily the demand for allotments within this part of the Borough. However, the Borough-wide consultation indicated that only 1.5% of respondents felt that there is 'too much' provision, although unfortunately, it is not possible to spatially analyse these findings. Therefore, it is proposed that if the situation maintains that several sites continue to be under-utilised, site-specific consultation should take place to assess whether there is the demand within these local neighbourhoods. Similarly, specific consultation could also be undertaken in Bulkington to see if there is demand for further allotments, as presently, there is an extensive waiting list here. However, this may change temporally, and so the situation should be monitored over a period of time.

Linked to further consultation, by setting the quantity standard to reflect existing provision levels, this would allow for a potential reduction in allotment provision within Nuneaton, should existing supply continue to exceed demand, which at the same time, could be compensated for with an increase in supply in Bulkington, where there is presently an un-met demand.

12. Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other Burial Grounds

12.1 Identifying Local Needs – Open Space and Indoor Sport Questionnaire Analysis

The results from this consultation exercise are displayed in Appendix 5. However, with regard to cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds the following key information was obtained:

▪ Usage levels

25.9% of the 1921 respondents to the question visit this type of open space at least once a month, with 37.4% never visiting this type of open space.

➡ **Implications:** The Borough-wide findings show that usage levels vary – unsurprising given the nature of this open space.

▪ Quality

On a scale of 1 to 5, the average mark awarded to cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds was 3.38 (where 1 is very poor and 5 excellent). When compared with other types of open space, this was the second highest average score out of the eight typologies.

➡ **Implications:** Respondents feel that cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds are high quality open spaces.

▪ Quantity

Out of the 1395 that provided a response, the vast majority (79.6%) stated that there is sufficient provision of cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds in the Borough.

➡ **Implications:** The Borough-wide findings show that respondents feel that there is sufficient provision of cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds.

▪ Mode of Transport

59.6 % of visitors to this type of open space travel by motor vehicle. This is a higher proportion than those who either walk or cycle (34.6%)

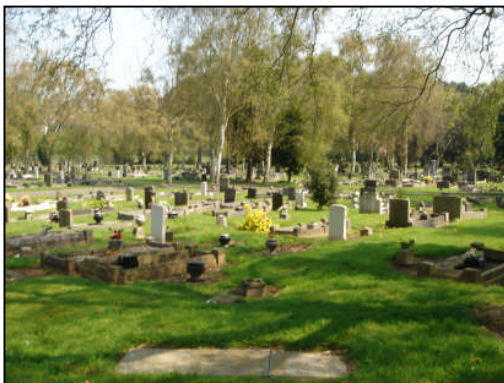
➡ **Implications:** The Borough-wide findings show that the dominant form of transport is motor-vehicle.

12.2 Auditing Local Provision

12.2.1 Quantitative data – all sites

By combining site surveys with desktop research, the following quantitative information was gathered concerning cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Number of 'primary purpose' sites	Number of 'secondary and other purpose' sites	Total area of open space (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	0	0	0	0
Arbury	5482	0	0	0	0
Attleborough	7564	1	0	1.301	0.172
Bar Pool	7451	0	0	0	0
Bede	6760	2	0	4.626	0.684
Bulkington	6303	0	0	0	0
Camp Hill	7325	0	0	0	0
Exhall	7381	0	0	0	0
Galley Common	7593	1	0	3.548	0.467
Heath	6377	0	0	0	0
Kingswood	6878	0	0	0	0
Poplar	6850	0	0	0	0
Slough	7058	0	0	0	0
St Nicolas	7073	1	0	7.085	1.002
Weddington	7286	0	0	0	0
Wem Brook	7082	0	0	0	0
Whitestone	7435	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	119132	5	0	16.56	0.139



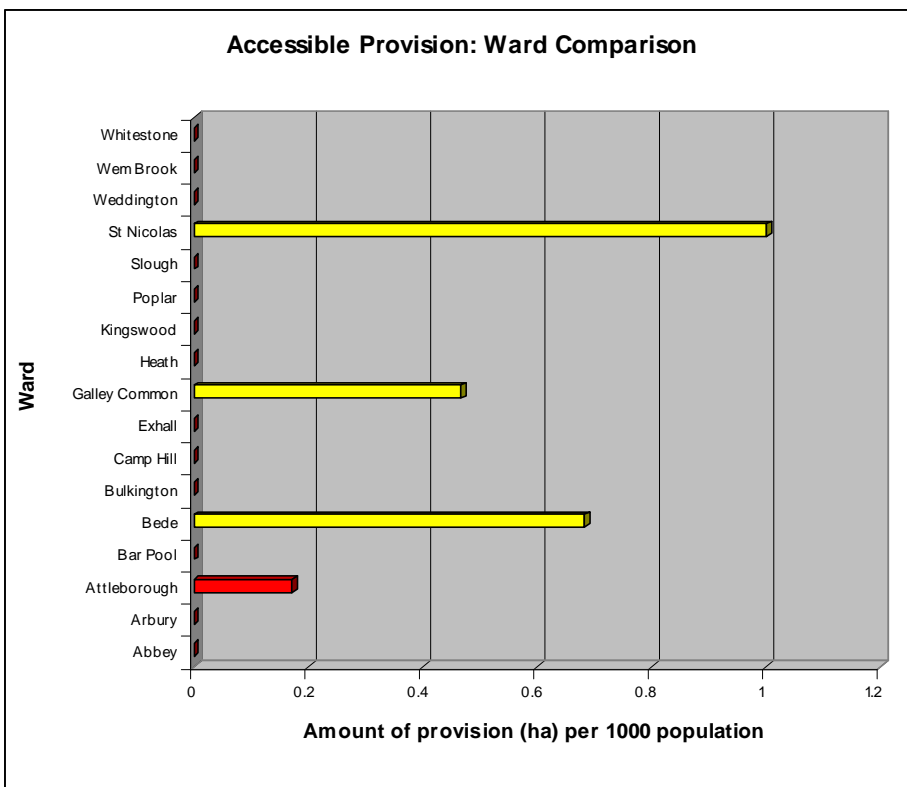
**Example of Cemeteries,
disused churchyards
and other burial
grounds:**

Bucks Hill Cemetery

12.2.2 Quantitative data – accessible sites

The number of sites that were deemed to be fully, or partly accessible to the public, were as follows:

Ward	Ward population (2001 Census)	Total number of sites	Total area of sites (ha)	Quantity of provision (ha) / 1000 population
Abbey	7234	0	0	0
Arbury	5482	0	0	0
Attleborough	7564	1	1.301	0.172
Bar Pool	7451	0	0	0
Bede	6760	2	4.626	0.684
Bulkington	6303	0	0	0
Camp Hill	7325	0	0	0
Exhall	7381	0	0	0
Galley Common	7593	1	3.548	0.467
Heath	6377	0	0	0
Kingswood	6878	0	0	0
Poplar	6850	0	0	0
Slough	7058	0	0	0
St Nicolas	7073	1	7.085	1.002
Weddington	7286	0	0	0
Wem Brook	7082	0	0	0
Whitestone	7435	0	0	0
TOTAL	119132	5	16.56	0.139



12.2.3 Qualitative and Value Results

Quality and value assessments were undertaken at all cemeteries within the Borough. The table below summarises the findings:

Ward	Number of Assessed sites	Average Quality Score (%)	Average Value Score (%)
Abbey	0	N/A	N/A
Arbury	0	N/A	N/A
Attleborough	1	63.0	44.4
Bar Pool	0	N/A	N/A
Bede	2	60.2	44.4
Bulkington	0	N/A	N/A
Camp Hill	0	N/A	N/A
Exhall	0	N/A	N/A
Galley Common	1	61.1	50.0
Heath	0	N/A	N/A
Kingswood	0	N/A	N/A
Poplar	0	N/A	N/A
Slough	0	N/A	N/A
St Nicolas	1	66.7	44.4
Weddington	0	N/A	N/A
Wem Brook	0	N/A	N/A
Whitestone	0	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	5	62.2	45.5

12.2.4 Accessibility

Within the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport Facilities' questionnaire, respondents were asked how far they would be prepared to travel to cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds. The results were used to calculate distance thresholds for this type of open space by assessing the time that 75% of respondents were prepared to travel. From this, the following time thresholds (or effective catchments), were calculated:

Walking time threshold based on 283 responses:

Time threshold: 10 minutes

Straight-Line Distance threshold: 480 metres

Driving time threshold based on 648 responses:

Time threshold: 15 minutes

Straight-Line distance threshold: 3385 metres



12.2.5 Analysis of Provision

For the purpose of this report, the focus has been on identifying and assessing cemeteries. Disused churchyards have not been included, given that they can only exist where there is a church, and therefore provision levels cannot be influenced by a report such as this.

There are presently five cemeteries within this Borough, located in the wards of St Nicolas, Galley Common, Attleborough and Bede (where there are two cemeteries). The quality of provision is very good with all sites scoring similar marks (the average mark was 62.2%). When assessing the sites it was evident that grounds maintenance is good within all sites, including suitable provision of amenities such as seating and bins. It was also noticeable that excellent signage was in place at entrance points, providing information such as contact details of the Council as well as cemetery opening times.

12.3 Setting Provision Standards

12.3.1 Quantitative standard

The Audit has identified that the Borough has:

TOTAL PROVISION: 16.56 ha (0.139 ha / 1000 population)

ACCESSIBLE PROVISION: 16.56 ha (0.139 ha / 1000 population)

The Borough-wide consultation indicated that 79.6% of people that responded to the question felt that there was adequate provision of cemeteries and other burial grounds. As indicated above, Borough-wide cemetery provision is 0.139 ha / 1000 population. However, it is pointless to set a local quantity standard, as cemeteries only have finite capacity and given that there is continual demand for burial grounds, additional land will be required to meet this, as recognised within PPG17. This is also acknowledged within the Local Plan, which states that the Council has land available for ten years of burials. However, additional land will be required after this period, and potential sites have been identified.

12.3.2 Qualitative Standard

A suitable qualitative standard should reflect the views and aspirations of the public, as well as drawing upon best practice to ensure that targets are realistic and achievable. When asked to assess the open space which they visit most regularly, the 'Open Space and Indoor Sport' questionnaire highlighted that the Borough's residents score dog-bins, litterbins, seating facilities and disabled facilities poorly, whilst site access points and safety scored well. With this in mind, the following standard is proposed:

Cemeteries should be free of litter and dog foul and appropriate measures should be in place to address anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Where possible, ancillary facilities should be in place such as appropriate signage and seating facilities

To help achieve this standard, examples of best-practice should be followed. For instance, management and maintenance of cemeteries should consider the Green Flag Award and some of its key criteria, including:

(i) A Welcoming Place:

Green Flag States:

- “The signs throughout a green space should conform to a coherent design. A jumble of different signs for different purposes should be avoided. Out-of-date signs should be removed. New signs should fit with the existing design. Signs situated around the site on gates and fences at strategic points should be robust and durable”

(ii) Well-maintained and Clean

Green Flag States:

- “There should be a specific policy on how to address vandalism, dog mess, used needles and syringes, chewing gum, fly posting, fly tipping and graffiti, including target response times.”
- “Infrastructure and other facilities should be brought into a schedule of cyclical maintenance that endeavours to retain them at a high standard.”
- “Graffiti should be removed as soon as possible and preventative measures considered.”
- “Paths and hard surfaces should be well maintained and regularly swept to suppress weed growth.”

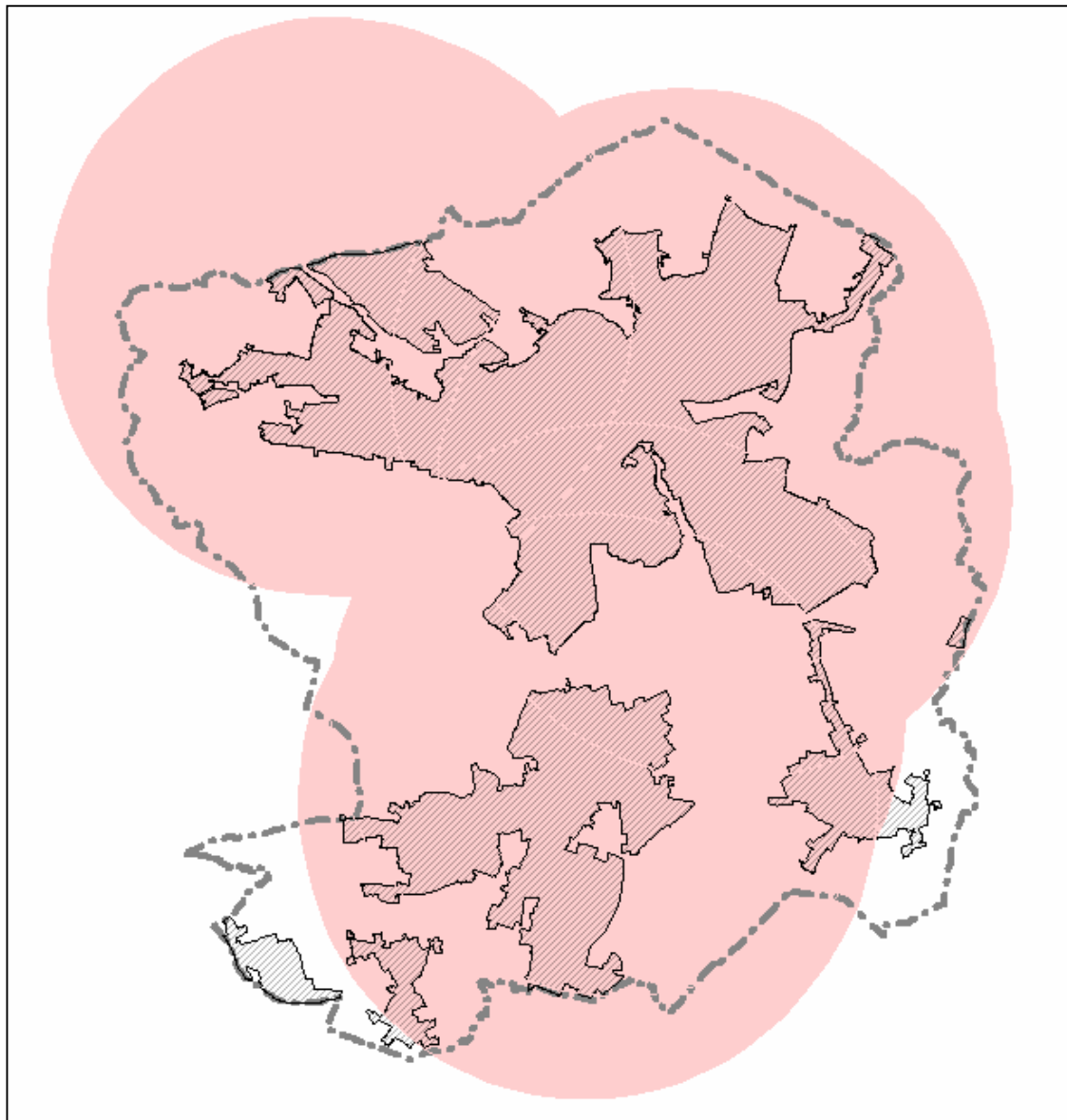
12.3.3 Accessibility Standard

Analysis of the Open Space and Indoor Sport questionnaire produced walking and driving thresholds for cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds (see 12.2.4). The majority of respondents indicated their preferred transport mode was by car. With this in mind, it is reasonable to base the accessibility standard on the findings of the consultation. Therefore, the recommended local standard is:



15 minute drive (3385 metre catchment)



By applying the accessibility standard to provision within the Borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth, the following map is produced.



KEY

-  Catchment Area (based on a driving distance of 3385 metres)
-  Urban Areas



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12.4 Policy Implications

Cemeteries are important, particularly when considering the open space function that they play within urban areas. The findings of this investigation provide minimal relevant information; the Council already recognises that it will need to provide additional land for burials within the next 10 years. However, when looking to identify new cemetery sites, the accessibility standard outlined in 12.3.3 should be considered. At present, there are small pockets within the southeast and southwest of the Borough that fall outside of the 15 minute driving catchment. Therefore, new sites should be located in areas that would address this.

13. Scope for further work

13.1 Applying Provision Standards and Drafting Policies

For the purpose of this report the accessibility standard identified for each type of open space has been displayed visually within sections 5 to 12. Closer inspection of these maps is possible using the Council's Geographical Information System GGP, where all the information and overlays are stored.

The qualitative standard has not been applied. It is more appropriate for the Borough Council to utilise these independent assessments and make appropriate policies. The Companion Guide to PPG17 recommends using the following template as a basis for making policy decisions.

<p>HIGH QUALITY & LOW VALUE</p> <p>Preferred policy approach to a site in this category should be to enhance its value in term of its primary purpose. If this is not possible the next best approach is to consider whether it might be of high value if converted to some other primary purpose. Only if this is also impossible will it be acceptable to consider a change of use</p>	<p>HIGH QUALITY & HIGH VALUE</p> <p>Ideally all spaces and facilities should come into this category and the planning system should then seek to protect them</p>
<p>LOW QUALITY & LOW VALUE</p> <p>Wherever possible, the policy approach to these facilities should be to enhance their quality provided it is possible to enhance their value. If this is not possible, the space or facility may be surplus to requirements in terms of its present primary purpose</p>	<p>LOW QUALITY & HIGH VALUE</p> <p>The policy approach to these sites should always be to enhance their quality and therefore the planning system should seek to protect them</p>

With regard to the quality and value assessments, whilst it would be desirable to have all sites scoring 100% for each aspect, this is not a realistic possibility. Scores are limited by the fact that there are a range of factors for each assessment. This should be taken into consideration when identifying low quality and low value sites.

With regard to applying the quantitative standards, general comments and spatial trends have been noted within sections 5 to 12. In addition to this, the quantity of



provision has also been calculated within each ward, and this allows ward provision to be compared with the quantity standard. However, this is not a particularly effective way of applying the quantitative standard, given the arbitrary nature of Council wards, but was the only option available to *Jones Plus Limited*. Thus, there is scope to compare the quantitative standard with identifiable neighbourhoods, as opposed to wards.

13.2 Undertaking Additional Consultation and Research:

Following on from the development of this report, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council should now consider undertaking the following key consultation exercises to enhance the work of this report:

- Undertake consultation in communities where there is a lack of 'parks and gardens' to assess whether there is the demand for community parks.
- Consult with local cycling forums and identify suitable distance thresholds for this specialised form of transport to different types of open space provision.
- Undertake consultation to assess whether there is demand for artificial turf pitches within the Borough.
- Monitor allotment usage and where allotments are under-utilised, undertake consultation to assess whether there is the demand for such provision within these identified communities.

Furthermore, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council should look to work in partnership with neighbouring local authorities to help identify open spaces that are situated outside of the boundary of Nuneaton and Bedworth, but that may be used by its' residents, such as Hartshill Hayes Country Park. Likewise, open spaces located within this Borough may be important to residents of neighbouring local authorities, and so it is important to utilise the information collected as part of this audit, at the both regional and sub-regional level.