

North Norfolk Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (2019)



Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study FINAL

North Norfolk Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study - Consultation Report

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Glossary of Terms

Term	Meaning
ACRE	Action with Communities in Rural England
ANGSt	Accessible Natural Green Space Standard
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BAP	Biodiversity Action Plan
BHS	British Horse Society
CC	County Council
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CWS	County Wildlife Site
EA	Environment Agency
FiT	Fields in Trust
GI	Green Infrastructure
HAP	Habitat Action Plan
HIA	Health Impact Assessment
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IDP	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
LAP	Local Area for Play
LEAP	Local Equipped Area for Play
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
MUGA	Multi Use Games Area
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NEAP	Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play
NICE	National Institute for Health and Care Excellence
NNDC	North Norfolk District Council
NPFA	National Playing Fields Association
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NSPF	Norfolk Strategic Framework Planning Document
NWT	Norfolk Wildlife Trust
PAW	Planted Ancient Woodland Site
PC/TC	Parish Council/Town Council
PFE	Public Forest Estate
PPG17	Planning Policy Guidance Note 17
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
RA	Ramblers Association
ROWIP	Rights of Way Improvement Plan
PROW	Public Right of Way

S106	Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SANG	Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SUD	Sustainable Drainage System
WASt	Woodland Access Standard
YAB	Youth Advisory Board

Acknowledgments

Many individuals, groups and organisations have provided information, views and support in preparing this study. Input from these stakeholders is fundamental to the report, and provides the basis for the evidence in supporting the standards, options and recommendations in relation to open space and outdoor recreation facilities.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This is one of three reports provided within the overall *Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study (2019)*. It is a supporting document to the two main reports: The Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study and the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). It provides consultation findings from various stakeholders and feeds into other aspects of the study as explained below.

1.1 Study Overview

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local planning authorities to set out policies to help enable communities to access high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation. These policies need to be based on a thorough understanding of local needs for such facilities and opportunities available for new provision.

In view of the above, in 2018 North Norfolk District Council appointed Ethos Environmental Planning to undertake an outdoor Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study to provide an up-to-date and robust assessment identifying needs, surpluses and deficits in open space, outdoor sport and recreation to support the delivery of the emerging Single Local Plan up to 2036. The study will also inform the Council's management processes for open space, health and well-being plans and its investment and infrastructure funding strategy.

In summary the requirements of the brief are to provide:

- A comprehensive and robust Open Space, Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities Assessment to replace the 2006 Open Space and Recreation study; taking into account the Amenity Green Space evidence document from 2018.
- Locally derived open space, sports and recreation provision standards for quantity, quality and accessibility and to provide recommendations about future requirements per activity at settlement level.
- A Playing Pitch Strategy completed in line with Sport England guidance.
- Evidence to support policy development, funding bids to national organisations such as Sport England, and support requests for contributions from Planning Obligations either CIL/Section 106 or other potential investors.
- Identify a list of projects for each local area to help with CIL/S106 spending/contribution.

In order to meet this brief Ethos are providing:

- An Open Space and Outdoor Sport and Recreation audit and assessment¹
- A Playing Pitch Strategy

As such the overall outcome of the study will comprise of two main reports drawing upon an evidence base comprised of:

- Consultation and engagement with all relevant key stakeholders, agencies and organisations as well as the wider community and general public.
- A detailed audit of all facilities within the scope of the study.

¹ Including play space and natural green space/recreation

- Analysis and assessment of the adequacy of current and future facility provision based on recommended methodologies such as Sport England's "Assessing Needs and Opportunities" national planning guidance and Playing Pitch Strategy guidance.

1.2 The Community and Stakeholder Needs Assessment

This report makes a cross-cutting contribution to the overall study in providing evidence that will be used in both of the main study reports². It primarily relates to the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study but relevant findings and information will also be carried forward in the PPS.

In the two main reports the consultation findings will be combined with other evidence, findings and assessments such as that completed in the audit, mapping and analysis process.

Undertaking comprehensive consultation and engagement with all relevant stakeholders and the wider community is an essential part of the overall process. It is an expectation of the National Planning Policy Framework and is needed to ensure that the study is robust in relation to recommended national guidance such as that recommended by Sport England.

The report examines local need for a wide range of different kinds of open space, outdoor sport, and recreation facilities. It has drawn upon a range of survey and analytical techniques including a review of consultation findings from relevant sport, leisure, play and open space studies. It outlines the community consultation and research process that has been undertaken as part of the study as well as the main findings.

The report is made up of 4 main sections:

- General community consultation
- Neighbouring local authorities; and town and parish councils
- Parks, green spaces, countryside, and rights of way
- Play and youth facilities

Each section provides additional detail on the consultation process relevant to that section and at the end of each section there is a short summary of the key findings.

The consultation and research programme was undertaken from January to April 2019. The extent of the research reflects the breadth and diversity of the study and a consequent need to engage with as wide a cross section of the community and stakeholders as possible³.

In summary, questionnaire surveys were undertaken as below:

- A general household survey (online)
- A survey of town and parish councils
- Survey of strategic partners

In addition to the above a number of one to one stakeholder interviews/surveys were undertaken.

² Additional consultation has also been undertaken in relation to pitch sports as advised in Sport England guidance. These additional findings will be included in the main PPS report.

³ It should be noted that this report provides consultation evidence in the form of the observations and views/opinions sourced from many different organisations, individuals and studies. On occasion the views and observations expressed by individuals and groups may not be consistent with each other, nor are such individual contributions necessarily accurate or up to date.

The result of this consultation alongside the audit of open space and consideration of existing national and local standards and benchmarks will help to inform the content of the recommended local standards. This will be explained further in the open space report.

The consultation report also helps the study to understand stakeholder and local people's appreciation of open space, sport and recreation facilities, and the wider green infrastructure and the values attached by the community to the various forms of open spaces and outdoor facilities. This appreciation will have clear implications for the way in which open space, sport and recreation facilities are considered as part of plan making as well as in dealing with planning applications.

2.0 GENERAL COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

This section provides consultation findings that covered all aspects of open space and outdoor sport/recreation facility provision. In this sense it provides a useful overview across all these aspects rather than simply from groups and organisations with specific interests in just one aspect of open space, sport or outdoor recreation. This contrast, for example, with other sections of the report which supply findings from individuals, groups and organisations with specific interests in individual elements of open space and sport/recreation.

The section also includes engagement with public health stakeholders who have an interest running across all aspects of sport and recreation facility provision, whatever activity that may be (in relation to encouraging an increase in physical activity – with associated health benefits).

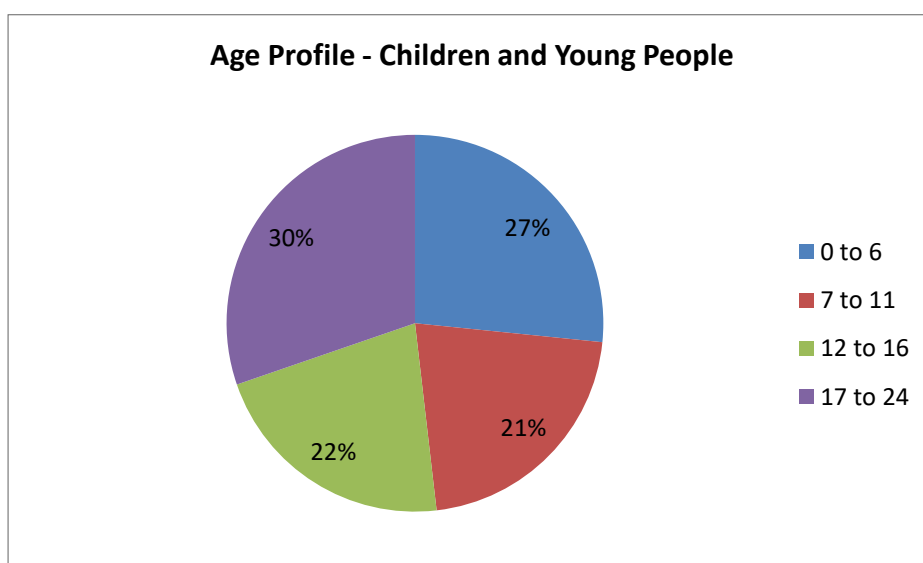
2.1 Residents' Household Survey

2.1.1 Introduction

The open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities study needs to secure a general understanding of how residents of North Norfolk currently make use of the various kinds of open space and outdoor recreation facilities; in particular whether they think there are enough of such facilities; what they think the quality of those facilities; how accessible they are; and what kind of facilities they think are priorities for future development and improvement. A good way of securing this general overview is to secure responses from a broad cross section of North Norfolk households.

An agreed questionnaire survey was therefore distributed to a random sample of 4000 households who could reply via Freepost or online. The online survey was also promoted to the wider public by the Council's Communications Team. Respondents were asked to respond to provide a view on behalf of their household, rather than simply as individuals. 693 surveys were completed with a total of 1403 people represented. The average household size of the households was 2.0 – which is lower than the UK average and North Norfolk District as a whole (2.3)⁴.

Just 18% of households who responded had children and young people resident (representing household views on behalf of 127 children and young people) with ages well spread across age ranges:

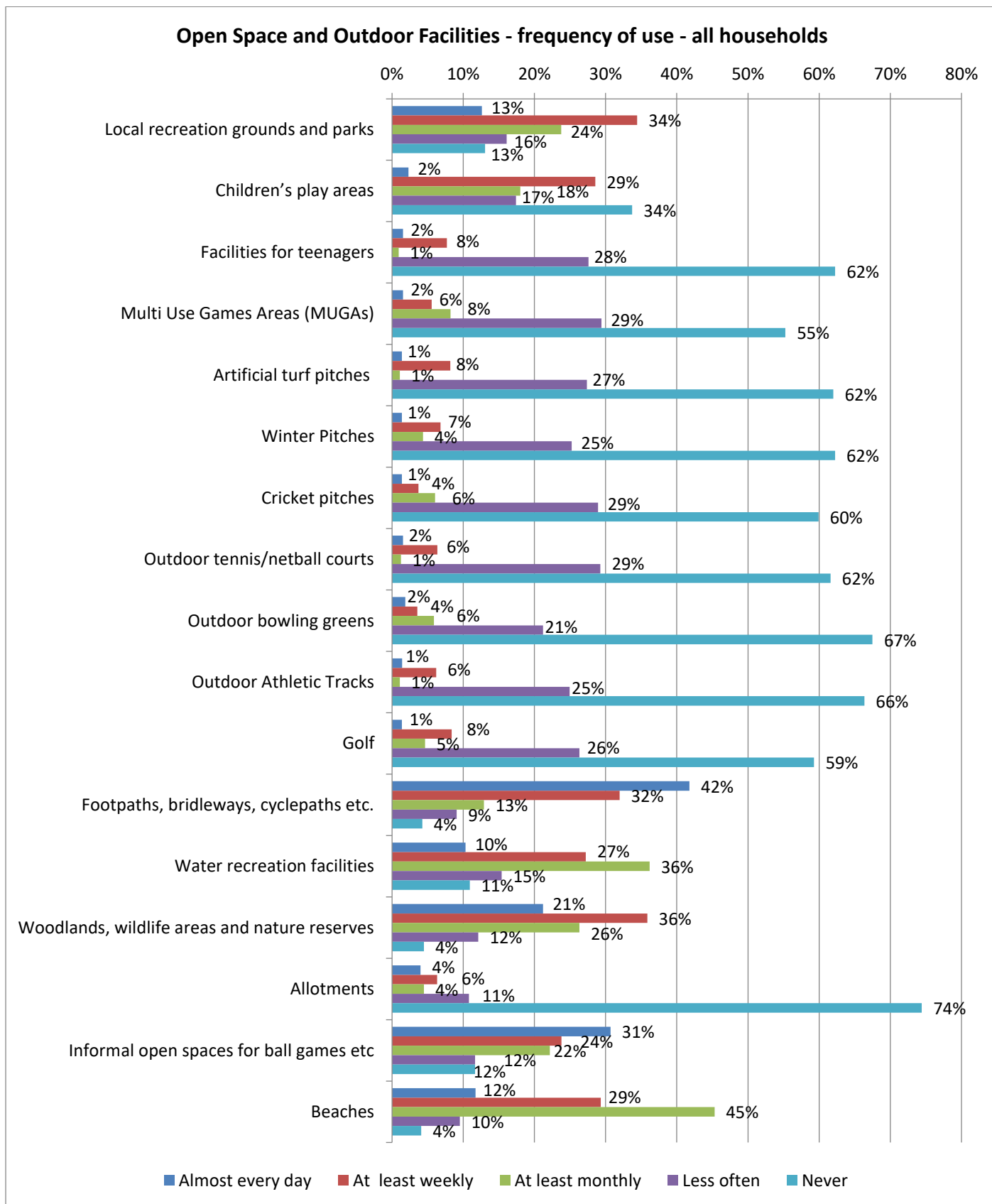


A demographic profile of the results is included in Appendix 1 and the full questionnaire is included in Appendix 2 and the following provides some of the key findings:

⁴ 2011 census figures.

2.1.2 Frequency of use – all households

Respondents were asked to state how often they visited or used each of the following types of open space, sport and recreation facilities within the study area, and the results are shown on the charts below⁵:



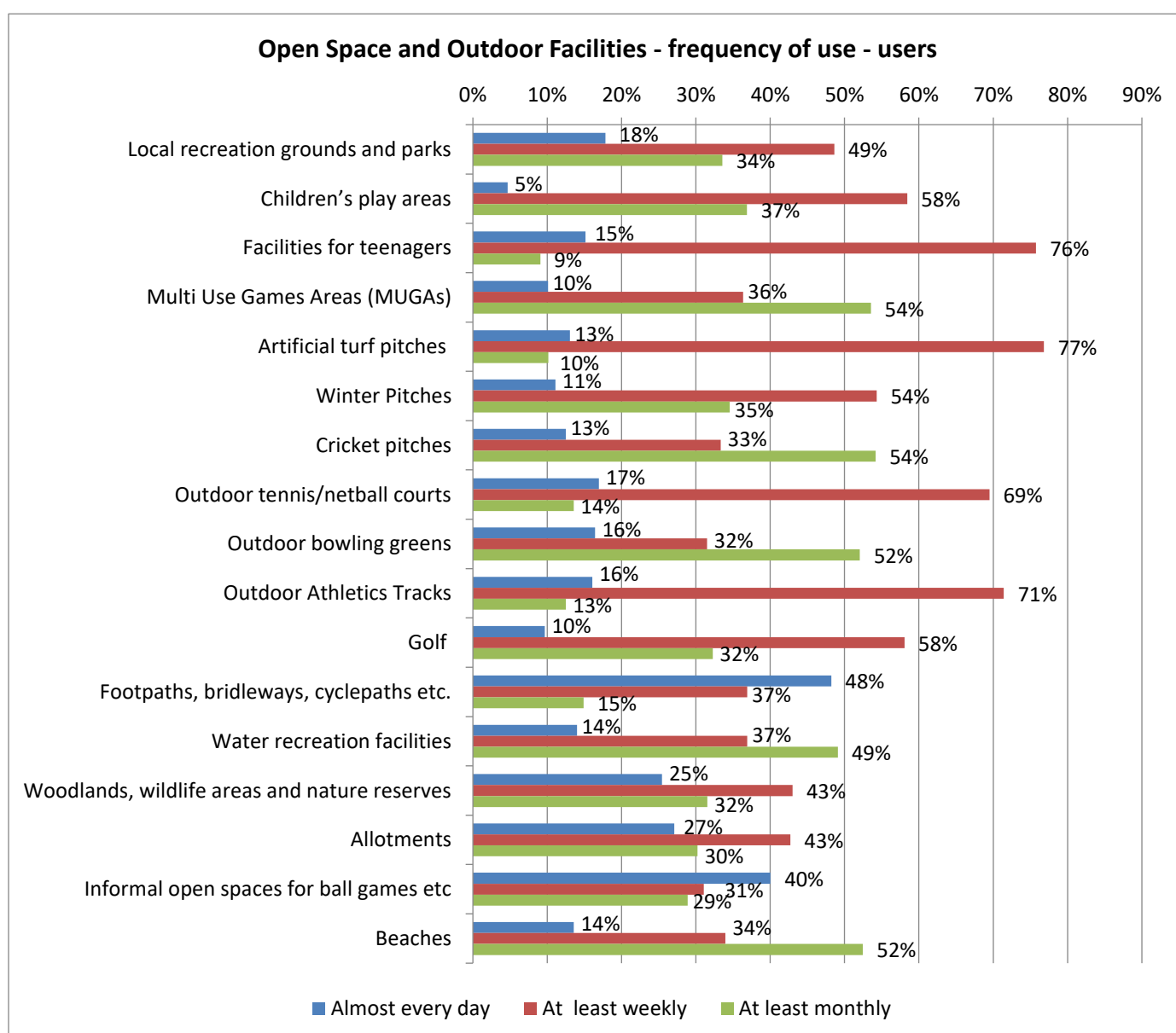
⁵ Please note that percentages have been rounded up or down to the nearest full percentage. This means that on some occasion the total percentages will vary very slightly from 100%.

Footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths are the most frequently used facility daily (42%), followed by informal open spaces (31%) then woodland, wildlife areas and nature reserves (21%).

There are seven facilities which are all used around the same amount for weekly use; woodland, wildlife areas and nature reserves (36%), local recreation grounds and parks (34%), footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths (32%), beaches (29%), children's play areas (29%), water recreation facilities (27%) and informal open spaces (24%). The District's beaches are the most monthly used facility (45%) followed by water recreation facilities (36%). Facilities for teenagers, MUGAs and sport facilities are used less often by households.

2.1.3 Frequency, regularity and times of use – Regular Users⁶

It is interesting to look at the frequency with which regular users of facilities visit them as for some facilities this is not immediately obvious from looking at the overall figures.

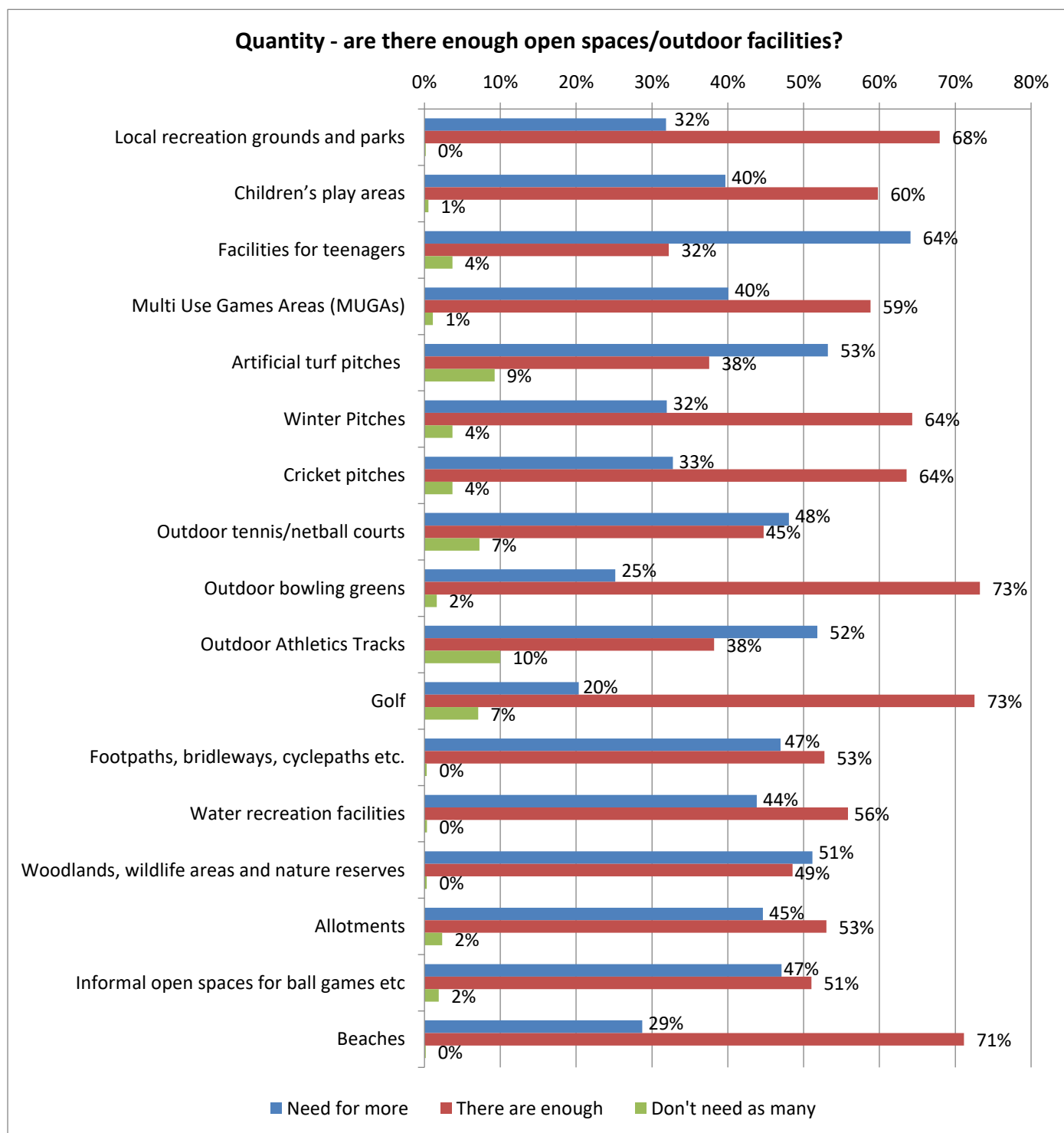


- 71% of users use outdoor athletics tracks weekly; and 69% of users of outdoor tennis/netball also use them weekly. 43% of allotment holders visit their allotment weekly (27% visit daily).
- 76% of teenagers use facilities designed for them e.g. skate parks weekly, but only 15% visit daily.

⁶ By regular users we mean those households where open space/facilities are used/visited at least monthly.

2.1.4 Quantity of open space, sport and recreation facilities

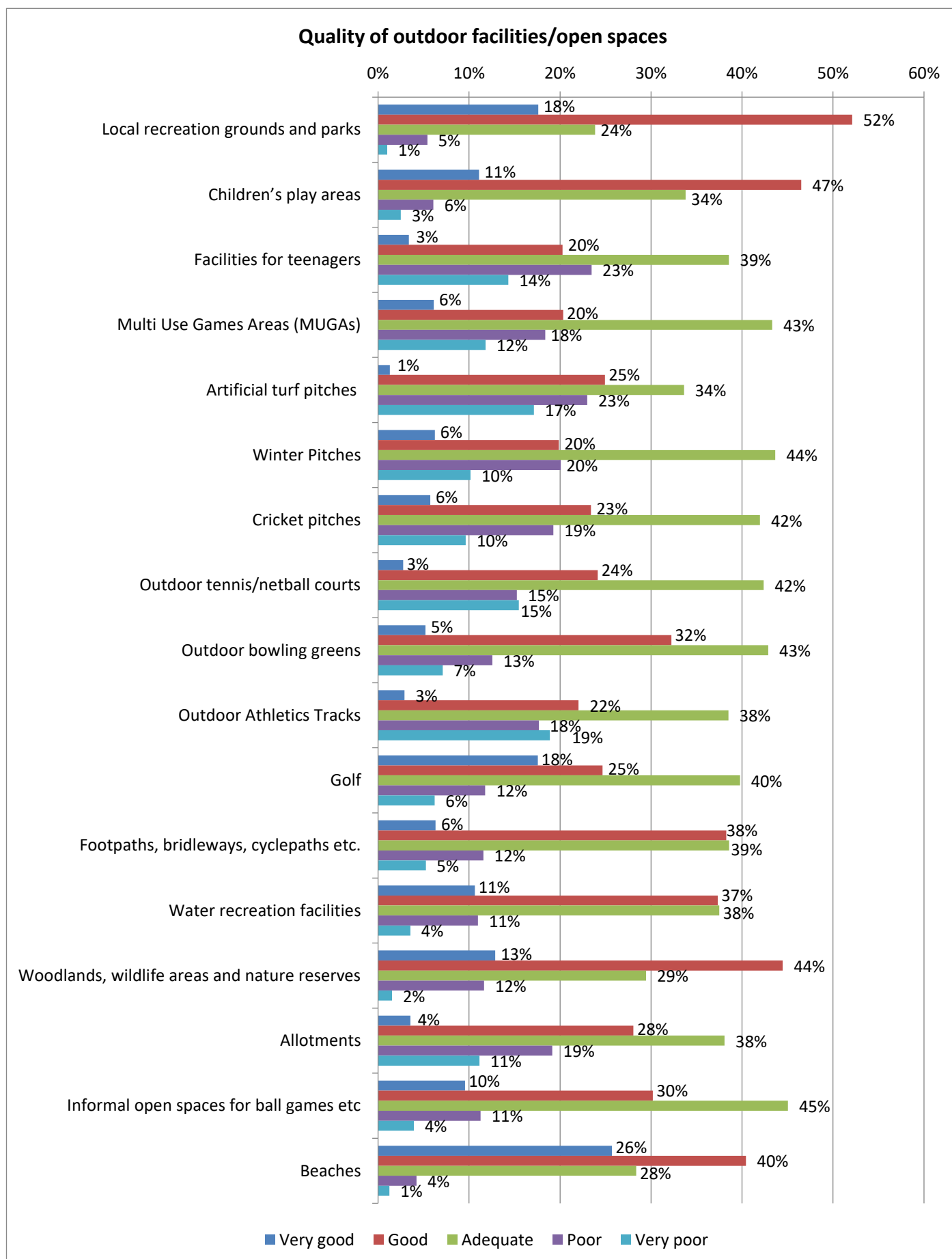
Residents were asked if they needed more, the same or fewer of different types of open space and recreational facilities. Findings are illustrated in the chart below and will influence the “quantity” component of local standards as appropriate (this will be explained further in the 3 main reports).



- There are three types of provision where the majority of households have indicated that there are need for more facilities; facilities for teenagers (64%), artificial turf pitches (53%) and outdoor athletics tracks (52%).
- It is significant that there are a large majority of households that thought there are enough local recreation grounds and parks (68%) and children's play areas (60%).
- For some typologies there is no clear view on general quantity needs such as informal open spaces, allotments and woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves.

2.1.5 Quality of open space, sport and recreation facilities

Respondents were asked how they rated various types of facilities in the study area in terms of quality. The responses of those expressing an opinion on specific categories of facility are illustrated below:



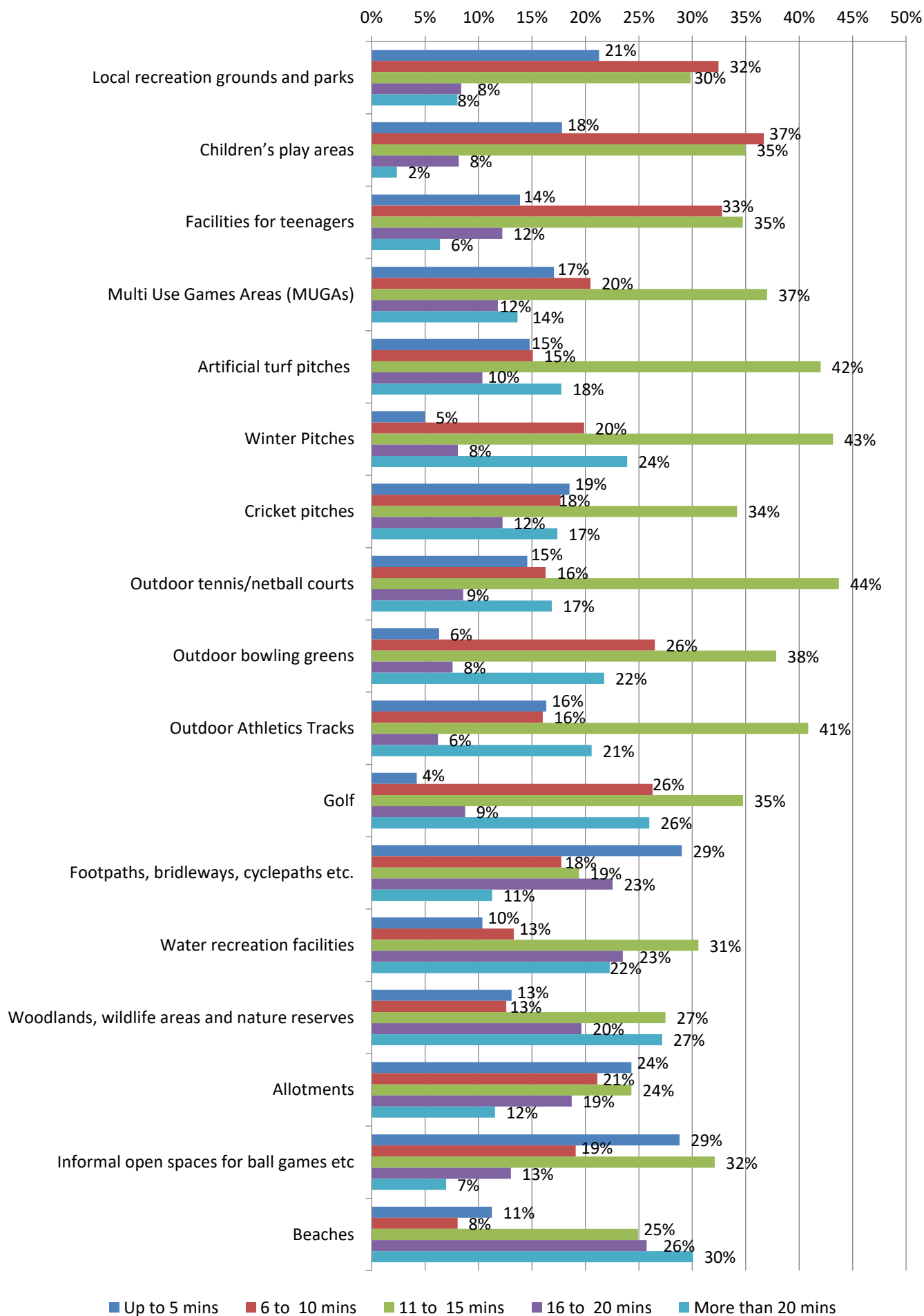
The majority of outdoor facilities/open spaces were rated by households as either good or adequate. Local recreation grounds and parks and beaches were rated as being the highest quality provision. 70% of households rated local recreation grounds and parks as being very good or good; and beaches 66%. The lowest rated provision was artificial turf pitches with 40% of household rating poor or very poor. The quality of facilities for teenagers were also rated as poor or very poor by 37% of households.

2.1.6 Access Issues (Geographical)

An important component of this study is to develop and recommend a series of local standards of provision for different types of open space, sport and recreation opportunities. The following provides a means to gauge people's willingness to travel to use different types of facility/open space (which might be by car, foot, bike, public transport etc). Where appropriate, these results will feed into the determination of the "access" element of local standards.

In looking at the travel times in the first set of charts it should be notes that these do not specify the mode of preferred travel (this is covered by the next set of charts).

Acceptable travel times to open spaces/outdoor facilities



In general, a majority of household respondents report that they would not normally travel more than 15 minutes to visit the different kinds of open spaces and outdoor sport/recreation facilities. There is considerable variation however between the typologies.

For example, 56% of user households are prepared to travel 20 minutes to visit the District's beaches. Some of these would in fact travel further i.e. 26% would travel up to 20 minutes and an additional 30% would in fact travel more than 20 minutes. 47% would also travel similar lengths of time to visit woodlands, wildlife area and nature reserves.

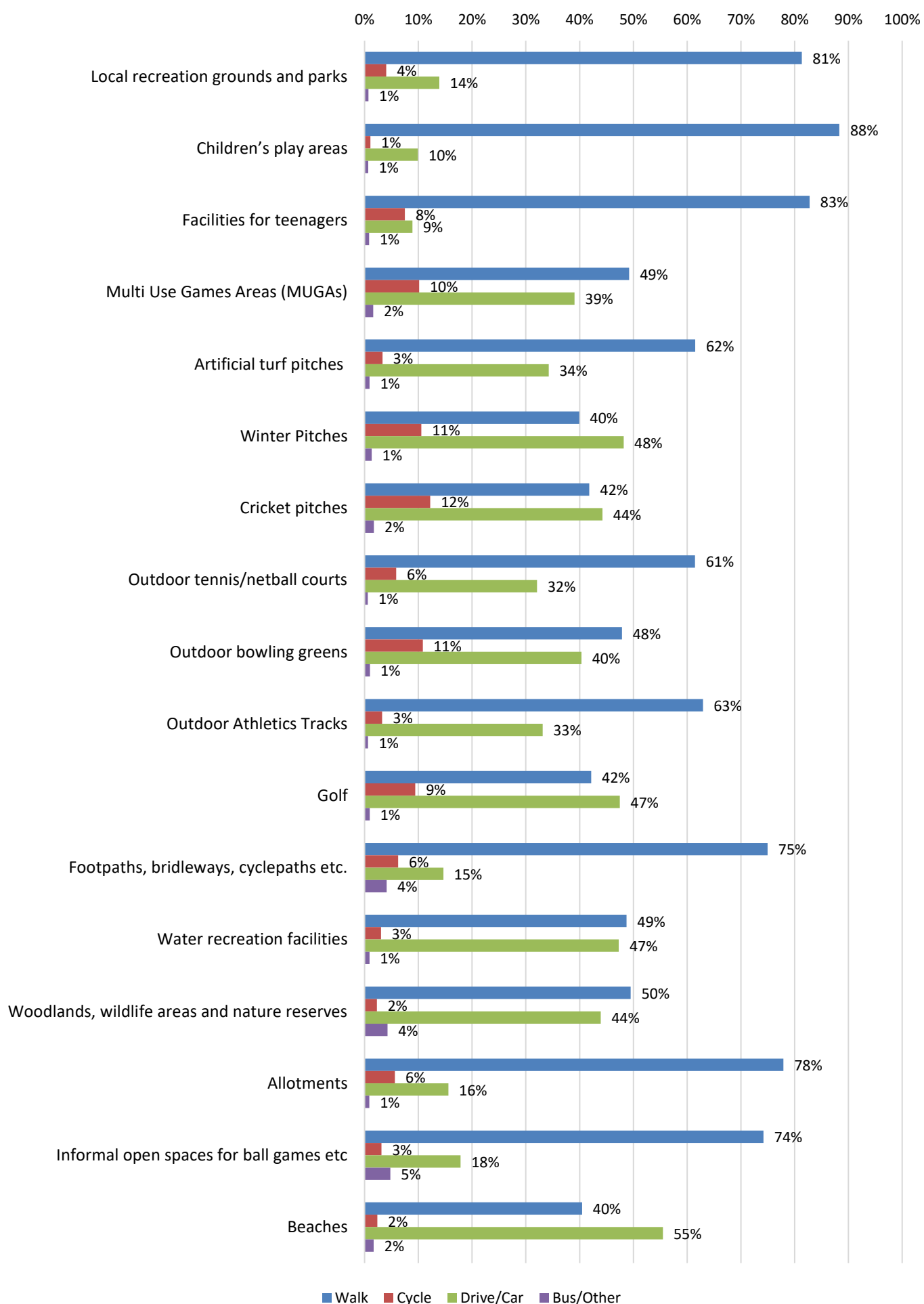
In contrast, for significant numbers of residents, facilities need to be much more locally accessible before they will be used (for example, play areas and park/recreation grounds).

- 55% of users would expect play areas to be within a 10 minute travel time, of which 18% would not wish to travel more than 5 minutes.
- 53% of users would expect local parks/recreation grounds to be within a 10 minute travel time, of which 21% would not wish to travel more than 5 minutes; similarly for informal open space (48% and 29% respectively).

In general, household members will travel further to access outdoor sports facilities than parks and play areas:

- 75% will travel for 15 minutes to use winter pitches i.e grass pitches for football etc (of which 8% would travel up to 20 minutes and an additional 24% would travel more than 20 minutes). 70% would travel similar lengths of time to make use of Artificial Turf Pitches.
- 70% will travel for 15 minutes to play Golf and to use outdoor tennis courts (around 30% of these would travel 20 minutes – some further).

Preferred Mode of Travel



For most of the typologies walking is the preferred mode of travel, most notably for local recreation grounds and parks (81%), children's play areas (88%) and facilities for teenagers (83%). However, there were some facilities where a greater proportion of households would prefer to drive than walk such as winter pitches (48%), cricket pitches (44%), golf (47%) and beaches (55%).

It is clear from the above that there is great variance in respondents' apparent willingness to spend time travelling to different types of facility/open space. In drawing up the "access" element of specific local standards for different kinds of open space/facility it is clearly very important to take careful note of all of these findings (combined with the preferred mode of travel options discussed below).

There are no typologies where cycling or bus/other are a significant mode of transport.

Importance of Footpath/cycle access

Residents were asked if they would cycle or walk further or more often if the quality of their journey by foot or bike to a nearby open space or facility was improved.

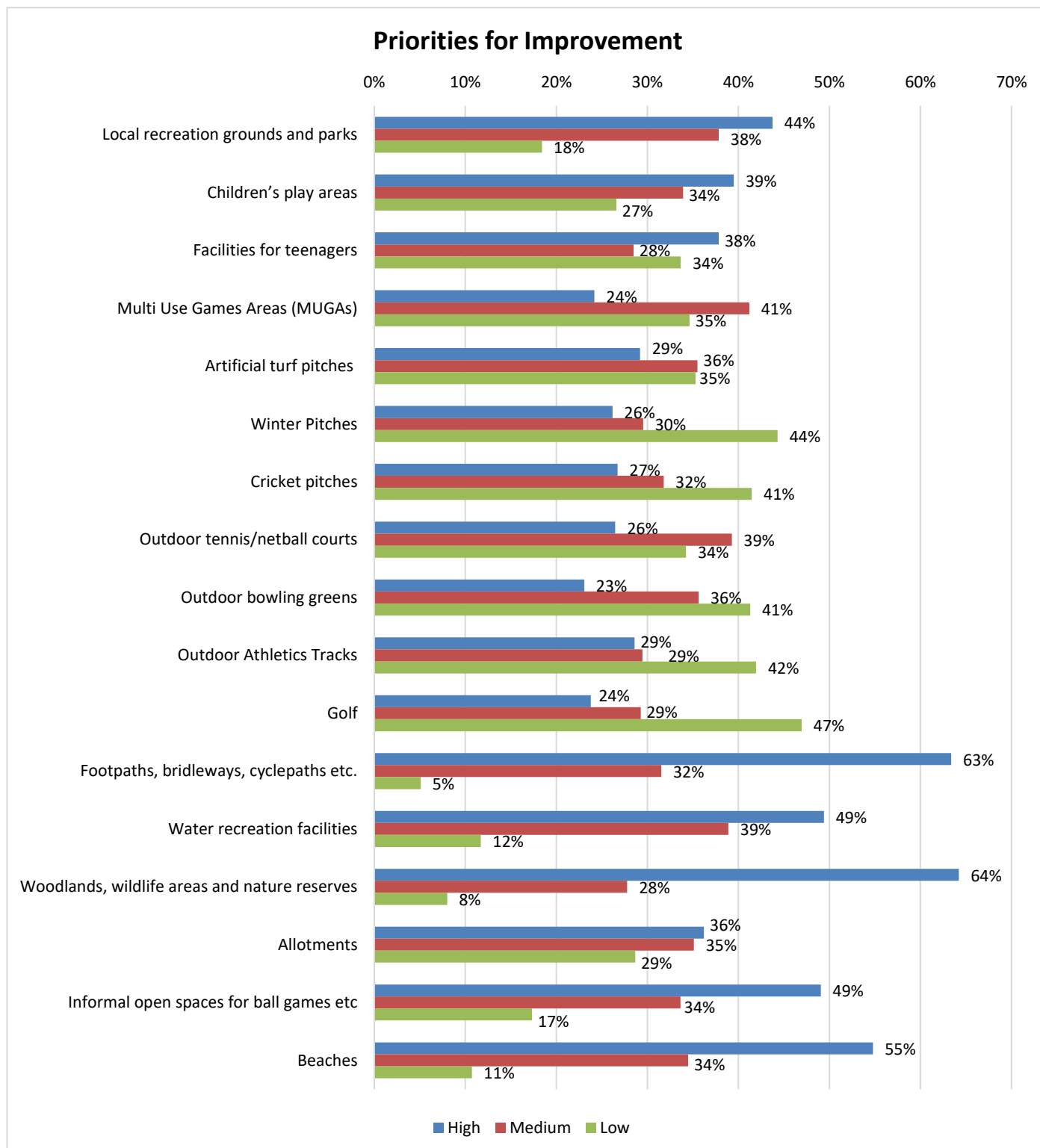
- 65% of households confirmed that they would be prepared to walk/cycle further if the quality of the route was improved.
- 84% also said that if the quality of the route was improved, they would make the journey more often.

This is significant finding in terms of illustrating the potential benefits of ensuring good foot and cycle path access to facilities, in particular because of the low percentage of households that would currently cycle.

The detailed findings from this section will be used when drawing up the access elements of relevant standards for different kinds of open spaces elsewhere in the study.

2.1.7 Key Issues and Priorities for Improvement

Households were also asked what their priorities for improvement in provision were. Findings are illustrated in the table below. Respondents were asked to rate the need for new or improved facilities by indicated priorities at three levels – high, medium or low.

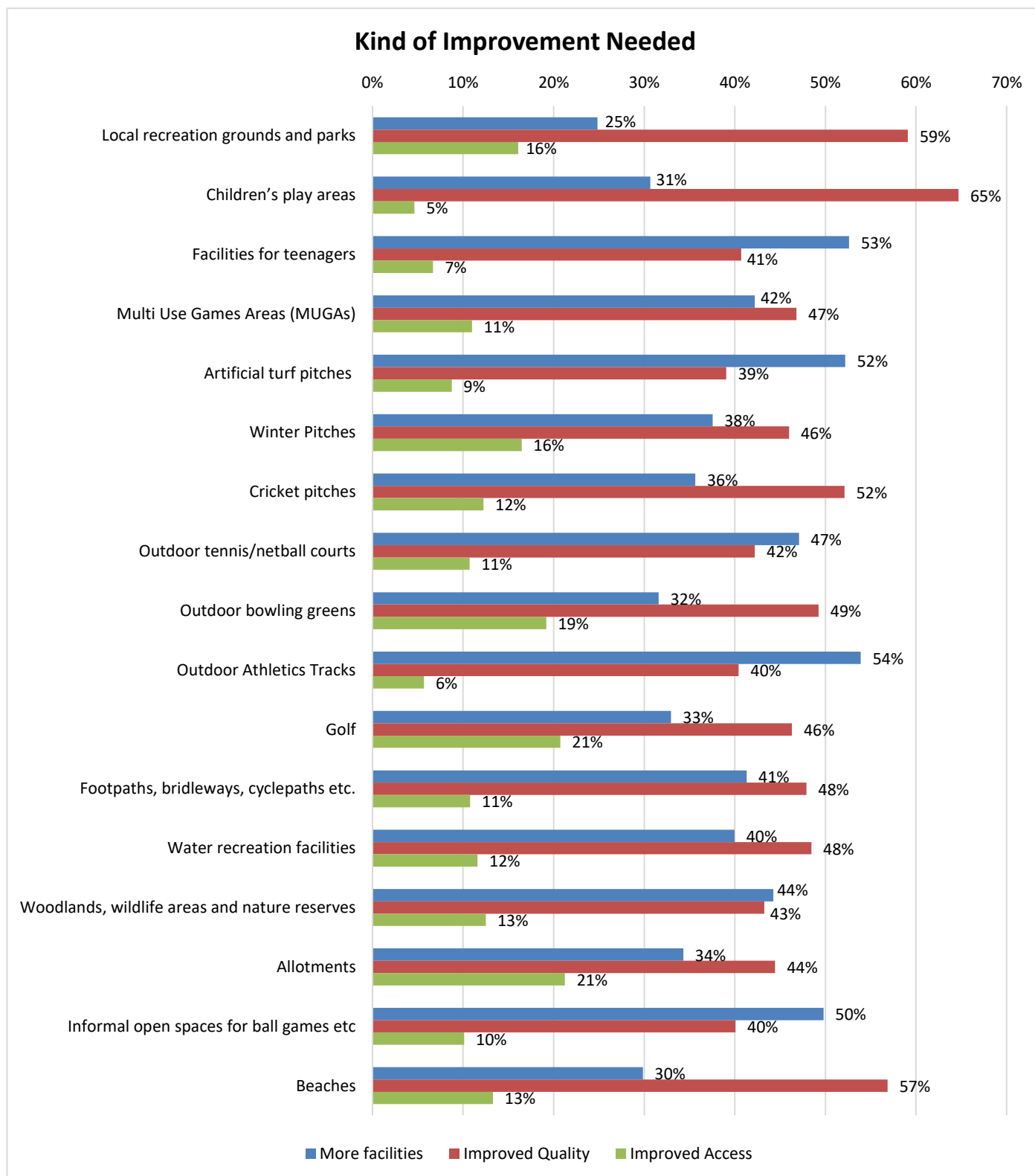


The category highlighted by the largest number of householders as high priority for potential improvement/new provision was footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths (63%); woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves (64%) and beaches (55%).

Other notable high priorities for improvement typologies were informal open spaces (49%) and water recreation facilities (49%).

Kind of Improvement Needed

An associated question asked households to indicate whether the kind of priority need was primarily for more facilities, improved quality of existing, or improved access. In relation to the priorities noted above these findings are shown in the charts below:



The four typologies identified where there is a need for more facilities are facilities for teenagers (53%), artificial turf pitches (52%), outdoor athletics tracks (54%) and informal open spaces (50%). Typologies recognised as requiring quality improvements to existing provision include local recreation grounds and parks (59%), children's play areas (65%) and beaches (57%). Improving access at existing facilities was not deemed particularly significant across any typology.

2.2 Stakeholder Views - Public Health

2.2.1 Introduction

This section highlights stakeholder views on the value of open space to the wider public health agenda. This includes national perspectives from organisations such as the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and Public Health England. It also provides feedback from the District Council's Public Health lead as well as Norfolk County Council Public Health services.

The District Council is represented on the Norfolk Health and Wellbeing Board. The board leads and advises on the development of the North Norfolk Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) Operational Plan. It ensures effective local engagement and monitors local outcomes. It focuses on improving the health and wellbeing of the people living in their CCG area through joined up commissioning across the NHS, social care, district councils, public health and other relevant services.

2.2.2 National perspectives on the value of open spaces and physical activity to health and wellbeing.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) have pointed out that "physical activity is not only fun and enjoyable, it is essential for good health, helping to prevent or manage over 20 conditions and diseases. This includes heart disease, diabetes, some cancers and obesity. It can also help improve people's mental health and wellbeing⁷."

NICE Local Authority Briefing - Public health

Supporting people of all ages to be more physically active can help local authorities meet their new public health responsibilities. Specifically, it will impact on a range of indicators identified in the public health and the adult social care outcomes frameworks including:

- use of green space for exercise/health reasons
- child development
- excess weight in children and adults
- proportion of physically active and inactive adults
- self-reported wellbeing and health-related quality of life
- falls and injuries in the over-65s
- mortality from cardiovascular diseases (including heart disease and stroke), cancer and respiratory diseases.

More specifically in relation to the Open Spaces Study, Public Health England has provided a health equity briefing: *Local action on health inequalities: Improving access to green spaces*.

Public Health England - health equity briefing: Local action on health inequalities: Improving access to green spaces. Summary of key points

- There is significant and growing evidence on the health benefits of access to good quality green spaces. The benefits include better self-rated health; lower body mass index, overweight and obesity levels; improved mental health and wellbeing; increased longevity.
- There is unequal access to green space across England. People living in the most deprived areas are less likely to live near green spaces and will therefore have fewer opportunities to experience the health benefits of green space compared with people living in less deprived areas.

⁷ NICE Local government briefing [LGB3] - April 2013

- Increasing the use of good quality green space for all social groups is likely to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities. It can also bring other benefits such as greater community cohesion and reduced social isolation.
- Local authorities play a vital role in protecting, maintaining and improving local green spaces and can create new areas of green space to improve access for all communities. Such efforts require joint work across different parts of the local authority and beyond, particularly public health, planning, transport, and parks and leisure.

Providing opportunities for physical activity by developing and maintaining appropriate facilities such as parks and open spaces is therefore very important in relation to promoting better public health. Public Health services nationally therefore tend to have an interest in all aspects of active recreation facility provision; and this is reflected in the views of the team in North Norfolk.

2.2.1 Norfolk County Council – Public Health

The Norfolk and Waveney Health and Wellbeing Board leads and advises on work to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Norfolk through joined up commissioning across the NHS, social care, public health and other services. It oversees the development of the health and social care needs assessment referred to as the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The Board also has responsibility for development of the Better Care Fund plan to support the transformation of the health and social care system to meet the combined challenges of the demands of a growing older population and reducing budgets for Norfolk.

The Board is supported by Norfolk County Council and has representatives from the County Council; the District/Borough Councils (including North Norfolk); Clinical Commissioning Groups; the voluntary sector; and Health Watch Norfolk.

The County Public Health Team noted that each of the Borough/District Councils including North Norfolk actively supports the Joint Norfolk and Waveney Health and Wellbeing Strategy by promoting public health initiatives in their own area that reflect the Strategy's main aims, focussing on the particular priority needs of their own residents as identified in the local Health Profile and CCG operational plan.

Norfolk County Council is responsible for protecting and improving public health. The main role is to help people lead healthy lifestyles and stay safe from threats to their health. The public health team work on:

- Health improvement – raising awareness of healthy lifestyles and buying relevant services, such as stop smoking and weight management services
- Information and intelligence – to provide information to understand the needs of the county's population and compare it to other parts of the country – to help us decide on the health issues that need improving
- Health protection – to protect the public from threats from infectious diseases and environmental hazards, such as flu and MRSA
- Health care – to provide advice, information and expertise on public healthcare services to NHS commissioners (managers who buy these services)

The County Council Public Health Team fully recognises the value of access to open space in relation to promoting health and wellbeing and public health objectives. They noted that:

- Public Health England specifically provide information on local health indicators relating to access to green spaces in recognition of their importance to promoting public health

<https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/search/green%20spaces> The indicators include: utilisation of outdoor space for exercise/health reasons; people's access to woodland; and Healthy Assets (including access to public green space).

- There is strong evidence to suggest that green spaces have a beneficial impact on physical and mental wellbeing and cognitive function through both physical access and usage.
- Access to green space such as woodland, supports wellbeing and allows people to engage in physical activity. Both the presence of a woodland and the number of people who can readily access the space represents a significant asset to that community. Woodlands provide spaces for community activities, social connectedness, volunteering as well as employment.
- The Access to Healthy Assets and Hazards index is designed to allow policy/decision makers to understand which areas have poor environments for health, and to help move away from treating features of the environment in isolation.
- A recent report from the Children's Commissioner for England report highlights the importance to children of play and physical activity in relation to health and wellbeing.
- Obesity is contributing to increasing levels of poor health and long-term conditions such as diabetes. Promoting physical activity via promoting use of local green spaces and active recreation is important to help reduce obesity.
- Evidence suggests that people in communities with access to quality green space have improved mental well-being, less stress and social isolation, improved social cohesion and improved physical health, with fewer working days are lost to ill health. Conversely, when contact with the natural environment becomes difficult, or even unpleasant, the impact on people's emotional wellbeing will be adversely affected.
- The County Council also provides information on local walking and cycling routes, safer routes to school, sustainable travel options and local public transport.

Norfolk Planning in Health Protocol (2017)

The protocol for planning in health in Norfolk adopted in 2017 came about in recognition of a need for greater collaboration between local planning authorities, health service organisations and public health agencies to plan for future growth and to promote health. It notes that “spatial planning can have a major positive impact on improving the environment in which people live or, if the health impacts of developments are not adequately considered, adversely impact on people's physical and mental health”.

The protocol highlights that the National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to ensure that health and wellbeing and the health infrastructure are considered in Local and Neighbourhood Plans and in planning decision making; and that public health organisations, health service organisations, commissioners and providers, and local communities should work effectively with local planning authorities in order to promote healthy communities and support appropriate health infrastructure.

It concludes that “the environment in which we are born, grow, live, work and play (Marmot, 2010) is a major determinant of our health and well-being” and that “access to green space and walk-ability of our neighbourhoods, along with many other social and environmental factors, contribute directly to our health and well-being and can impact on our ability to live healthy lifestyles”.

The County Council therefore welcomes the impact of public health and wellbeing considerations being given full consideration in the North Norfolk Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study.

2.2.2 North Norfolk District Council - Health and Communities Team

Introduction

The Health and Communities Team Leader highlighted that there are many ways in which District Councils can support improvements in public health and wellbeing and referred to the *District Council Contribution to Public Health: a time of challenge and opportunity* report by The Kings Fund which has a section on the health and wellbeing benefits of leisure services and green space.

The Council works in partnership with North Norfolk CCG, Norfolk CC Public Health and Active Norfolk to improve health and wellbeing in the District. NNDC is represented on a range of strategic and local delivery groups which cover various aspects of health and wellbeing.

The Team Leader noted that “in addition to offering a wide range of sports and leisure facilities and opportunities either through our own facilities or through sport specific clubs or community gyms and activities, we also encourage people to improve their physical, mental and social health through accessing the natural environment, parks, open spaces or any other free to use or low-cost activity opportunities”.

Activities are run by the District Council at the dual use sports centres and the Council also runs a range of activities mainly for children and families at the country parks, woods and beaches. In addition, the Council provides a “Muddy Boots” programme which provides volunteering opportunities for people to improve health and wellbeing by working in the natural environment

Overview – North Norfolk Health Profile

The 2018 Health profile for North Norfolk notes that the health of people in North Norfolk is quite varied compared with the England average. Life expectancy for both men and women is higher than the England average. About 14% (1,900) of children live in low-income families. In Year 6, 15.9% (120) of children are classified as obese (better than the average for England). It is also notable that statistics relating to the number of physically active adults (aged 19+) show that North Norfolk is significantly better than the England average.

However, statistics relating to diabetes diagnoses (17+ and 65+) are significantly worse compared to the English average. Participation in physical activity, sport and recreation is increasingly seen to be an effective intervention in the reduction of type 2 diabetes. Hence, for North Norfolk, increasing such participation is a high priority.

The other notable health statistic in which North Norfolk features poorly in relation to the England average is in Dementia diagnoses (aged 65+). A report published by Natural England in 2013 *Greening Dementia* highlights the benefits and barriers facing individuals living with dementia in accessing the natural environment and local greenspace. Improving access to and use of green spaces for older people is therefore also an important issue for North Norfolk.

North Norfolk DC Health and Communities Team - Areas of Work

The District Council Health and Communities Team promotes various public health initiatives in support of the Norfolk & Waveney Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2018 to 2022) and focusses on areas of particular priority to North Norfolk. In broad terms the District Council aims to develop and promote sport and physical activity relating to:

- Healthy lifestyles

- Active recreation
- Active travel

Areas of work include:

- Support of sport and active recreation
- Support for Wellbeing programmes
- Partnership work with Active Norfolk who run several activities as part of the Fit Together programme in addition to a regular walks programme.
- Provision of grants via the NNDC Big Society Fund.

The District Council Health and Communities team recognise the importance of providing and promoting access to parks and green spaces in relation to health and wellbeing. They noted, for example:

- The District Councils Corporate Plan 2015-19 has Health and Wellbeing as one of its five priority themes. It notes three specific aims: Support local communities and residents through the Big Society Fund; address issues which lead to ill-health and improve the quality of life of all residents; encourage participation in sports and activities.
- Regular physical activity can help local people of all ages to become more relaxed, provide more energy and help protect against a range of diseases including heart problems, high blood pressure, diabetes and depression. It can also help to maintain a healthy weight.
- The general value of parks (including parks events) and open spaces in providing access to outdoor physical activity and associated benefits for health and wellbeing both physical and mental.
- For children and young people being active helps develop a strong heart, and strong muscles and bones. For older people it especially helps with balance, co-ordination, maintaining bone strength and the flexibility of joints – which means people are less likely to have a fall.
- The importance of play areas and outdoor informal youth facilities such as MUGAs and skate parks in enabling regular physical activity for children and young people.

The NNDC Big Society Fund provides considerable support to local active recreation and sport initiatives which help improve health and wellbeing. The BSF has been running since 2012. It is currently a £250, 0000 per annum grant fund. Types of sports and recreation projects the Council has funded since 2012 include:

- Setting up a health walks project
- Provision of new play equipment
- Provision of outdoor gym equipment
- Grant aid towards provision of MUGA's
- Grants to sports clubs such as rugby, football, bowls, tennis, gymnastics and cricket to improve facilities and buy new equipment.
- Grants to community groups that own and manage nature reserves, open spaces to improve access, restore habitats etc.
- Grants to community gyms

2.3 Household Survey and Public Health - Key Findings

This provides some key consultation findings from the North Norfolk household survey and from Public Health Stakeholders.

2.3.1 The Household Survey

Quantity

- A large majority of households that reported that there are enough local recreation grounds and parks (68%); children's play areas (60%).
- Outdoor sports: a large majority (60% or more) thought there are enough winter pitches (football, rugby etc); cricket pitches; outdoor bowling greens; and golf courses.
- A clear majority of households reported a need for more facilities for teenagers (64%)
- A small majority noted a need for additional artificial turf pitches (53%); outdoor athletics tracks (52%); and woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves (51%).

Quality

- The majority of outdoor facilities/open spaces were suggested by households to be good or adequate.
- Local recreation grounds, beaches and woodland, wildlife areas and nature reserves were rated highly in terms of quality.
- Artificial turf pitches, outdoor athletics tracks and facilities for teenagers were rated as poor or very poor by significant numbers of respondents (over 35%).

Access (geographical)

- In general, a majority of household respondents report that they would not normally travel more than 15 minutes to visit the different kinds of open spaces and outdoor facilities. There is considerable variation however between the typologies.
 - A majority of households would expect parks and play areas to be within a 10 minute walk time.
 - Households are generally willing to travel further to access outdoor sport facilities. For many outdoor sports facilities a clear majority of user households will travel 15 minutes – a significant proportion of which will travel further to some kinds of sports facility.
 - A majority of user households are prepared to travel 20 minutes to visit the District's beaches; and 30% of these report that they would in fact travel more than 20 minutes. 47% would also travel similar lengths of time to visit woodlands, wildlife area and nature reserves.
- The preferred mode of transport to open spaces and outdoor recreation facilities is walking; most notably for local recreation grounds and parks, children's play areas and facilities for teenagers.
- There are some facilities that households would prefer to travel by car, this includes winter pitches, cricket pitches, golf and beaches.
- There are no typologies where cycling or bus/other are a significant mode of transport.

Priorities

- The typology highlighted by the largest number of householders as high priority for potential improvement/new provision was footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths, woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves and beaches.
- Other notable high priorities for improvement typologies were informal open spaces and water recreation facilities.

2.3.2 Public Health and other issues

- North Norfolk District Council fully recognises the value and importance of access to open space, sport and outdoor recreation facilities in relation to improving health and wellbeing and in relation to residents' quality of life.
- The District Councils Corporate Plan 2015-19 has Health and Wellbeing as one of its five priority themes. It notes three specific aims: Support local communities and residents through the Big Society Fund; address issues which lead to ill-health and improve the quality of life of all residents; encourage participation in sports and activities.
- Norfolk County Council has primary responsibility for Public Health. In 2017 it adopted a Planning in Health Protocol in recognition of the importance of spatial planning in securing improved health and wellbeing outcomes for local residents. It also provides information on local walking and cycling routes, safer routes to school, sustainable travel options and local public transport.
- The District Council Health and Communities Team promotes various public health initiatives in support of the Norfolk and Waveney Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and focusses on areas of particular priority to North Norfolk.
- Areas of work include: support of sport and active recreation; support for Wellbeing programmes; partnership work with Active Norfolk; and provision of health/physical activity related grants through the Big Society fund.
- Grants through the Big Society fund over recent years have supported projects such as: setting up a health walks project; provision of new play equipment, MUGAs and outdoor gym equipment; grants to sports clubs such as rugby, football, bowls, tennis, gymnastics and cricket to improve facilities and buy new equipment; grants to community groups that own and manage nature reserves, open spaces to improve access, restore habitats etc.
- Some sectors of the community face particular barriers to access such as disabled people; children and young people; households in the more isolated rural areas and those in the more deprived wards of the study area.

3.0 NEIGHBOURING LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND TOWN/PARISH COUNCILS

3.1 Introduction

This section provides information and feedback from neighbouring local authorities and local parish and town councils. It is important to consult with neighbouring local authorities under the “duty to co-operate” requirement. This places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils in England and public bodies to “engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters”.

The need to consult and engage with local parish and town councils arises from the fact that many parish and town councils are responsible for the management of open spaces, play areas and recreation grounds; and the local parish councils also tend to have a good understanding of local needs and priorities in relation to local sport, play and recreation facilities.

Section 3 is comprised of two main sub-sections:

- Neighbouring Authorities – Cross-boundary issues
- Town/Parish Councils

There is a summary of key issues at the end of the section. The information and findings of this section will be taken forward in the main report.

3.2 Neighbouring authorities – Cross boundary and wider strategic issues

Overview – North Norfolk District Council

North Norfolk District shares borders with 5 local authority areas – King’s Lynn & West Norfolk, Breckland, Broadland, Broads Authority and Great Yarmouth. A number of general points relating to cross border and wider strategic issues are noted below:

- Norfolk planning authorities have combined Norfolk Strategic Framework Planning Document (NSPF). The document provides a framework for planning issues across the County which focusses on strategic land use issues with cross boundary implications.
- Norfolk County Council has commissioned a Norfolk-wide Green Infrastructure Project to limit constraints between council boundaries.
- The Green Infrastructure Project will also include a recreational avoidance mitigation strategy which will identify new/enhance opportunities and mitigation measures/projects for the Natura 2000 sites.

Neighbouring Local Authorities

Planning officers were contacted from the 5 neighbouring authorities to check the status of similar studies and to check if they had identified any cross-border issues that they thought should be considered within the North Norfolk studies.

Comments and observations from officers of the neighbouring authorities are provided below⁸:

The Broads Authority

The Broads Authority is the Local Planning Authority for the Norfolk Broads. The Broads Authority Executive Area covers parts of six districts one of which is North Norfolk.

⁸ The officer responses were collected via an emailed pro-forma

The Broads Planning Policy Officer notes that “before the emerging Local Plan, the Broads Authority did not have an adopted policy approach on open space” and adds that “we do not have a high housing figure but the open space studies of our districts had assessed open spaces in our area so we protect them through our Local Plan – they were not protected before”.

Recreational Open Space Policy

The Planning Policy Officer highlighted that in the emerging Broads Authority Local Plan, Policy MODDM7 which relates to recreational open space, play space, sports fields and allotments states that development on such open spaces should be permitted only if a local assessment demonstrates that:

- i. There is an excess of recreational or amenity open space in the catchment area (in and out of the Broads) and the proposed loss will not result in a current or likely shortfall during the plan period; or
- ii. The proposal is for ancillary development on an appropriate portion of the open space which enhances the recreational facilities and their setting; or
- iii. The open space which would be lost as a result of the proposed development would be replaced prior to the commencement of the development by an open space of equivalent or better quality and equivalent or greater quantity, in an equally accessible and convenient location subject to equivalent or better management arrangements which continue to meet the needs of the existing community; and
- iv. The proposal would not cause significant harm to the amenity or biodiversity value of the open space.

The Planning Policy Officer further notes that “we also protect some areas of Local Green Space” details of which can be found in the emerging Local Plan document.

As regards new provision the Plan notes that the Authority will “have regard to the approach and/or standards set by the relevant constituent district council. Any contribution will need to be towards a specific deliverable scheme, in consultation with the relevant parish or district council and having regard to the developer contributions policy in the Local Plan document. The contribution will be required to name a specific scheme (site and type of provision). Open space provision may also be required to reduce recreation pressure on sensitive designated wildlife sites”.

Other comments

The Planning Policy Officer comments that the Authority strongly recommend “that the North Norfolk Open Space Assessment should ignore the Broads boundary and assess the entire district” and confirms that “the Broads Authority will not be doing an open space study for the Broads”.

Kings Lynn & West Norfolk

Type of study	Notes/updated on relevant studies	Comments and observations – cross border issues
Playing Pitch	Study completed in 2013.	None specifically identified by officer.
Green Infrastructure	Study completed 2009/2010. Stage 1 completed Sept '09, Stage 2 completed May '10.	None specifically identified by officer.
Open Space/PPG17 Study	Study completed in 2006.	None specifically identified by officer.
Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk Natura 2000	Study completed in September 2015.	HRA Monitoring and Mitigation issues affecting North Norfolk Coast SPA.

Sites Monitoring & Mitigation		
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Breckland

Type of study	Notes/updated on relevant studies	Comments and observations – cross border issues
Green Infrastructure	Commissioned by Norfolk County Council in 2018.	It is hoped that this study will provide a greater level of detail on cross boundary infrastructure networks and used to inform future GI projects.
Open Space/PPG17 Study	Study completed in 2015.	No cross-border issues/strategic issues were identified.
Play/Youth Facility Strategy	Indoor and Built Sports and Recreation Facilities completed in 2017.	The spatial analysis includes the impact of catchments area of facility supply in neighbouring authorities.
Thetford Green Infrastructure Study	Study completed in 2007.	No cross-border issues/strategic issues were identified.
Dereham Green Infrastructure Study	Study completed in 2008.	No cross-border issues/strategic issues were identified.

Broadland

Type of study	Notes/updated on relevant studies	Comments and observations – cross border issues
Playing Pitch Strategy	Study completed in 2014.	Demand applies across borders especially in relation to Norwich.
Green Infrastructure	Study completed in 2007.	Green infrastructure is not constrained by Council boundaries.
Open Space/PPG17 Study	Study completed in 2007.	None specifically identified by officer.

Great Yarmouth

Type of study	Notes/updated on relevant studies	Comments and observations – cross border issues
Playing Pitch Strategy	Study completed in June 2015.	No cross-border issues identified. It is unlikely that there will be much significant cross border travel by players across local authority boundaries to play their home games.
Open Space/PPG17 Study	Study completed in October 2013.	None specifically identified by officer.
Parks/Greenspace/Countryside Strategy	Study completed in June 2015.	None specifically identified by officer.
Play/Youth Facility Strategy	Study completed in June 2015.	None specifically identified by officer.

3.3 Town/Parish Councils and Ward Members

3.3.1 General Overview

Within North Norfolk District there are 121 town/parish councils. Surveys were sent to all town/parish councils together with reminders to chase responses as needed. 58 of the town/parish councils responded. The survey covered issues relating to the quantity, quality and accessibility of various types of open space and outdoor recreation facilities. There was also an opportunity for the local councils to highlight any priorities they might have for new or improved provision.

Matslake and Skeyton declined to complete the survey due to not having any facilities within their parish. Antingham, Bacton, Gimingham, Roughton, Southrepps, Thorpe Market, Witton informed us that they had no interest in completing the survey.

Responses were received from the following town/parish councils:

- Ashmanhaugh
- Beckham (East & West)
- Beeston Regis
- Blakeney
- Briningham
- Brinton
- Bristol
- Catfield
- Cley
- Colby
- Cromer
- Dilham
- East Ruston
- Edgefield
- Fakenham
- Felbrigg
- Fulmodeston & Barney
- Great Snoring
- Gresham
- Gunthorpe
- Happisborough
- Helhoughton
- Hempton
- Hindolveston
- Hindringham
- Holt
- Honing
- Horning
- Hoveton
- Ingham
- Kettlestone
- Little Snoring
- Ludham
- Matlaske
- Melton Constable
- Mundesley
- North Walsham
- Northrepps
- Overstrand
- Plumstead
- Potter Heigham
- Raynham
- Runton (East and West)
- Sculthorpe
- Upper Sheringham
- Sheringham Town Council
- Skeyton
- Stalham
- Stiffkey
- Sutton
- Swafield
- Swanton Abbot
- Tattersett
- Thursford
- Walsingham
- Wells Town
- Weybourne
- Worstead

Some broad findings from the survey were:

- 44 of the 58 town/parish councils who responded were directly responsible for the management of various local spaces and outdoor facilities.
- 31 of the town/parish councils noted that there was a need for additional or improved open space, sport and recreation facilities; 11 noted that there was no requirement and 16 were not sure.
- Only 8 parishes thought there were potential for community use at schools with the remaining 50 parishes stating that they did not think there was scope for use.

The suggested potential for improvements/greater community use of school facilities is noted below:

Town/Parish	Comments
Beeston Regis	Beeston Hall School may be amenable to public use.
Catfield	Catfield Primary School could offer some use but could be limited as the field and sports area are quite small.
Cromer	Potential for further usage of facilities at Cromer Academy.
Fakenham	Fakenham Academy has an all-weather pitch which could be utilised and the disused small swimming pool on the Old Grammar School Site (owned by NNDC).
Happisburgh	Potential at Happisburgh Primary School.
Sheringham	Sheringham High School and Primary School are open for letting and have MUGAs. The Primary School doesn't have floodlights so has limited use. Sheringham Woodfield School has some capacity for community use.
Stalham	The Junior Academy on Yarmouth Road could have potential for community use.
Swanton Abbot	The school has a significant area of outside space that is not utilised outside of school hours.

Quality factors – open space provision

We asked the parish councils to highlight what they thought, in general, were high priorities as regards qualitative factors of recreational open spaces. The quality factors most commonly deemed to be of a high priority as regards recreational public open spaces are that:

- They should be easy to get to for all members of the community.
- They should be safe and secure for those using them.
- Equipment and grounds should be of high quality and well maintained.

Other aspects of quality specifically highlighted and related comments were:

- Ensuring there is disabled access.
- Uninformed groups using facilities.
- Access to toilet facilities within open recreational spaces or nearby.
- They should be inclusive and adaptive for children and adults with complex learning and health needs.
- Specific areas for different age groups to prevent intimidation.

Summary of Issues Raised

The table below covers issues of quantity, quality and access for a range of facilities⁹:

⁹ Parish and Town Councils that did not specify if there was a need for additional or improved facilities are not listed in the table below.

Town/Parish Councils	Parks, Recreation grounds and village greens	Children's Play Areas	Facilities for teenagers	Multi-Use Games Areas	Artificial Turf Pitches	Winter Pitches	Cricket Pitches	Outdoor tennis and netball courts	Bowling Greens	Outdoor Athletics Tracks	Golf	Footpaths etc	Allotments	Informal open spaces	Wildlife areas etc	Beaches
Beeston Regis		X														
Blakeney		X						X				X				
Briston		X	X	X								X	X			
Catfield	X	X				X	X			X		X		X		
Cley		X										X	X			X
Colby	X	X	X	X			X	X	X					X	X	
Cromer	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Edgefield		X														
Fakenham	X									X		X	X			
Fulmondeston		X		X								X		X		
Hempton	X	X											X			
Hindringham		X														
Holt TC	X		X	X	X							X			X	
Hoveton		X	X	X		X							X			
Ingworth	X	X										X			X	
Melton Constable				X				X								
Mundesley		X	X										X			
North Walsham		X	X			X										
Northrepps		X	X	X			X	X							X	
Potter Heigham			X													
Raynham		X		X												
Sheringham TC		X			X	X	X			X		X			X	
Sheringham Upper													X			
Stalham	X							X		X		X	X	X	X	
Stiffkey			X	X								X	X			
Swanton Abbot	X	X	X									X		X	X	
Wells TC				X								X				
Weybourne			X		X											X
TOTAL	9	19	12	11	4	5	4	6	2	5	0	12	11	6	8	3

For town/parish councils in the North Norfolk District the most important issues are:

- Need for more children's play areas or additional equipment in existing play areas.
- Need for facilities for teenagers and MUGAs.
- Improvements to footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths.
- Need for more and improved allotments.

3.3.2 General Overview

Unmet needs and aspirations for improvement

As part of the survey we also asked the open questions “are you aware of any particular groups within your community whose needs are not currently met” and “if you have, or are aware of, any specific projects, plans and aspirations for improve open spaces and outdoor recreation facilities within the Parish”. Individual town/parish responses are shown in the table below.

Town/Parish Council	Groups in parish whose needs are not being met	Current plans and known aspirations
Beckham (East & West)	None identified.	Keep Our Woodlands is maintained by a local conversation trust & are providing new equipment for the parish play area. They are also looking at establishing a wildflower meadow on the former allotments.
Blakeney	None identified.	The last phase of our recreational facilities project is underway which is to provide outdoor gym equipment (subject to time and funding).
Briston	None identified.	In the very early stages of investigating the possibility of turning the unused allotment on Plantation Hill into a community garden. Briston Football Club is looking to refurbish its pitch and pavilion on the recreation ground.
Catfield	Youth groups – need for sports and meeting area. Adult groups e.g. bowls.	Parish Council has an aspiration to regenerate the football field to a multi-use space for the community. Currently we are consulting to see what facilities the community would like to see (budget is limited). We are hoping that this would attract young and older members of the community.
Cley	Families with young children – need for toilets and baby changing facilities. Disabled users.	Plan to build a community toilet in the village hall car park. Also, to protect the Quay to ensure it remains a safe, enjoyable and open space for all to use. Improve the management of allotments. Add an interpretation board in the village hall car park. Cley Harbour is also fundraising to dredge another stretch of the River to be able to allow bigger boats to access the harbour.
Colby	Teenagers. Older adults specifically to add disabled access to bowls green.	None identified.
Cromer	Young children below age of 7. Facilities for disabled children. Teenagers – recently lost recreational spaces for teenagers. General need for facilities for older and disabled people, and	Friends of North Lodge Park are currently working on a project with NNDC. Cromer Skate Park charity are developing into a general youth and play charity to help support the further development of youth facilities in Cromer.

	opportunities to encourage fitness among all adults.	
Dilham	None identified.	Parish Council are in the process of bidding for funding for some adult exercise equipment for the playing field. The Village Hall & Playing Committee has been awarded funding for new play equipment in the current play area.
East Ruston	None identified.	To maintain the village hall as a community asset.
Edgefield	Young children – there are no areas in parish that have play equipment.	No plans due to no finances.
Fakenham	Tennis players – limited access at current facilities. Swimming pool – no provision of indoor or outdoor facilities.	Consultation underway for the provision and improved access to tennis and swimming facilities. Plans for Millennium Park to improve the car park (both size and surface), provide distance markers, improved disabled access and security. Plans for Aldiss Park to improve the surface of the car park. Also a proposal by the Hawk and Owl Trust to renovate former toilet area by Central Cinema.
Fulmodeston & Barney	Disabled adults.	PFA are applying for grants for the parish.
Great Snoring	Young children.	None identified.
Gresham	None identified.	Parish Council aspire to continue to maintain the park to a good standard.
Hempton	None identified.	Currently working with the landowner, NWT and local conservations bodies to produce a management plan for Hempton Common and The Bullock Hills. This includes improving the duck pond area, managing the trees and adding suitable seating. Also, to look at add more pieces of equipment to the play area.
Holt	The community on the south side of the bypass. Teenagers.	2 areas of residential development on the south side of the bypass should have provided recreational equipment. Holt Town Council are therefore in discussion the NNDC to transfer the land so that the Town Council can provide equipment especially aimed at teenagers/adults.
Hoveton	Disabled children and adults.	Aspiration to have an outside gym, MUGA, a community café and an area for disabled children and adults to enjoy.
Ingworth	Children – lack of play equipment. Lack of public access to the River Bute and footpaths around the parish.	When funding was obtained in 2015 for play are in Ingworth a small amount was keep back for repairs, but it is not a sufficient amount to add additional equipment.
Little Snoring	None identified.	Hoping to get funding for a ball wall.

Melton Constable	Teenagers.	Trying to fundraise for a MUGA but not have not been able to obtain a formal lease to secure the funding.
Mundesley	Residents towards the North of the parish off Cromer Road.	Parish Council are working with NNDC to obtain allotments and refurbish the Watson Watt Garden.
North Walsham	Older children and disabled children.	North Walsham Play are hoping to install a new outside gymnasium this year.
Northrepps	All ages groups – current provision is none existent.	Aspiration for a basketball court, tennis court, skate park and toddler play equipment. Parish Council would also like to replace wooden equipment and fencing in play area if funding becomes available. Also, a local landowner has developed the River Mun project.
Overstrand	None identified.	In the process of developing a village plan which will identify aspirations for open space.
Plumstead	None identified.	Aspiration to develop the area at the Green as a recreational and education facility.
Potter Heigham	None identified.	Aspiration for skate park facilities and pentanque.
Sheringham	Tennis players.	Plans for Morley Hill to be developed for community use once it becomes available. Aspiration to improve the war memorial gardens.
Stalham	Judo group.	Plans to extend and re-surface the recreation ground car park. Currently working on a community open space market town initiative joint bid with Stalham Area Business Forum.
Stiffkey	Public who use allotments/garden plots.	Focus on garden plots and open ground spaces and working the NNDC to extend the leases on the open spaces that we have.
Sutton	Children.	The playground equipment committee has £3,000 of funds but no land to build facilities.
Swanton Abbot	Raised at parish council meeting that children would like somewhere safe to play and an area for informal football/running around.	There is a proposed development which includes a new village hall and a village green. This could include a wildlife area.
Walsingham	None identified.	Working with local landowners to establish five permissive circular walking routes.
Weybourne	Teenagers. Parish also lacks a football pitch.	Parish Council has concerns over the state of the beach.

The detailed parish response relating to aspects of quantity and quality of the various elements summarised in table of issues raised above are provided below:

Parish	Need for new/improved provision and typology specific comments
Beeston Regis	Play Areas – need for more provision.
Blakeney	Play Areas – need to separate provision for small children from older children.
Briston	<p>Play Areas – equipment needs upgrading.</p> <p>Teen facilities – equipment needs upgrading.</p> <p>MUGA – needs resurfacing.</p> <p>Footpaths etc – requires maintenance.</p> <p>Allotments – requires maintenance.</p>
Catfield	<p>Parks – potential to add additional equipment. Survey underway to consult with residents.</p> <p>Play Areas – broken equipment needs replacing. Could do with more disabled equipment.</p> <p>Winter Pitches – lack of facilities due to distance from mains power and water.</p> <p>Cricket Pitches – none currently available, but potential option for multi-use at football pitch.</p> <p>Tennis/Netball Courts – only facility in parish is private.</p> <p>Athletics Tracks – none currently available, but potential option for multi-use at football pitch.</p> <p>Footpaths etc – requires resurfacing, currently not suitable for unaccompanied youngsters.</p> <p>Informal Spaces – requirement for more provision. Previously had agreed an area with a local farmer but now at the discretion of the farmer. Lacking in large enough spaces for families.</p>
Cley	<p>Play Areas – improved access for those in pushchairs and wheelchairs.</p> <p>Footpaths etc – more regular maintenance to avoid overgrown paths.</p> <p>Allotments – more money required to manage the upkeep of allotments including cutting of hedges and improving access.</p> <p>Beaches – provide toilet facilities to attract more visitors as the area is quite remote.</p>
Colby	<p>Parks – potential to develop facilities on the village green and to provide outdoor style gym equipment.</p> <p>Play Areas – need for more equipment in current play area.</p> <p>Teen facilities – need for more provision. Aspiration to add facilities on the playing field.</p> <p>MUGA – need for more provision. Aspiration to add on the playing field.</p> <p>Cricket Pitches – none available, requirement for one.</p> <p>Winter Pitches – none available, requirement for one.</p> <p>Bowls – requirement for disabled access.</p> <p>Informal Spaces – need for provision to cater for local needs.</p> <p>Wildlife Areas – aspiration to develop wildlife areas on playing field in conjunction with local wildlife group, Wild About Colby.</p>
Cromer	<p>Parks – investment in planting, improvement of signage on bins to encourage depositing of litter.</p> <p>Play Areas – need to improve, replace and add additional equipment in most areas such as Brownhill and on green spaces surrounding Victory Housing Trust Land.</p> <p>Teen facilities – apart from the skate park, there are no facilities aimed at teenagers. The disused bowls green is regularly used as an informal meeting place.</p> <p>MUGAs – there is one facility in Cromer but it is not free for public use. An additional free MUGA would be a valuable asset.</p>

	<p>ATPs – new provision required alongside new football facilities.</p> <p>Winter Pitches – need for new football facilities for both adult and youth teams. There are also no rugby pitches.</p> <p>Tennis/Netball Courts – plenty of tennis provision but no netball or basketball provision.</p> <p>Bowls – a voluntary group has expressed concerns that difficulties were experienced when attempting to improve facilities and reduce conflicts with other users of nearby open space.</p> <p>Athletics Tracks – Cromer has a successful amateur running group so new provision would be extremely valuable.</p> <p>Footpaths etc – requirement to improve surfacing throughout the town. Funding has been provided on FP 19 between Henry Blogg Road and Norwich Road. Cliff Lane has also been highlighted as an area for improvement. There are also opportunities for using disused rail facilities such as the Cromer High Station and the disused Tunnel.</p> <p>Allotments – need to improve formal gardens including North Lodge Park. There has been expression from the public for a community orchard, with the existing community gardens at the cemetery requiring eventual replacement with additional space.</p> <p>Informal Spaces – there is a notable gap in informal ball spaces within Cromer. There is a need for further bins and signage to support dog walking within the existing spaces.</p> <p>Wildlife Areas – roadside nature reserves are a potential which are being explored.</p> <p>Beaches – disabled access required to the West Promenade.</p>
Edgefield	Play Areas – need for provision. None currently in the parish.
Fakenham	<p>Play Areas – Millennium Park requires improvements.</p> <p>Athletics Tracks – potential to add distance markers at Millennium Park for informal track.</p> <p>Footpaths etc – improvement to access onto the Great Eastern Railway footpath.</p> <p>Allotments – improve disabled access to seating areas at St Peters Garden.</p>
Fulmondeston	<p>Play Areas – need to replace old equipment and provide additional equipment.</p> <p>MUGAs – need for adult gym equipment.</p> <p>Footpaths etc – requirement to improve the definition of the public footpaths.</p> <p>Wildlife Areas – improve rights of way through wildlife areas.</p>
Hempton	<p>Parks – requires ongoing maintenance and improvement of the village green.</p> <p>Play Areas – requires ongoing maintenance, improvement of equipment and additional equipment to obtain a comprehensive play area for a range of age groups.</p> <p>Allotments – requires ongoing maintenance.</p>
Hindringham	Play Areas – needs improved play equipment.
Holt TC	<p>Parks – lack of facilities for the whole of Holt.</p> <p>Teen Facilities – requirement for facilities south of the bypass within the new developments.</p> <p>MUGAs – requirement for facilities south of the bypass within the new developments.</p> <p>Footpaths etc – improve footpaths from Holt to coastal areas.</p> <p>Wildlife Areas – requires ongoing maintenance on common land.</p>
Hoveton	<p>Play Areas – play area is currently closed and in need of being repaired.</p> <p>MUGAs – an aspiration of the parish but no funds to build.</p> <p>Winter Pitches – space within the parish for additional pitches.</p> <p>Allotments - an aspiration of the parish but no funds to provide provision.</p>
Ingworth	<p>Parks – currently only one small playing field.</p> <p>Play Areas – could be improved or expanded.</p>

	<p>Footpaths etc – limited footpath provision. Village has lots of speeding vehicles.</p> <p>Wildlife Areas – limited access to the River Bute which could be improved.</p>
Melton Constable	<p>MUGAs – requirement for a MUGA, in the process of fundraising.</p>
Mundesley	<p>Play Areas – Watson Watt Garden play area needs to be refurbished.</p> <p>Allotments – lack of provision and large waiting list.</p>
North Walsham	<p>Play Areas – further provision required in North Walsham around 2-3 more.</p> <p>Teen Facilities – some current facilities but there is the opportunity to add more.</p> <p>Winter Pitches – no access to any facilities.</p>
Northrepps	<p>Play Areas – equipment needs replacing, and provision needs to be provided for small children.</p> <p>Teen Facilities – no current facilities, need for provision.</p> <p>MUGAs - no current facilities, need for provision.</p> <p>Cricket Pitches – no current facilities, need for provision.</p> <p>Tennis/Netball Courts– no current facilities, need for provision.</p> <p>Wildlife Areas – need for more provision.</p>
Potter Heigham	<p>Teen Facilities – no current provision, potential for skate park.</p>
Raynham	<p>Play Areas – need for improved and additional children’s equipment.</p> <p>MUGAs – need for additional outdoor gym equipment.</p>
Sheringham TC	<p>Play Areas – need for more provision.</p> <p>ATPs - no current facilities, need for provision.</p> <p>Winter Pitches – demand for more provision.</p> <p>Cricket Pitches – provided at the sports field but has to double up as a football pitch.</p> <p>Athletic Pitches - demand for more provision.</p> <p>Footpaths etc – footpaths need to be identified, marked and maintained.</p>
Sheringham Upper	<p>Allotments – a few private allotments in the village, these may not continue when a plot becomes vacant so need for an allotment would exist.</p>
Stalham	<p>Parks – requirement to upgrade access to recreation ground as it is currently unadopted with limited parking.</p> <p>Tennis/Netball Courts – no netball facilities in public areas, only at the Junior Academy.</p> <p>Athletics Pitches – only facility is at Stalham Academy when the field is marked out.</p> <p>Allotments – requirement for more provision, currently only one town council allotment.</p> <p>Informal Open Spaces – no areas for dog walking, currently only space is at the recreation ground.</p> <p>Wildlife Areas – only area in the parish is not open to the public. Requirement for more provision.</p>
Stiffkey	<p>Teen Facilities – demand for more provision.</p> <p>MUGAs – would be good to incorporate areas for adults such as outdoor fitness into play areas.</p> <p>Footpaths etc – more assistance required in maintaining.</p> <p>Allotments – a huge demand for allotments which is currently not met, demand for more provision.</p>
Swanton Abbot	<p>Parks – village plan identified a need for a village green.</p> <p>Play Areas – a need for more space suitable for kicking footballs etc.</p> <p>Teen Facilities – a village green could provide a safe place for older children to meet.</p>

	<p>Footpaths – these could be maintained to a higher standard. There are no bridleways in the village.</p> <p>Wildlife Areas – there are privately owned areas which would be used to encourage wildlife.</p>
Thursford	Footpaths etc – a few within the parish but demand for more.
Wells TC	<p>MUGAs – adult MUGA would be beneficial.</p> <p>Footpaths – cycle paths and circular walking routes would be beneficial.</p>
Weybourne	<p>Teen Facilities – lack of facilities in the village.</p> <p>Winter Pitches – no current provision. Demand for football pitches.</p> <p>Beaches – state of the beach is an ongoing concern.</p>

Parish Councils – other comments

Finally, the survey also provided the opportunity to raise any other issues or to make other points. The table below provides individual town/parish responses made:

Parish	Issues and other comments
Briston	Briston Parish Council spends a lot of time and money looking after the open spaces, sport and recreation ground in the parish. There are very few grants available now for help with this maintenance and not a lot of advice from the District or County Council.
Catfield	We have many families in the village who do not have transport and therefore cannot access the wider area facilities. If we were to improve facilities in the village it would offer the youth a wider range of facilities and engender community spirit. We are lucky to have some amazing open fenland and woods around us but very little for group activities that is currently suitable for use.
Cley	PRoW are the Districts biggest asset, attracting many visitors to the areas to walk and cycle the varied landscape North Norfolk has to offer. Therefore, further investment in PRoW maintenance and better information regarding access and nearby facilities need to be made a bigger priority.
Cromer	North Norfolk could also benefit from a strategy to enable public arts or arts in public places. The provision of accessible toilets and changing facilities is also something we consider very important.
Fakenham	Despite much prompting, NNDC has been extremely slow in updating Dog Fouling Bylaws covering our outdoor recreational areas.
Holt	Important that all sectors of Holt community are provided for as much as in other market towns and coastal areas.
Hoveton	We've contacted and met with various people at NNDC, the sport council, Anglian business manager based at Ipswich, the FA and everything has come to nothing after over 2 years and we're not further forward.
Little Snoring	It is proving impossible to keep the playing field free of dog poo. People ignore the signs to keep dogs on leads and to clear up after them. It is also difficult to maintain the surface of the playing field as it is damaged by mole hills and rabbits.
North Walsham	North Walsham Play are leading the way on change in North Walsham.
Sheringham	Further investment both locally and throughout North Norfolk is necessary.
Stalham	Greater funding from NNDC for town's recreational facilities.
Sutton	Sutton desperately needs outdoor play areas for its growing population.
Swafeld	Swafeld and Bradfield is adjacent to North Walsham where there is considerable provision for all ages and abilities. It is on a regular bus route and within easy cycling distance.

3.3.3 North Norfolk District Council Ward Members

District Council Ward members were invited to highlight any issues they were aware of relating to open space, sport and recreation facilities. Responses are noted in the table below:

Ward	Issues, observations and comments
Lancaster South	<p>Playing Pitches & Outdoor Sport – there is a variety of registered clubs in the area, but no known public outdoor free to use playing fields.</p> <p>Play Areas – Millennium Park is misused by teenagers regularly; the local police are aware of the issues.</p> <p>Teen Facilities – only available facilities are at Millennium Park.</p> <p>Footpaths – range of provision but not all are easily accessible.</p> <p>Water Recreation – access to river Wensum where angling rights are available.</p> <p>Allotments – three sites available for use.</p>
North Walsham North	<p>Playing Pitches & Outdoor Sport – approval for a new artificial pitch at North Walsham High School.</p> <p>Parks – North Walsham football club have recently re-classified their pitches as available for recreational use.</p> <p>Play Areas – provision available at Acron Road Green and Woodside.</p> <p>Informal open space - provision available at Acron Road Green and Woodside.</p>
Stalham and Sutton	<p>MUGA – potential for a MUGA at high school.</p> <p>Teen Facilities – Sutton has a lack of facilities.</p> <p>Water Recreation – there is limited provision across both Stalham and Sutton.</p> <p>Cricket Pitches – need for facilities across both Stalham and Sutton.</p>
Waterside	<p>Parks – need for more provision of parks.</p> <p>Play Areas – need for more provision of children’s play areas.</p> <p>Informal open space – the parish council and ward members have identified an area for becoming informal open space.</p>

3.4 Neighbouring Local Authorities, Town/Parish Councils and Council Members – Observations and key issues

Neighbouring Local Authorities – Key Findings

Section 3.1 above reviews feedback from neighbouring Local Authorities in relation to the status of their open space strategies/associated studies and any cross-border issues of significance. It is notable that there are very few cross-border issues.

The Norfolk Strategic Framework Planning Document (NSPF) provides guidance across the District for cross-boundary issues.

All authorities highlighted the importance of the region wide Green Infrastructure study which is currently underway and has been commissioned by Norfolk County Council.

Town/Parish Councils – Key Findings

- 44 of the 58 town/parish councils who responded were directly responsible for the management of various local spaces and outdoor facilities.
- 31 of the town/parish councils noted that there was a need for additional or improved open space, sport and recreation facilities; 11 noted that there was no requirement and 16 were not sure.
- Only 8 parishes thought there were potential for community use at schools with the remaining 50 parishes stating that they did not think there was scope for use.

Common areas of concern

For the town/parish councils, the areas of most concern are:

- The need for more children's play areas or additional equipment in existing play areas.
- The need for facilities for teenagers and MUGAs in some parishes.
- Improvements to footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths.
- Need for more and improved allotments.

Quality Considerations

The quality factors most commonly deemed to be of a high priority as regards recreational public open spaces are that:

- They should be easy to get to for all members of the community.
- They should be safe and secure for those using them.
- Equipment and grounds should be of high quality and well maintained.

It is also thought important by many parish councils that open spaces should be clean from litter and graffiti and easy for members of the community to get around.

Detailed responses on open space typologies

Many of the parish councils provided detailed responses relating to aspects of quantity and quality of the various elements of open space surveyed. District Council members were also given the opportunity to provide, but few responses were received.

4.0 PARKS, NATURAL GREEN SPACE AND RIGHTS OF WAY

4.1 Introduction

This section covers consultation responses and findings in relation to non-sporting recreational open spaces, including parks and recreation grounds, natural green spaces, water recreation, allotments and rights of way. Consultation undertaken for this section included key stakeholder interviews, proforma responses, and surveys of relevant (non-sports) groups and organisations. The information and findings from this section will be taken forward in the Open Space Study main report.

This section is comprised of seven main sections:

- Review of policy and strategy
- Key Stakeholders - strategic context and overview
- Parks, gardens and recreation grounds (including village greens).
- Allotments
- Natural green space – e.g. wildlife areas, nature reserves and woodlands
- Beaches and water recreation
- Footpaths, bridleways and cyclepaths.

There is a summary of key points and issues at the end of the section.

4.2 Review of policy and strategy – North Norfolk District Council

This section provides a brief overview of relevant District Council policy and strategy documents, helping to provide a well-established framework and context for future open space planning.

4.2.1 North Norfolk District Council Corporate Objectives

One of the Council's main objectives in the Corporate Plan is Health and Wellbeing and associated actions include working with partners to invest in sport and recreation facilities across the District and promoting health and fitness for all ages, abilities and ambition. It is therefore anticipated that the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study and the Sports Pitch Strategy will help the Council meet four of its strategic objectives i.e.

- Provide sport and leisure for all, alongside good quality open spaces
- Work in partnerships to help tackle health inequalities and decrease inactivity
- Bring investment to the district
- Increase participation in sport

4.2.2 North Norfolk Open Space and Recreation Study (2006)

Overview

The 2006 Open Space Study had four main aims:

- to inform the review of the local plan;
- to provide guidance on open space standards;

- to advise the management of open space and sports facilities; and
- to help the Council to set priorities for expenditure, as well as find sources of funding.

The study involved an assessment of the quantity, quality and value of parks and open spaces in North Norfolk and notes whether provision is meeting local needs. It developed local standards and measures to address deficiencies in open space provision. It recognised that open space, with good planning and management, can perform multiple functions and provide a variety of benefits which cut across the Council's strategic priorities.

Some of the general conclusions in 2006 assessment were that:

- Public parks in North Norfolk are well provided for, especially at the strategic level represented by country parks.
- There are a good number of large parks, which are also well distributed throughout the District.
- Difficulties begin to arise at the more local level, such that a number of settlements in the rural hinterland have no children's play areas, and are too far from other villages which may have adequate facilities to be able to use those.

The study also concluded that much of the open space in the district was of a high standard, and it gave advice on how to improve open space sites which are below standard; where existing functions can be expanded to meet demand, and on improving accessibility.

It also recommended the establishment of a Green Network to link open space and enhance its value; and advised on how existing facilities could be used to better effect, as well as identifying areas with specific requirements.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - Guide to Core Strategy - Open Space Standards (2008)

This SPD provides advice on the implementation of developer contributions, and the Open Space standards contained in the North Norfolk Core Strategy. It highlights that "development sites in areas that are deficient in terms of the adopted local standards will be required to make appropriate provision locally, either within the development or by making new provision elsewhere or improvements to existing provision off-site".

Local Standards

The current NNDC adopted local standards for Open Spaces (as noted in the 2008 SPD).¹⁰

Typology	Quantity Standard	Accessibility Standard	Quality Standard
Public Parks (Includes Country parks, district parks, neighbourhood parks and small local parks)	20.34 ha per 1,000 population including: 19 ha Country Park provision 1.34 ha other public parks	All residents within the seven main towns and Hoveton should have access to an area of public park within 400m of home. People living outside the main towns and Hoveton should have access to an area of park within 800m of home	Proposals for new housing development should be accompanied by proposals to improve open space provision reflecting local circumstances as set out in the Open Space Study. Open spaces identified within the Open Space Study for improvement should be prioritised. Public parks within the District should meet the Green Flag 'good' quality standard.

¹⁰ Please note that the table excludes Children's Play which is covered in Section 5.

Natural Green Space	1 ha per 1,000 population	Efforts should be made where possible to improve access to open spaces	Areas of natural and semi-natural green space should be of adequate quality and support local biodiversity. Areas of natural and semi-natural green space which either under-perform in terms of their value to the local community or local biodiversity should be enhanced
Allotments	0.64ha of allotment land per 1,000 population	All residents within the District should have access to an allotment garden within 2.5km of home.	Allotment sites should be of adequate quality and support the needs of the local community. Allotment sites which under-perform in terms of their value to the local community should be improved

The current local standards and Open Space Study findings will be reviewed and new standards proposed in this current study. The new standards will then be applied across the District in the main Open Space and Outdoor Recreation report.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – Design Guide (2008)

This SPD contains a chapter on Landscape Design for both rural and urban areas but no specific guidance relating to sport and recreational open spaces.

Amenity Green Space Topic Paper (2018)

This document provides an appraisal of Open Space, Education & Formal Recreation Spaces, and Local Green Space options, in the towns, villages and open countryside in North Norfolk.

The purpose of the paper was to review the district's designated Open Land Areas in line with updated national policy through a review of existing designations within settlements as shown on the current 2008 adopted proposals map, subsequent open land areas brought forward through development and other suggested sites, identified by officers, town and parish councils. For the purposes of the review, the Amenity Green Space designation includes: public and privately owned accessible open space, churchyards, village greens, allotments and urban woodlands. The Education and Formal Recreation Area designation includes: school playing fields, sports pitches and formal sports areas.

As appropriate, the detailed findings and analysis of the Topic Paper will be considered in both of the main reports - the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study and the Playing Pitch Strategy.

4.3 Key Stakeholders - strategic context and overview

This section includes general comments from the key stakeholders consulted. Responses specific to individual typologies from the stakeholders consulted will be noted under each of the focused topic headings.

4.3.1 North Norfolk District Council - Countryside Team

The Sports and Countryside Manager oversees the teams who operate the Council's dual use sports facilities and the ranger team who look after 14 (varied) woodland/countryside sites across the District. He provided a general overview of NNDC provision and management of open spaces as noted below:

- There are three Countryside Rangers responsible for the management of 14 countryside and woodland sites across the District. This is big workload for three staff.
- The Council's "flagship" site is Holt Country Park that has a wide variety of facilities including a visitor centre and play area. This is a Green Flag site.
- Pretty Corner Woods also has Green Flag status and until recently Sadlers Wood did also (one aspiration is to requalify Sadlers Wood for Green Flag status).
- Beeston Bump at Beeston Regis is managed by the Council and is a SSSI.
- The District Council is responsible for the management of a number of play areas across the District (managed by Property Services).
- There are also a number of amenity green spaces across the District owned and managed by the Council (Environmental Services) under the Grounds Maintenance contract.
- Sustainability – with reduced budgets it is essential that any new open space facility developments secure funds for ongoing maintenance and/or are able to generate income to cover costs.
- There may be potential for a more innovative approach to the use of some of the District's open spaces, particularly those which are now aged/tired and which have potential for income generation following investment.
- Currently there is little staff time available to keep up to date with potential external funding opportunities which are increasingly required if significant improvements are to be made to facilities.

Additional points relating to the various typologies can be found in the appropriate sections later in the report.

4.3.2 Strategic Organisations

Natural England – Sustainable Development Lead Adviser

Standards of provision

Natural England has proposed standards for provision of natural green space, the Accessible Natural Green Space (ANGSt) standard. These standards recommend that everyone, wherever they live, should have accessible natural green space:

- Of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minute's walk) from home
- At least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres of home
- One accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home; and
- One accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home; plus
- Statutory local Nature Reserves at a minimum level of one hectare per thousand population

Natural England suggest that these standards should be a target to achieve; and particularly that everyone, wherever they live, should have an accessible natural green spaces of at least two hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes from home).

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGS)

The Natural England view is that developments should include the provision of well-designed Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspaces (SANGS) proportionate to its scale. Such provisions can help minimise any predicted increase in recreational pressure to the European sites by containing the majority of recreation within and around the development site boundary away from European sites. We advise that the SANGS guidance can be helpful in designing this; it should be noted that this document is specific to the SANGS creation for the Thames Basin Heaths, although the broad principles are more widely applicable.

Management of Local Sites - Natural England is responsible for the management of a number of protected sites within North Norfolk e.g. SSSIs and LNRs.

The importance of Biodiversity and multi-functional open spaces

Natural England highlights the importance of measurable net gain in the creation of habitat and improvements to biodiversity and refer you to the [Governments 25 Year Environment Plan](#) and paragraph 174 of the [National Planning Policy Framework](#), specifically:

“promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity”

Green Corridors

Natural England encourages the development of Green Networks to provide linkages between areas of existing green open space. This process would involve:

- The identification and mapping of all public green space and existing Green Infrastructure and any off-site linkages.
- Identification of potential development sites (e.g. garage courts, brown field sites) that would require Green Infrastructure as part of the development to provide green linkages.
- Green space nearby community facilities (e.g. schools) are identified as places for education and volunteering.

Environment Agency – Planning Advisor

Overview

We need more natural green space (green infrastructure) with access for local communities, particularly with access to the water environment. This would achieve several things: help people better connect with nature including our chalk streams in North Norfolk, better connection with nature helps to secure an understanding for the need for conservation, help people understand the impact of human activities on water quality, providing access near settlements should alleviate pressure on sensitive coastal habitats which are already under pressure from too much disturbance.

Access to rivers provides opportunities for local groups to undertake pond dipping activities and angling/fly fishing, increasing understanding and a feeling of ownership and stewardship of their 'patch'.

The importance of biodiversity and multi-functional open space

- Open green spaces provide opportunities for water features such as ponds, which increase water infiltration and can be designed as to temporarily hold run off. Features like this provide natural flood management benefits if sited strategically. River restoration on these sites could also provide natural flood management benefits, protecting downstream properties.
- Many of our rivers need more shading to keep water cool, which is particularly relevant to climate change adaptation. Planting of riverside trees can help to shade the river and increase infiltration and slow the flow of flood water. If done at a large scale it can help protect downstream communities through natural flood management. This would contribute to creating a 'multi-functional open space'.

Norfolk Wildlife Trust (NWT) – Senior Conservation Officer

NWT owns and manages Cley and Salthouse Marshes Nature reserve. We have a conservation management plan agreed with Natural England for these sites. The beach and perimeter of the reserve are publicly accessible; but the majority of the nature reserve, including bird hides is subject to a charge to enter. Full details are available at the Cley Visitor Centre.

NWT has identified the area surrounding and inland of Cley as a North Norfolk Coast and Woods Living Landscape Project area. The project area is made up of coastal habitats, farmland, heathland and woodland. It is an area that we have identified as a priority for NWT to engage with landowners and managers to improve management of areas of ecological interest and improve ecological connectivity.

Living Landscape project areas aim to create corridors of suitable habitat, such as river valleys or hedgerows, which will act as 'wildlife highways' that will permit species to move through the countryside. Sometimes this movement will be via a series of 'stepping stones' – pockets of suitable habitat interspersed around the landscape, such as a series of small woodlands and copses dotted around farmland, or even wildlife-friendly gardens in towns and villages.

NWT advises owners and managers of County Wildlife Sites (CWS) throughout Norfolk. Most of these areas are privately owned but many such as Salthouse Heath are Commons and Open Access land. CWS boundaries are available from NBIS and are known to NNDC planning department.

Further details of NWT reserves and Living Landscape can be provided if needed. NWT is happy to comment on the strategy further as it develops.

The Woodland Trust - Regional External Affairs Officer

The Woodland Trust noted that they appreciate the opportunity to input into this document. They highlighted that proximity and access to woodland is a key issue linking the environment with health and wellbeing provision.

Management of Local Sites

The Woodland Trust owns around 1,200 woods across the UK. Details of woods that we own and those in other ownership in North Norfolk can be found at <http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting->

[woods/map/North%20Norfolk,%20Norfolk,%20United%20Kingdom/52.848934173584/1.17139804363251/?newTemplate=true](https://www.woods/map/North%20Norfolk,%20Norfolk,%20United%20Kingdom/52.848934173584/1.17139804363251/?newTemplate=true)

In our own woods we try to maximise benefit for wildlife and wherever possible keep the wood open for people to access. We also include areas of open space to make the woods attractive and useful for people to visit.

Spatial Planning Standards

The Woodland Trust has researched and developed the Woodland Access Standard (WAS_t) for local authorities to aim for, encapsulated in their *Space for People* publication. They believe that the WAS_t can be an important policy tool complimenting other access standards used in delivering green infrastructure for health benefits.

The WAS_t is complimentary to Natural England's ANGST+ and is endorsed by Natural England. The Woodland Trust Woodland Access Standard recommends:

- that no person should live more than 500m from at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 2ha in size
- that there should also be at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 20ha within 4km (8km round-trip) of people's homes.

Applying this standard in North Norfolk, compared to some other councils in Norfolk, gives the following figures (see table below).

Accessibility to Woodland in North Norfolk using the Woodland Trust Woodland Access Standard

		Accessible woods		Woodland creation	
		% of population with access to a 2ha+ wood within 500m	% of population with access to a 20ha+ wood within 4km	% population requiring new woodland to be able to access a 2ha+ wood within 500m	% population requiring new woodland to be able to access a 20ha+ wood within 4km
England		18	67.9	48.3	11.8
Norfolk	Breckland	17.7	53	43.6	2.1
Norfolk	Broadland	13.9	78.1	31.4	0.2
Norfolk	Great Yarmouth	0	0	69.8	47.3
Norfolk	King's Lynn and West Norfolk	8.5	47.8	53.3	25.2
Norfolk	North Norfolk	12.3	55.3	40.3	2.6

Norfolk	Norwich	16.9	78.4	37.6	0
Norfolk	South Norfolk	5.1	10.2	40.5	14

The table indicates that in North Norfolk, while access for residents to larger woods within a 4 km catchment is quite good, the District would benefit from more new small woods closer to where people live. This provides an excellent opportunity for creating more accessible woodland to improve health and wellbeing opportunities for sustainable communities and neighbourhoods.

The Trust would like the Open Space Study to aim to increase access to woodland for the people of North Norfolk.

The importance of biodiversity and multi-functional open space

The Case for Trees: Forestry Commission (2010)

Trees enhance biodiversity. A mature oak can host up to 5,000 species of invertebrate that will form the basis for a healthy food chain that benefits birds and mammals. As a platform for biodiversity trees can link pockets of wildlife that, in time, helps to increase it and thus bring people closer to nature.

The Trust would wish to highlight the important of ancient woodland.

Ancient woods are irreplaceable. They are our richest terrestrial wildlife habitats, with complex ecological communities that have developed over centuries, and contain a high proportion of rare and threatened species, many of which are dependent on the particular conditions that this habitat affords. For this reason, ancient woods are reservoirs of biodiversity, but because the resource is limited and highly fragmented, they and their associated wildlife are particularly vulnerable.

Their long continuity and lack of disturbance means ancient woods are often also living history books, preserving archaeological features and evidence of past land use, from earthworks to charcoal pits. They are also places of great aesthetic appeal, making them attractive for recreation and the many benefits this can bring in terms of health and wellbeing.

The Trust would wish to see ancient woodland protected from development and buffered accordingly.

Other information/points raised

- Our document 'Residential developments and trees' may be useful: <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/publications/2015/07/residential-developments-and-trees/>
- The **Trees or Turf (2011)** report outlines the benefits of converting selected areas of intensively mown grassland to woodland, and in particular the cost savings which can be made.
- The Trust supplied a number of additional typology-based comments noted in the appropriate sections below.

The Forestry Commission (Business Development Manager - East England)

Role: The Forestry Commission is the government department responsible for protecting, expanding and promoting the sustainable management of woodlands and increasing their value to society and the environment.

The Forestry Commission and Natural England share Standing Advice in relation to Ancient Woodlands. Some relevant points are that:

- The NPPF amended in May contains stronger protections for ancient trees and ancient woodlands
- The Forestry Act regulates felling of woodland. UK Forest Standard provides guidance on acceptable management of woodland and on best practice.
- The government's 25 Year Environment Plan reiterates a commitment to planting 11 million trees.
- the government's Clean Growth Strategy includes a commitment to increasing woodland cover in England to 12% by 2060, which means 130,000ha of new woodland. It also sets out a target of a 26% drop in emissions from land use, which may require an even larger shift to woodland.

The Business Development Manager - East England noted that “we have various sites of woodland within the Public Forest Estate (PFE) that we manage and own in North Norfolk. Our responsibility is for encouragement of public engagement with the PFE where there are not leasehold agreements in place that prevent public access rights”. It was noted that Bacton Woods, North Walsham is owned by the Forestry Commission but managed locally by the District Council.

Local Plans and ancient woodland – Forestry Commission approach: The information below is provided to assist in assessing the appropriateness of sites for future development, and to highlight opportunities for achieving your renewable energy obligations.

A summary of Government policy on ancient woodland:

[Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006](#) (published October 2006). **Section 40** – “Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity”.

[National Planning Policy Framework](#) (published March 2012).

Paragraph 118 – “planning permission should be refused for development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and the loss of aged or veteran trees found outside ancient woodland, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss”.

[National Planning Practice Guidance](#) – Natural Environment Guidance. (Published March 2014)

This Guidance supports the implementation and interpretation of the National Planning Policy Framework. This section outlines the Forestry Commission’s role as a **non-statutory consultee** on “*development proposals that contain or are likely to affect Ancient Semi-Natural woodlands or Plantations on Ancient Woodlands Sites (PAWS) (as defined and recorded in [Natural England’s Ancient Woodland inventory](#)), including proposals where any part of the development site is within 500 metres of an ancient semi-natural woodland or ancient replanted woodland, and where the development would involve erecting new buildings, or extending the footprint of existing buildings*”

It notes that ancient woodland is an irreplaceable habitat, and that, in planning decisions, Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) should be treated equally in terms of the protection afforded to ancient

woodland in the National Planning Policy Framework. It highlights the Ancient Woodland Inventory as a way to find out if a woodland is ancient.

[Standing Advice for Ancient Woodland and Veteran Trees](#). (Published April 2014)

The Forestry Commission has prepared joint [standing advice](#) with Natural England on ancient woodland and veteran trees which we refer you to in the first instance. This advice is a material consideration for planning decisions across England. It explains the definition of ancient woodland, its importance, ways to identify it and the policies that relevant to it. It also provides advice on how to protect ancient woodland when dealing with planning applications that may affect ancient woodland. It also considers ancient wood-pasture and veteran trees.

The Standing Advice website will provide you with links to [Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory](#), [assessment guides](#) and other tools to assist you in assessing potential impacts. The assessment guides sets out a series of questions to help planners assess the impact of the proposed development on the ancient woodland. **Case Decisions** demonstrates how certain previous planning decisions have taken planning policy into account when considering the impact of proposed developments on ancient woodland. These documents can be found on our [website](#).

[The UK Forestry Standard](#) (3rd edition published November 2011).

Page 24 "Areas of woodland are material considerations in the planning process and may be protected in local authority Area Plans. These plans pay particular attention to woods listed on the Ancient Woodland Inventory and areas identified as Sites of Local Nature Conservation Importance (SLNCIs).

[Keepers of Time](#) – A Statement of Policy for England's Ancient and Native Woodland (published June 2005).

Page 10 "The existing area of ancient woodland should be maintained and there should be a net increase in the area of native woodland".

[Natural Environment White Paper "The Natural Choice"](#) (published June 2011)

Paragraph 2.53 - This has a "renewed commitment to conserving and restoring ancient woodlands".

Paragraph 2.56 – "The Government is committed to providing appropriate protection to ancient woodlands and to more restoration of plantations on ancient woodland sites".

[Biodiversity 2020: a strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services](#) (published August 2011).

Paragraph 2.16 - Further commitments to protect ancient woodland and to continue restoration of Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

Renewable & low carbon energy: The resilience of existing and new woodland is a key theme of the Forestry Commission's work to Protect, Improve and Expand woodland in England we will continue to work with Forestry / Woodland owners, agents, contractors and other Stakeholders to highlight and identify, pests and diseases and to work in partnership to enable Woodlands and Forests are resilient to the impacts of Climate Change.

Woodfuel and timber supplies continues to be an opportunity for local market growth whilst also enabling woodlands to be brought back into active management.

Flood risk: The planting of new riparian and floodplain woodland, can help to reduce diffuse pollution, protect river morphology, moderate stream temperature and aid flood risk management, as well as meet Biodiversity Action Plan targets for the restoration and expansion of wet woodland.

The Forestry Commission is keen to work in partnership with Woodland / Forest Stakeholders to develop opportunities for woodland creation to deliver these objectives highlighted above.

In the wider planning context the Forestry Commission encourages local authorities to consider [the role of trees in delivering planning objectives as part](#) of a wider integrated landscape approach. For instance, through:

- the inclusion of [green infrastructure](#) (including [trees and woodland](#)) in and around new development; and
- the use of locally sourced wood in construction and as a sustainable, [carbon lean fuel](#).

Historic England - Planning Adviser

Historic England note that some open space will have historical significance which should be recognised and taken into account in future planning and management. This is the case even if not formally designated as a Registered Park and Garden or Conservation Area or contain a Listed Building or Scheduled Monument. Norfolk Gardens Trust holds an inventory of parks and gardens of local significance.

4.4 Parks, Recreation Grounds and Village Greens

While NNDC do manage a small number of parks, recreation grounds and open spaces across the District the primary providers are the local town and parish councils and recreation trusts.

4.4.1 North Norfolk District Council

Countryside Team

- In broad terms across the District the quantity of parks and recreation ground provision is quite good, however quality is much more variable and some are run down and in need of improvement.
- The importance of biodiversity is sometimes not fully appreciated and there is a need for more protection where areas are used for open recreation.
- Holt Country Park is an excellent well used park with a good variety of facilities and a visitor centre that is open 6 months a year. The park hosts a popular events programme.
- One key aspiration is to improve the play area at Holt Country Park which is no longer fit for purpose. External funding would be need to enable this project.
- A further aspiration for Holt Country Park is to secure an electricity supply for the Visitor Centre and Park which would considerably widen its potential use. Again, external funding would be needed.

Planning – Landscape officer

- There is a lack of provision in the west of the District around Fakenham. There is a concern that due to the lack of provision in this area, more people are visiting the coast and the sensitive nature conservation areas to walk their dogs and exercise in general, which in turn is having a negative impact on these sites. There are several studies and visitor surveys available which provide evidence for this (see report by Footprint Ecology commissioned by the LPAs in Norfolk for visitor surveys at European Sites, 2016).
- Fakenham is a residential growth area for the LPA and has very poor links with GI both within the town and out into the countryside. The only sizeable GI provision within the town is the River Wensum which in itself is a protected river (SSSI and SAC). There are poor pedestrian and cycle links east and west, particularly to Pensthorpe (a local attraction and wildlife park). Further details can be seen in the emerging Local plan background paper no 5(Green infrastructure opportunities)
- The in-combination effects of residential growth from Kings Lynn and West Norfolk BC and NNDC on the north Norfolk coast and other sensitive sites are considerable. As part of the emerging Local Plan the combined authorities across Norfolk are currently reviewing the scope to enhance existing GI and/or create a significant Country Park which could serve both areas to reduce the pressure on designated European sites as one potential solution. The likelihood is that land (most likely farmland) will need to be acquired/gifted to secure this provision, or there is the potential to work with local farmers to achieve this vision.
- Holt Country Park works well and could be a model to implement in other parts of the District.
- Another significant growth area for the District is to the south-west and west of North Walsham. Although North Walsham benefits from having Bacton Woods and Pigneys Wood to the north and north-west of the town there are no easy links to these areas for residents from the south and west of the town. Further details of opportunities to improve connectivity are again found in background paper no 5.
- There is a sensitive SSSI (Bryants Heath) to the west of North Walsham which could be adversely impacted by the residential growth proposed by NNDC on the edge of North Walsham. There is scope on the western side of the town to create a multi-purpose park that could incorporate new facilities for the football club (which is due to be moved to allow for residential) and green space/park area

for the new residential growth planned (i.e. dog walking and natural green space as well as more formal park/play provision). This would help alleviate the pressures on the nearby SSSI. However this too may need to be provided for on greenfield land i.e. farmland.

4.4.2 Town and Parish Councils

The town and parish councils are key providers of Parks and Recreation Grounds, Village Greens etc. in North Norfolk. Comments from the local councils survey specifically noted for this typology are provided in the table below:

Town/Parish	Comments
Catfield	About to do a survey to see what else we could put at recreation ground. Not in village centre, between Catfield and Ludham.
Colby	Develop facilities on the village green.
Cromer	Investment in planting would be beneficial following previous cuts to this budget. Improvement of signage on bins to encourage depositing of dog mess in all litter bins.
Fakenham	Millennium Park; improve parking, provide distance markers, improve disabled access and security. Aldiss; improve parking.
Hempton	Ongoing maintenance & improvement of village greens is required.
Holt	Not enough facilities for the whole of Holt i.e south of bypass
Ingworth	Small playing field only
Stalham	Access to rec ground is down an unadopted road with limited parking.
Sutton	Need more.
Swanton Abbot	The village plan identified a need for a village green.

4.4.3 Strategic Organisations

Natural England

The Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) guidance is aimed at parks and greenspace practitioners and their partners, particularly decision makers, planners and managers of green space. It describes the amount, quality and visitor services of accessible natural green spaces that we believe everyone is entitled to, and provides advice on how they can be delivered.

Norfolk Wildlife Trust

No local knowledge of quantity but in our view, parks and recreation grounds should provide for biodiversity as well as more formal recreation. For instance, grassland that is not part of sports pitches can be managed as wildflower meadow.

Woodland Trust

We would like to see trees and small areas of woodland which are found in parks or in recreation ground protected and well managed. We would also like to see opportunities actively sought to plant more trees and small copses or areas of woodland in parks where appropriate. We have a report called Trees or Turf that provides evidence that conversion of short mown grass to woodland in urban open space can provide a range of benefits for people and wildlife and significantly reduce ongoing management costs. <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/publications/search/?Query=trees+or+turf&sortby=date&count=12>

Trees outside woods are extremely important. We would wish to see tree cover increased overall as this will

help to address the threat of tree disease. Planting a range of suitable native trees will help to make our tree stock more resilient.

Old individual trees are an important part of our cultural and landscape heritage: ancient, veteran and notable trees resonate with the history of the landscape and form markers in the lives of individual people and communities. Ancient trees also have a special conservation value, supporting many species of epiphytes, invertebrates and fungi, whilst also providing a habitat for other animals including owls, woodpeckers, other hole nesting birds and bats. In addition, trees make a significant contribution to the urban environment both in visual terms and in helping to abate air pollution and create oxygen.

It is important that there is no further avoidable loss of ancient trees through development pressure, mismanagement or poor practice. The Ancient Tree Forum (ATF) and the Woodland Trust would like to see all such trees recognised as historical, cultural and wildlife monuments scheduled under TPOs and highlighted in plans so they are properly valued in planning decision-making. There is also a need for policies ensuring good management of ancient trees, the development of a succession of future ancient trees through new street tree planting and new wood.

4.5 Allotment Provision

In North Norfolk the primary providers and managers of allotment sites are the town and parish councils.

4.5.1 NNDC Countryside Team

Some allotment plots/sites across the District are in poor condition and not well maintained. Such areas could be cleared and promoted to the local community for more beneficial use e.g. reallocated to residents who really need/want them. Rules, regulations and guidance for allotment use could be reviewed and it should be clear what is regarded as good practice as regards management/maintenance of plots and what activities are/are not permitted as regards their use by plot holders.

4.5.2 Town and Parish Councils

The town and parish councils are key providers of Allotments etc. in North Norfolk. Comments from the local councils survey specifically noted are provided in the table below:

Town/Parish	Comments
Blakeney	Perhaps need for these. Residents use neighbouring village allotments.
Briston	Needs maintenance especially vacant ones. PC rectifying this.
Cley	Cley PC are struggling to be able to afford the continued and ongoing maintenance of the allotments. The allotments desperately need some investment, with much needed hedge cutting and removal of disused sheds & greenhouse in the first instance. Furthermore, we would like to be able to install another water supply and carry out some surface improvements to the footpath running through the site to allow occasional vehicle access for allotment holders.
Cromer	Need to improve formal gardens such as North Lodge Park. A wish has been expressed for a community orchard previously. Existing community gardens at Cemetery/ Crematorium will need eventual replacement with additional space.
Fakenham	St Peters Garden - improve gravelled disabled access to seating areas.
Hempton	Ongoing maintenance required.
Hoveton	Would like them but no funding.
Mundesley	Not enough, large waiting list.
Sheringham Upper	A few private allotments in the village, we understand these may not continue when a plot becomes vacant so need for an allotment site would exist
Stalham	One Town Council allotment, and no community garden.
Stiffkey	Permanent plots and community gardens are a priority. Huge demand is currently not met.

4.6 Natural green space, wildlife areas and woodlands

4.6.1 North Norfolk District Council

Countryside Team

Overall there is a good quantity of provision across the District but there is a need for more support/finance to manage and maintain them to a good standard. NNDC manage 14 woodland/countryside sites as noted below:

- Holt Country Park
- Pretty Corner Woods, Sheringham
- Sadlers Wood, North Walsham
- Beeston Bump, Beeston Regis
- Spa Common, North Walsham
- Franklin Hill Sheringham
- Warren/Links Wood, Cromer
- Station Woods, Cromer
- Howards Hill, Cromer
- Browns Hill, Cromer
- Burnt Hill, Cromer
- Bacton Woods, North Walsham (Owned by Forestry Commission)
- Dick and Buck Burrows, Cromer (Owned by Woodland Trust)
- Old wood, Sheringham (Owned by Woodland Trust)

North Norfolk has a good selection of good quality woodlands. The three rangers manage the sites and grounds maintenance is provided by Environmental Services in line with an agreed contract. All of the sites have a site-specific management plan. The District Council manages two sites in partnership with the Woodland Trust - Dick and Buck Burrows and Old Wood, Sheringham. Bacton Woods, North Walsham, is owned by the Forestry Commission but managed locally by the District Council.

As regards public outdoor recreation on more environmentally sensitive sites the most “at risk” areas can sometimes be screened with natural barriers or trees of different heights and densities.

NNDC is currently working with the Woodland Trust to make improvements to Pretty Corner Woods/Old Wood, Sheringham. The Council, in partnership with the Woodland Trust have recently secured over £20k of funding through the government’s Pocket Parks programme (for enhancements at Sadlers Woods).

Sustainability – with reduced budgets it is essential that any new developments secure funds for ongoing maintenance and/or are able to generate income to cover costs.

Planning – Landscape officer

Overview

The District is lucky to have a variety of locally, nationally and internationally protected nature conservation sites within the area, however not all of these sites are managed properly and some are adversely affected by visitor pressure. More needs to be done to work with owners of these sites to improve access to sites that are the least sensitive to visitors (or have the facilities to manage visitors), encourage access away from

more sensitive sites, and/or provide alternative facilities to encourage more damaging activities away from sensitive areas.

Biodiversity and multi-use of open spaces for recreation

For planning applications and development, the GI provision is often divided into play areas and sports pitches and natural greenspace. The natural greenspace is often the tiny strip of land at the edges of development that is there for screening (or “landscaping”) purposes and may not function as a valuable habitat. True Sustainable Drainage Systems SUDS features (ones that incorporate biodiversity and amenity) are virtually non-existent in developments or poorly maintained so don’t function as intended. The emerging Local Plan is promoting more multi-functional use of land in this respect. GI and open space provision (incorporating biodiversity enhancements) are often the last consideration in the planning of a site and only implemented reluctantly to meet the requirements of the open space standards or meet with the HRA requirements. Open space/GI is planned around housing rather than being integral to the design process.

Outdoor recreation in environmentally sensitive areas

There are numerous activities that can have adverse impacts on sensitive nature conservation interests and which do not necessarily have to be noisy activities. Simply walking through a site can result in trampling of habitats or disturbance of species. Nationally and internationally designated sites have a fair amount of protection from damaging activities (or ones that require planning permission), however locally important sites (such as County Wildlife Sites) receive little statutory protection. There is an ever-increasing amount of tourist type facilities, attractions and infrastructure requirement being proposed in what could be considered inappropriate locations in relation to biodiversity aims, for example: tree top/adventure type play areas in sensitive woodlands or open sites, visitor centres (which attract more visitors), car parks (visual amenity issues), glamping and theme park rides. All of these types of attraction require environmental screening in one form or another. There is often a conflict / disparity between protecting the AONB and the economic aims of encouraging more tourists and tourist infrastructure. There is a need to balance competing demands and locate more damaging activities outside of the AONB and countryside, perhaps in disused industrial areas or brownfield sites that are not sensitive to additional disturbance.

Much of the countryside is given over to farmland and has very little public access (even through PRoW) therefore public access is often concentrated in sites designated for nature conservation, open access land and common land, beaches, woodland (managed by the Forestry Commission, Woodland Trust or NNDC). All of these sites have biodiversity value and must be protected from adverse impacts. If farmers and landowners could be persuaded to open up more of their land (which is less sensitive) then the impacts on the more sensitive sites would be diluted.

4.6.2 Town and Parish Councils

A number of the local councils manage areas of natural and semi-natural green spaces and/or have an interest in such. Specific comments are noted below:

Town/Parish	Comments
Colby	Long term aspiration to develop wildlife area on playing field in conjunction with local wildlife group - Wild About Colby.
Cromer	Roadside nature reserves are potential being explored.
Holt	Important to keep the common land areas well maintained and used.
Northrepps	Need for better public access to nature/wildlife areas.
Stalham	The only area in parish is not open to the public.
Swanton Abbot	There are privately owned areas which would be used to encourage wildlife.

4.6.3 Strategic Organisations

Natural England

Priority Habitats and Species

Priority habitats and species are those listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act, 2006 and UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UK BAP). Larger areas of priority habitat will usually be mapped either as Sites of Special Scientific Interest on the Magic website or as Local Wildlife Sites or Local Geological Sites. Local Environmental Record Centres and local wildlife and geoconservation groups are also a source of information on Local Sites.

The Woodland Trust

We wish to highlight the huge multifunctional value of woodlands.

Woods provide a range of social, economic and environmental benefits and woodland has been shown to contribute to 10 of the 20 quality of life indicators for the UK.

Public health is one of the biggest challenges facing modern society. Easily accessible woods close to residential areas provide measurable benefits: they encourage people to exercise; help reduce the mental stresses of modern society; improve air quality and reduce respiratory diseases. At present 85% of the population do not have a wood within easy walking distance. We need to remedy this and bring the quality of life benefits trees and woods can offer to our communities.

Woods make particularly outstanding greenspaces for public access because of the experience of nature they provide, their visual prominence alongside buildings which offers balance between the built and natural worlds, their low maintenance costs and their ability to accommodate large numbers of visitors.

We would like to see sensitive restoration of Planted Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

Although often damaged, these PAWS sites still retain Ancient Semi-natural woodland features that existed before conversion, and these can be managed to help restore this valuable habitat. This is the only way of increasing the area of ancient woodland with semi natural characteristics.

The key findings of research carried out by the Oxford Forest Institute into PAWS and their restoration were that most sites retain elements of their previous semi-natural ancient woodland ecosystem. The best way to make the most of these remnants is to change the woodland canopy structure gradually, rather than removing non-native tree species in one go, which has been the most common approach in the past. We have combined this research with our own experience to produce a short guide for woodland owners and managers entitled *The Conservation and Restoration of Plantations on ancient woodland sites* - available on the Trust's website - <http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/en/about-us/publications/Pages/ours.aspx>.

Norfolk Wildlife Trust

Coastal areas and heathlands, along with the woodlands of Cromer ridge and environs provide important areas for wildlife and public amenity. These areas are owned by a number of bodies, including National Trust and NNDC. Management should seek to address both of these aspects.

The Forestry Commission

The Forestry Commission completed a “Forest Plan” for North Norfolk (2018-2028). The North Norfolk area extends beyond the District boundary, covering 1,249 hectare of Forestry Commission land. The Plan aims to fulfil a number of objectives:

- To provide descriptions of the woodlands we manage.
- To explain the process we go through in deciding what is best for the woodlands’ long term future.
- To show what we intend the woodlands to look like in the future.
- To outline our management proposals, in detail, for the first ten years so we can seek approval from the statutory regulators.

The Forest Plan contains three main themes one of which is “People”. This includes the following main aims:

- Create a pleasant natural environment for the public to enjoy outdoor recreation in a rural woodland setting.
- Promote public use of open access land by enabling provision of recreational facilities through partnership working.
- Increase area managed through continuous cover to protect and enhance the internal and external landscape, in keeping with the local landscape character.

The plan notes that “Bacton wood is the main recreation woodland within the plan area with a surfaced car park, 3 waymarked trails and an orienteering course. Forest operations are managed by the Forestry Commission, whilst the recreation facilities provided are managed by North Norfolk District Council. Due to the limited availability of open access woodland in the area Bacton is heavily used and a highly important asset to the local community”.

The Plan has a District Strategic Objective to “expand opportunities for communities to become involved with the Estate and take part in activities that improve quality of life, health and learning”. In this respect the Commission is keen to maintain and develop the partnership with the District Council to help fulfil this objective. It adds that “records of permissions granted for recreation events will also measure progress in this area”.

British Horse Society (County Access and Bridleways Officer)

Many wildlife areas, nature reserves and woodlands are restricted and do not allow access for horse riders, yet other users groups are allowed access. There seems to be a disregard for the needs of horse owners when granting access, specifically to woodlands. This could be significantly improved and there are many examples across the UK where horses have access to this type of area and there are positive benefits and a happy co-existence between user groups

4.7 Beaches and Water Recreation

4.7.1 North Norfolk District Council

Planning – Landscape Officer

The District has a number of Blue Flag beaches which attract a huge number of visitors to the District. However, these blue flag beaches restrict access to dogs during the busy summer tourist season, this has the effect of displacing dog walkers and visitors with dogs to other beach areas, which may have sensitive nature conservation features e.g. beach nesting birds. There needs to be more consideration across the Council and its partner organisations on how it can promote less [nature] sensitive beaches to visitors with dogs, not just restricting dogs from certain beaches.

All too often there appears to be an economic focus and a general lack of regard to the nature conservation and landscape scenic value of the coast. Priorities tend to focus on the tourist value of the beaches or from a coastal protection view. Improvements could be made for securing biodiversity value to beaches, for example the little tern breeding colonies at Eccles or the seals at Horsey.

Coastal Management – Coastal Engineer

The District Council manages the coastal strip/beaches from Weybourne through to Cart Gap. This includes managing all aspect of coast protection/erosion work and coastal foreshore works. With a full coastline to the whole of north Norfolk it begs the question of whether we should be doing more to enable reasonable public access to our beautiful beaches.

The Council has great difficulty managing some water sports particularly jet skiing and 'Jet Skiers'. It is a complicated issue and has many interlinking facets.

North Norfolk is primarily a cliffed frontage which means ramped accesses down the cliffs are very restricted. Where they exist, they are for the most part in rural areas and management of these can be quite challenging. The major coastal towns all have ramped access to the sea/beach but these are mostly used by traditional fishermen who have historic rights of access and are not suitable for use by a 4x4 towing a trailer and a jet ski as parking becomes a major issue. In essence traditional seaside holidaymakers do not mix well with the jet ski fraternity, and they are not well accepted.

The sport itself is energetic and can be very physical and clearly access to a beach is critical. Jet skis are quite expensive but also need to be towed usually by a 4x4 vehicle. These need to be parked somewhere along with the trailer but are usually left on the beach. It is the interface between the users of Jet Skis and the public where the biggest difficulties occur. For the most part those participating are younger males and do not respond well to rules and regulation.

NNDC officers are aware of the problems and in recent years the numbers of incidents have reduced, and there are fewer jet skis being used generally. Officers have encouraged a private initiative at Sea Palling where the jet ski activities are privately managed and this has worked quite well for a number of years but is likely to be closed either this or next year. There is a definite need for a more centrally managed location for all water sports where activities such as these can be managed and encouraged but where there is no conflict with the public.

There is no simple solution and the basic requirements to enable a managed location are quite extensive:

- An area where there is no conflict of interest.
- Active management – (for a fee?)

- Ample parking for vehicle & trailer
- Ensure the participants and machines are fully licenced and insured
- Good safe ramped access to & from beach
- preferably with marked areas restricted for water sports users
- Buoyed or marked areas at sea delineated specifically for water sports
- Ideally a clean water wash-down area
- Toilet and refreshments would be helpful

There is a long history to this problem which at one stage was addressed by an officer/member working party appropriately named the Jet Ski working party. All beach access locations within North Norfolk from Wells to cart Gap were examined using the SWAT analysis technique but after much debate no single solution was finally promoted. Currently there are a number of somewhat out of date by laws which can be used to manage some aspects of this sport but they are less than effective in the vast majority of cases.

4.7.2 Town and Parish Councils

Four of the town and parish councils made comments relating to the beaches or water recreation as noted below:

Town/Parish	Comments
Cley	Cley PC feel a toilet (potentially temporary) should be present at the Beach in Cley during the summer months. The site is managed by Norfolk Wildlife Trust who unfortunately do not support the proposal. The beach is so remote that a toilet is really a necessity in this area.
Cromer	Disabled pedestrian access to West Promenade remains one of the most significant challenges to access.
Ingworth	Limited access to river Bute. Could be improved
Weybourne	The state of the beach is an ongoing concern.

4.7.3 Environment Agency

The EA highlight the recreational aspects of the catchment plans for the Rivers Stiffkey, Glaven, and River Mun developed in partnership with the Norfolk Rivers Trust (see below); and also noted that the Broadland Catchment Partnership Plan is relevant for the Bure, Ant and Broads. Additional points raised are noted below:

- We are working in partnership with the National Trust in the Upper Bure on the Riverlands project: <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/riverlands-how-we-keep-our-rivers-flowing> the project will be launched in the Autumn. We have particular aims around people, 'Our vision is for healthy rivers and catchments, rich in wildlife, enjoyed and cared for by all.'
- We also have a medium-term Plan setting out projects over the next six years, this includes Riverlands but also environmental projects on the River Burn and River Stiffkey, if we could tie in with any NNDC projects to gain those multiple benefits then that would be very beneficial.

See also the general comments from the EA in Section 4.3.2 above.

4.7.4 Norfolk Rivers Trust

In Norfolk, we are incredibly fortunate to be home to many internationally rare chalk-fed rivers; there are just over 220 across the world. These exceptional ecosystems provide a habitat haven for a large variety of fauna and flora to thrive. In the north and north west of Norfolk, the rivers Burn, Glaven, Mun and Stiffkey,

all chalk-fed, flow into the Wash or directly into the North Sea. A well-functioning river system requires good water quality, distinctive physical processes, and a diverse array of fauna and flora. These three factors interact, and are vital for wildlife, people and the local economy.

Recreation and community access and projects are noted in various of the River Catchment Plans relevant to North Norfolk, for example:

- The River Glaven Plan notes the importance of cultural factors including recreation and aesthetic experiences and that “over the last few years, more and more people have realised the importance of the natural world to health and wellbeing.
- A number of walking guides have been produced promoting public access to rivers for the River Glaven.
- The Stiffkey Catchment Plan highlights a lack of access for the community to enjoy the recreation potential of the river areas as being a key issue.
- A variety of conservation, education and community projects have taken place on chalk-fed rivers in Norfolk (including the Mun, Glaven, Stiffkey, Burn,) as part of a £1.3 million partnership between the Norfolk Coast AONB, Norfolk County Council, The Wild Trout Trust and local Environment Agency representatives.
- Norfolk Rivers Trust part-funded a project by the Environment Agency and the River Glaven Angling Association to restore a section of the River Glaven upstream of Wiveton.
- ‘Fishing for Youngsters’ aims to get young people outdoors and in touch with their natural surroundings through fishing.

4.7.5 Norfolk Coast Partnership

The Norfolk Coast Partnership is funded by Defra, Norfolk County Council, North Norfolk District Council, the Borough Council of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk and Great Yarmouth Borough Council. The partnership covers the Norfolk AONB area and shares the same objectives as the AONB.

The 2014-9 Strategy contains a chapter on Access and Recreation which includes within its vision

- Recreation by both visitors and local residents will be managed in a way that provides opportunities for all users to experience and enjoy the special qualities of the area without conflicting with those qualities or with other people’s enjoyment of them.
- Public access routes and areas, both statutory and discretionary, together with non-car forms of transport, will form an integrated network which is widely used by both local residents and visitors.
- Information on these, and on areas suitable for a variety of recreational activities, will be easily and freely available to the public.

Policies of particular relevance include:

- PR3: Investigate and seek to secure funding contributions from new housing development, both within and outside the area, that are likely to provide sources of recreational pressures on Natura 2000 sites, to enable their mitigation.
- PR6 Develop integrated and holistic management of recreation activities along the area’s coast to provide opportunities that do not impact on sensitive sites, especially coastal Natura 2000 sites.

4.8 Rights of Way - Footpaths, Cycling and Bridleways

In relation to the open spaces study it is important to consider the provision of and need for linear recreational open space in the form of rights of way such as footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths. For this reason, footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths are included in the typologies of open space considered.

4.8.1 Strategic Organisations

Norfolk County Council - Legal Orders Team (Rights of Way)

Norfolk County Council is the highway authority for the area and therefore manages and maintains the public rights of way and cycle networks. Within the council the Trails Team also manages long distance trails, some of which are provided on County Council owned land or otherwise utilising permissive access. NCC creates ten-year plans setting out priorities for increasing use and enjoyment of the public rights of way network, the current plan is the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan 2019 to 2029.

Norfolk Access Improvement Plan (AIP) 2019 – 2029

There are 2,400 miles (3,900km) of Public Rights of Way in Norfolk (footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways and byways open to all traffic), as well as cycle tracks, quiet lanes, unclassified county roads and permissive routes, making up a dense network of access routes. Many of these are promoted as long-distance trails and associated circular walks and rides.

The key strategic objectives are to:

- manage the countryside access network so that it is better able to meet the varying demands placed upon it;
- increase public, economic and environmental benefit;
- actively seek the involvement of communities;
- take a collaborative and pragmatic approach to responsibilities and resources; and
- increase investment in the countryside access network

The AIP notes the importance of rights of way for improving health and wellbeing and its proposed priority actions include:

- Design bespoke projects (and identify funding for them) to engage those typically hard-to-reach inactive populations experiencing health issues in outdoor activity on trails and other PRoW.
- Use Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) data to understand where health risks are more prominent, and where PRoW can help;
- Look for opportunities to improve health and wellbeing associated with the access network that work across communities;
- Develop partnerships between the environment, sports and health sectors (such as Active Norfolk) to deliver effective projects that connect people with nature and improve health as a result;

Under Theme 2 of the AIP there is a specific objective “Improve connectivity of the access network through the planning system”. Its associated action points are to:

- Create or improve access through opportunities afforded by the planning system (e.g. plans and strategies such as district green infrastructure plans, neighbourhood plans and local plans) or through planned environmental improvements such as flood bank re-alignment.

- Recommend adoption of the Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principle when creating new access.
- Link routes across local authority boundaries (cross-border).

As regards funding for improved rights of way, the County Council also wish to maximise the benefits achievable through new developments by:

- Giving guidance to Local Planning Authorities on how best to incorporate access provision into their Local Development Documents.
- Giving guidance to Local Planning Authorities on how best to seek planning gain in respect of improved access as apart of new development.

Norfolk Local Access Forum (Chairman)

The Norfolk Local Access Forum (NLAf) is a statutory organisation set up under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 to advice County Councils, and National Parks on all aspects of access to the countryside. Its membership is made up of a cross section of countryside users including land owners.

The NLAf also has Councillor members from the County Council and/or District Councils. The NLAf has just completed its statutory three yearly recruitment drive and its new members will meet for the first time in April 2019.

The NLAf has four sub-groups, covering Public Rights of Way, Permissive Access, and the Norfolk Access Improvement Plan. It is also unique in having a listed charity called Pathfinders.

The NLAf has a wide interest in access across Norfolk. NLAf works closely with the Norfolk Trails team (covering the National Trails which of course includes the sections in North Norfolk) as well as the Highway authority covering the other public rights of way.

4.8.2 Town and Parish Councils

While the County Council has primary responsibility for rights of way, some local councils have a particular interest in such and can be active in helping to maintain local paths, bridleways etc. Specific comments are noted below:

Town/Parish	Comments
Briston	Need maintenance. Already in contact with NNDC and NCC.
Catfield	Some footpaths running through the village and down into Catfield Fen. Latter not suitable for unaccompanied youngsters.
Cley	The Public Rights of Way in the parish are highly valued by residents and visitors. Every year the PC receive complaints regarding overgrown paths, we understand the County Council only have funds for one cut a year. Many people struggle to use these paths when they become overgrown. More cuts are required to enable use all year round.
Cromer	Need to improve surfacing exists on FP 19 between Henry Blogg Road and Norwich Road which has been funded 2019-20. Cliff Lane may also benefit from improvement due to some concerns at Surface suitability. An opportunity exists to make sure of disused rail facilities such as Cromer High Station or the disused Tunnel.
Fakenham	Access to southern end of the Railway cutting.
Holt	Cycle path important to access Holt. Footpath from Holt to coast regions important.
Ingworth	Very limited. Village has no footpaths, lots of speeding vehicles
Sheringham Town	Footpaths should be identified, marked and maintained.
Stiffkey	More help maintaining these would be good.

Swanton Abbot	Footpaths need to be maintained to a higher standard. There are no bridleways in the village.
Thursford	We have a few in our parish. Need for more.
Wells Town	Cycle paths and circular walking routes would be beneficial

4.8.3 Other Organisations

The British Horse Society (BHS) - Local Access and Bridleways Officer

Rights of way in Norfolk are poorly managed. There has been a lack of funding from the County local authority resulting in insufficient staff levels and funding to manage the rights of way network. There are many instances where rights of way have fallen into disrepair and have not been fixed. Feedback has included that as it is not a promoted route it isn't a priority.

Enforcement action is not taken by the local authority. Examples of this include a byway which has been closed by the landowner between Langham and Cockthorpe. The route has trees blocking access and the cross-field section has been ploughed and not reinstated. This has been the case for at least the 6 years we have been reporting it. Routes are not well maintained and are regularly so over/under grown they are inaccessible. In other car surface damage is not reinstated. The most frustrating part of this is that the staff in the rights of way team want to help but do not have the time or capacity to deal with the issues on the network.

The County Council does not meet its statutory duties in rights of way definitive map modification orders, again due to team capacity, and instead of meeting the 12 month deadline can regularly take 18-24 months to reach a decision. This makes it a real challenge to upgrade or add routes to the definitive map and statement.

There is a Norfolk access improvement plan, which was written with the involvement of the local access forum. It is not applied though. For example, the plan states it wishes to increase equestrian access, yet in practice we remain ignored. A recent example of this was in the Norfolk greenways project consultation which totally omitted equestrians from the initial consultation. Whether they will be included following many complaints from horse owners is yet to be seen.

Whilst there are many footpaths in North Norfolk, there are limited bridleways and byways allowing safe access for cyclists and horse riders. Given the high level of tourism in the area, multi-user routes which enable all non-motorised users, including carriage drivers, access to our landscape would be highly beneficial.

Multi-user routes: routes such as the Marriott's way (sadly a permissive route which should be dedicated as a public bridleway) are hugely successful and allow most users access (excuse horse and carriage). This model could be adopted on all Norfolk owned rights of way and across any land owned by North Norfolk District Council.

There is a misconception that multi-user routes (bridleways and byways) need expensive surfacing to make them accessible. There is no law requiring tonnes of hardcore to be put down to create surfaced tracks. This is often used as a barrier to extending access to footpaths for other user groups.

The Ramblers (North Norfolk)

The Sheringham ramblers walk twice a week on footpaths, coastal stretches and common land (including woodlands). They add that “on wet and windy days we build a woodlands section into our walks to give us some shelter!” They also observe that “lots of visiting ramblers join our group on an occasional basis when on holiday because they like to have the chance to walk beaches and coastline They conclude “in summary North Norfolk is an excellent area to walk in and is very popular with visitors – it is for many the main reason why the visit the area - hence the footpaths and rights of way have a clear benefit to tourism and the local economy”.

4.9 Parks, Natural Green Space and Rights of Way: Key Findings

Overview

- One of the District Council's main objectives in the Corporate Plan is Health and Wellbeing and associated actions include working with partners to invest in sport and recreation facilities across the District and promoting health and fitness for all ages, abilities and ambition.
- The District Council manage 14 (varied) woodland/countryside sites and the "flagship" site is Holt Country Park. They also manage the coastal strip/beaches from Weybourne through to Cart Gap; and are responsible for a number of play areas and amenity green spaces across the District.
- The District Council works in partnership with various organisations in relation to the management of recreational open spaces including Natural England, Norfolk Wildlife Trust and the Forestry Commission.
- The Town and Parish Councils are key managers of parks, recreation grounds and various open spaces across the District.
- Natural England suggests that the ANGst standard should be a starting point for developing a standard for natural and semi natural green space. Variations from this standard should be justified.
- The Woodland Trust Woodland Access Standard (WAS - endorsed by Natural England) provides guidance on access to Woodland, which should also be taken into consideration.
- Many stakeholders highlight the importance of biodiversity and having multi-functional open spaces that take biodiversity into account in relation to design and maintenance. A number of stakeholders also note the need to balance access and outdoor recreation with conservation in environmentally sensitive areas.
- The importance of biodiversity, ecological networks and the health and wellbeing benefits associated with access to good quality open space were key issues highlighted throughout the consultation.

Quantity

- The District Council Countryside Team notes that in broad terms across the District the quantity of park and recreation ground provision is quite good,
- The District Council Landscape Officer notes that there is a lack of provision in the west of the District around Fakenham. There is a concern that due to the lack of provision in this area, more people are visiting the coast and the sensitive nature conservation areas to walk their dogs and exercise in general, which in turn is having a negative impact on these sites.
- It was also noted that a significant growth area for the District is to the south-west and west of North Walsham. Although North Walsham benefits from having Bacton Woods and Pigneys Wood to the north and north-west of the town there are no easy links to these areas for residents from the south and west of the town.

Household Survey:

- A large majority of households that thought there are enough local recreation grounds and parks (68%) and children's play areas (60%).
- A small majority of households (51%) noted a need for more publicly accessible woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves.

Quality

- The District Council has secured Green Flag status for Holt Country Park, Pretty Corner Woods and until recently Sadlers Wood (an aspiration of the Countryside Team is to requalify Sadlers Wood for Green Flag). The Team would like to make further improvements to Holt Country Park – in particular to the play area and indoor facilities.
- The Team notes that while in broad terms across the District the quantity of parks and recreation ground provision is quite good, the quality is much more variable and some spaces are run down and in need of improvement.
- The District has a number of Blue Flag beaches which attract a large number of visitors to the District.

Household survey:

For most kinds of outdoor facilities/open spaces a majority of households suggested that they were of adequate or better quality (though the most common rating tended to be only "adequate").

- Local parks and recreation grounds and beaches were most commonly rated as being the highest quality provision. 70% of households rated local recreation grounds and parks as being very good or good; and beaches 66%.
- The lowest rated provision was artificial turf pitches with 40% of household rating them as poor or very poor. The quality of facilities for teenagers was also rated as poor or very poor by 37% of households.

Access

- In general, a majority of household respondents report that they would not normally travel more than 15 minutes to visit the different kinds of open spaces and outdoor facilities. There is considerable variation however between the typologies.
- 65% of households confirmed that they would be prepared to walk/cycle further if the quality of the route was improved. 84% said that if the quality of the route was improved they would make the journey more often.
- The detailed findings relating to acceptable access times to the various typologies will be considered in detail to help determine the access elements of relevant standards for different kinds of open space.

Other points raised

- Some sectors of the community face particular barriers to access such as disabled people; children and young people; households in the more isolated rural areas and those in the more deprived areas of the District.
- The Coastal Engineer highlighted that the Council has difficulty managing some water sports particularly jet skiing and 'Jet Skiers'. He notes that officers have encouraged a private initiative at Sea Palling where the jet ski activities are privately managed but this is likely to be closed soon. There is a definite need for a more centrally managed location for all water sports where activities such as these can be managed and encouraged but where there is no conflict with the wider public.
- The BHS note that whilst there are many footpaths in North Norfolk, there are limited bridleways and byways allowing safe access for cyclists and horse riders. Given the high level of tourism in the area, multi-user routes which enable all non-motorised users, including carriage drivers, access to our landscape would be highly beneficial.

5.0 OUTDOOR PLAY AND YOUTH FACILITIES

This section provides feedback and information relating to outdoor play spaces and youth facilities. It considers information and views provided by various stakeholders, strategic organisations and local groups.

The section is structured into two main parts:

- Review of Policy and Strategy
- Youth and Play – stakeholder feedback

There is a summary of key points and issues at the end of the section.

5.1 Review of Policy and Strategy

5.1.1 North Norfolk Open Space and Recreation Study (2006)

The study highlights that open space provides an important role in serving children’s play needs; and that “the importance of children’s play extends far beyond the activity itself and contributes directly towards child development through developing a wide range of physical, social and emotional skills and abilities”. The study also notes the need to engage children and young people in the identification and design of play opportunities as part of the planning process in order that play environments meet local needs and priorities.

The audits and analysis of play provision was undertaken in line with the National Playing Fields Association (now Fields in Trust - FiT) play typologies LAPs and LEAPs but did not include analysis of the need for NEAPs and outdoor Youth Facilities¹¹.

The broad conclusion was that in terms of quantity “coverage of children’s play facilities within the 7 main settlements is adequate. Resources within these areas should therefore be restricted to repair and improvement”. In contrast the study noted that “there are a number of villages lacking any such facilities - 21 settlements in total” but added that “it is, regrettably, not possible to provide a children’s play area in every settlement”.

In terms of quality the conclusion was that “overall 86% of the children’s play areas in North Norfolk are considered to be in either fair or good condition. The remainder (14%) are considered to be in a ‘poor’ condition. To improve the quality of individual play spaces therefore existing spaces should aim to fulfil the criteria set out by the NPFA to qualify as a LEAP”.

This study and the associated Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) - Guide to Core Strategy - Open Space Standards (2008) set the following local standard for Children’s Play Space comprised of three elements – quantity, quality and accessibility:

¹¹ Please see Section 5.1.3 below – FiT’s guidance on play and youth provision has developed significantly since 2006

Typology	Quantity Standard	Accessibility Standard	Quality Standard
Children's Play	0.8 ha per 1,000 population (including a variety of types)	All residents within the seven main towns and Hoveton should have access to an area of formal and informal play provision for children and teenagers within 400m of home. People living outside the main towns and Hoveton should have access to an area of formal and informal play provision for children and teenagers within 800m of home.	Children's play provision within the District should be of adequate quality and provide the range of facilities associated with the size of the facility. The guidelines set out within the NPFA 6-acre Standard (2001) should be used to assess levels of adequacy in terms of the range and quality of provision.

The current local standards and Open Space Study findings for Play Spaces will be reviewed and new standards proposed in this current study. The new standards will then be applied across the District in the main Open Space, Sport and Recreation report

5.1.2 Norfolk Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership – Children and Young People's Plan 2017-19

Introduction

The Children and Young People's Plan is drawn up by the County Council's Children's Services team on behalf of the Norfolk Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership. It sets out what the partnership aims to achieve together to address the needs of all children and young people, their families and carers. It also aims to "set out the wider context for working in partnership in children's services in Norfolk, the challenges that we face and what priorities we have set to achieve together".

The Plan highlights that "District councils are the local planning authority and may also provide parks, play and leisure facilities; respond to antisocial behaviour and in many cases support the work of communities through community development teams. District council's also play an important leadership role in their localities bringing together partners to focus on local issues and opportunities as they arise".

Plan Priorities - Space to thrive

The Plan sets out five priorities for the trust. Priority three is "Space to thrive".

This section notes that "having outdoor space to thrive, including play areas, outdoor youth facilities or informal open spaces, is an important factor in achieving good outcomes for children and young people and enhancing their life chances. Access to open space and its use for leisure, recreation and sport underpin people's quality of life and well designed and implemented planning policies are fundamental to help deliver spaces that are attractive, clean and safe and which contribute to the quality of life and well-being of people".

The Space to Thrive objectives include:

- Developing safe and positive community places and spaces.
- Making best use of the planning system to provide, design and designate child and young people friendly environments.

The Plan highlights five challenges that need to be tackled as noted below:

- Children and young people are often marginalised to specific spaces or activities – we need to re-think the role that all public space can play in the life chances of children and young people.
- Increasing child obesity with children less active is a major challenge. Provision of open spaces and outdoor facilities that they can access easily can help address this problem.
- Public space is often designed by adults for adults – we need to ensure there is a role for children and young people to design and direct use of spaces.
- Communities do not feel empowered to plan and direct use of community space and buildings to meet the needs of all residents, young and old
- Self-directed active play can be confused with anti-social behaviour – we need to challenge culture and stereotypes.

5.1.3 Fields in Trust (FiT)

In 2015 Fields in Trust produced the report: “Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play - Beyond the Six Acre Standard”. In relation to standards for children’s play space the following summary was produced as a guide for local authorities considering local standards:

Typology	Quantity guideline (hectares per 1,000 population)	Walking guideline (walking distance: metres from dwellings)
Equipped/designated play areas	0.25 See table below for recommended minimum sizes	LAPs – 100m LEAPs – 400m NEAPs – 1,000m
Other outdoor provision (MUGAs and skateboard parks)	0.3	700m

FiT add that “quantity guidelines should not be interpreted as either a maximum or minimum level of provision; rather they are benchmark standards that can be adjusted to take account of local circumstances”.

The minimum sizes FiT recommend for play/youth spaces is noted below:

Play space typology	Minimum size	Minimum dimensions	Buffer zones
LAP	0.01ha	10x10 metres (minimum activity zone of 100sqm)	5m minimum separation between activity zone and the boundary of dwellings
LEAP	0.04ha	20x20 metres (minimum activity zone of 400sqm)	20m minimum separation between activity zone and the habitable room façade of dwellings
NEAP	0.1ha	31.6x31.6 metres (minimum activity zone of 1,000sqm comprising an area for play equipment and structures & a hard surfaced area of at least 465sqm (the minimum needed to play five-a-side football).	30m minimum separation between activity zone and the boundary of dwellings

MUGA & Skateboard Park	0.1ha	40x20 metres	30m minimum separation between activity zone and the boundary of dwellings
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Quality Guidance

FiT also provide general quality guidance for public open spaces.

- Quality appropriate to the intended level of performance, designed to appropriate technical standards.
- Located where they are of most value to the community to be served.
- Sufficiently diverse recreational use for the whole community.
- Appropriately landscaped.
- Maintained safely and to the highest possible condition with available finance.
- Positively managed taking account of the need for repair and replacement over time as necessary.
- Provision of appropriate ancillary facilities and equipment.
- Provision of footpaths.
- Designed so as to be free of the fear of harm or crime.
- Local authorities can set their own quality benchmark standards for play areas using Play England's Quality Assessment Tool.

5.1.4 Play England

Play England also have some broad observations about overall policy direction and advice on local standards as summarised below.

Quantity

Play England recommend provision of a range of play spaces in all urban environments:

- A Doorstep spaces close to home
- B Local play spaces – larger areas within easy walking distance
- C Neighbourhood spaces for play – larger spaces within walking distance
- D Destination/family sites; accessible by bicycle, public transport and with car parking

They emphasise that play spaces do not just mean formal play areas. While these are included play spaces cover all areas of public open spaces that are "playable" e.g. spaces that are accessible, safe, appropriate for play and where play use is welcomed and encouraged.

They also point out the need for standards for smaller settlements and rural areas where the doorstep, local, neighbourhood, and destination hierarchy is unlikely to be appropriate.

Quality

Play England would like the Play England Design Guide *Design for Play* to be referenced and added as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Play England have developed a *Quality Assessment Tool* that can be used to judge the quality of individual play spaces. They recommend that local authorities consider adopting this as a means of assessing the quality of play spaces in the local area.

Access

Access is the key element for Play England as referred to in the Quantity section – a range of doorstep, local, neighbourhood, and destination play spaces with appropriate catchments. Disability access is also an important issue for Play England and they would like local authorities to adopt the KIDS publication *Inclusion by Design* as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Priorities

Play England have a guidance document: *Better Places to Play through Planning*. The publication gives detailed guidance on setting local standards for access, quantity and quality of playable space. It also shows how provision for better play opportunities can be promoted in planning policies and processes; giving detail of how local development frameworks and planning control can be utilised in favour of child-friendly communities. They recommended that local authorities adopt this guidance generally in terms of play and spatial planning.

5.2 Youth and Play facilities – Stakeholders

5.2.1 North Norfolk District Council

The primary providers of outdoor play and youth facilities are the town/parish councils and local recreational trust. However, the District Council is responsible for the management of a number of play areas across the District:

- NNDC Countryside Services manage the play area at Holt Country Park and the many of the woodland and countryside sites provide excellent play opportunities for informal and “natural play”.
- A number of play areas across the District are also managed by NNDC Property Services.
- While the Council does not manage any Skate Parks/Youth facilities it does own some sites managed by others e.g. Sheringham Skate Park – a new facility recently opened.
- In addition, the accessible beaches managed by the Council provide valuable play opportunities for children; and some of the informal/amenity green spaces owned and maintained by the Council (Environmental Services) allow for informal play close to home.
- One key aspiration for the Countryside Team is to improve the play area at Holt Country Park which is no longer fit for purpose. External funding would be needed to enable this project.

5.2.2 Town and Parish Councils

Town and Parish Councils are key owners and managers of local play areas and youth facilities in North Norfolk. Many of them highlight needs for improvements. Specific comments on play and youth facilities from individual parishes are provided in the table below:

Town/Parish Council Comments – Play and Youth Facilities

Town/Parish	Comments
Beeston Regis	There are no play facilities.
Blakeney	Enclosed area for small children separated from older children needed.
Briston	Play equipment needs upgrading/renewed. Facilities for teenagers also needs upgrading.

Catfield	Repairs to slide. Small field area but no ball games allowed outside village hall because of proximity. Could do with more disabled equipment.
Cley	Improved accessible access to the play area would benefit those in pushchairs and wheelchairs
Colby	More equipment in play area. Aspiration for playing field for young people to use.
Cromer	There is a need to improve and replace children's play generally at most existing locations, and the possibility of new play areas exists at areas such as Brownhill, and on green space areas surrounding Victory Housing Trust land. Existing proposals for a play area at the Park View development on Roughton Road have yet to be constructed. Beyond the skate park, there are no facilities aimed at teenagers. This site could benefit from further development for teenagers with increased facilities and park furniture. A disused Bowls Green is regularly used for informal sports and place for socialisation in place of location with this activity in mind.
Edgefield	Additional play area needed. None currently.
Fulmodeston & Barney	More equipment needed and replacement of old equipment.
Helhoughton	New equipment recently installed.
Hempton	Ongoing maintenance, improvement and development of the children's equipment is required. Additional play equipment is required to add to the existing to obtain a fully comprehensive play area for a broad age range of children.
Hindringham	Improved play equipment needed.
Holt	South side of bypass includes equipment for youth/adults.
Hoveton	Current play area closed as it needs repairs, and whole play areas need replacing all together. Youth club requirement - have put request out to start one.
Ingworth	Current area could be improved or expanded
Mundesley	Watson Watt Garden play area needs to be refurbished. Indoor facilities for teenagers needed when weather is bad.
North Walsham	At 2 or 3 parks improvements needed. (North Walsham play working to achieve this). Youth - Park-Core themed plus outside gym. Not include shelters.
Northrepps	Equipment needs replacement in next few years. Early years equipment required. There are no facilities for teenagers
Potter Heigham	Skate park facilities needed.
Raynham	Improvement and additional children's equipment needed.
Sheringham Town	Need for more play areas. Youth - churches play a big part here. Community centre available.
Stalham	No local swimming pool with easy access for young people.
Stiffkey	Not enough facilities for teenagers.
Sutton	Need more play areas.
Swanton Abbot	There is a need for a space suitable for kicking footballs etc. A village green could provide a safe place for older children to meet.
Weybourne	Lack of youth facilities in the village.

5.2.3 Woodland Trust

The Woodland Trust highlight that woods are important spaces for informal play "as highlighted in the Public Health White Paper (Healthy Lives, Healthy People; Nov 2010) there are tremendous opportunities for native woodland to contribute positively towards delivering improved mental and physical health for children and

young people. Research shows that woodland can provide benefits for air quality, urban heat island cooling, physical exercise provision and relief from mental illness".

5.2.4 Voluntary Sector Organisations

North Norfolk Youth Advisory Board (YAB)

The North Norfolk Youth Advisory Board is a body of young people and professionals that meet on a regular basis. The aim of the YAB is to identify issues that impact on young people and to play a strategic role in improving these identified needs. It is supported by Momentum which is a county-wide umbrella organisation for youth groups and other organisations with an interest in children and young people (including North Norfolk District Council). The North Norfolk YAB coordinator noted that:

- The new skatepark at Sheringham is an example of good practice in terms of provision and the involvement of young people in the process.
- Transport is a big issue for young people in North Norfolk as without a car it is difficult to independently access sport, play and leisure opportunities. This affects small towns and villages most as there tends to be little provision for children and young people locally.
- There is a general shortage of outdoor youth facilities and spaces for young people to meet in North Norfolk meaning that young people tend to meet with friends near local shops, village centres, parks, and play areas designed for younger children. This can cause concern and sometimes friction with older people who are not comfortable with groups of young people gathering. In some areas this is exacerbated by small numbers of young people involved with antisocial behaviour who may also be using alcohol and drugs. This can also mean that the majority of young people do not use facilities as much as they might like due to such misuse by a small minority.
- A common comment made by young people is that in many villages/neighbourhoods as there is no public space that is recognisably "theirs" they tend to get moved on from place to place. It was suggested that provision of good quality, well located and safe youth facilities designed with the input of young people would be likely to reduce any conflict with the wider community and it is also thought that well used provision tends to deter the small numbers who misuse facilities and give young people in general a bad reputation.
- When planning for new play areas and youth facilities or refurbishments/improvements to existing sites it is important to engage locally with children and young people.

Following on from the consultation process the North Norfolk YAB coordinator again emphasised the importance of involving local children and young people in the planning of any new play/youth spaces or improvements to existing provision in local communities. She noted that the North Norfolk YAB would be happy to be take such an ongoing role as part of a recognised process.

The North Norfolk YAB coordinator also helped to gather the views of groups of children and young people who they are in contact with across the district and also circulated an online survey to local youth organisations and others with an interest in children and young people (see below).

Young People and Local Youth Groups - YAB

YAB North Norfolk discussed play and outdoor youth provision with groups of young people in Cromer, Sheringham, Fakenham and Hoveton. Some points raised by young people are noted below:

- Most of the children and young people do make use of the local play and youth facilities that are available to them. Many also use local outdoor gyms and the free to use sports/kickabout facilities in parks.

- Overall there are not enough play areas and youth facilities locally though – more needed - especially for teenagers. Young people aren't allowed to use some of the play areas but there's nothing else for them.
- If you don't live in the towns transport is a problem and there's nothing to use locally.
- Provision for younger children is better and more easily accessible than facilities for teenagers. In the towns you can generally walk to a local play area within a reasonable time.
- Quality is variable – examples of good provision included parks with play areas at Happisburgh (by the beach) and Neatishead and the skateparks at Fakenham and Sheringham. "Holt Park is good to visit but the play area isn't very good". Many local play areas are very poor though, with old and outdated equipment that needs replacing.
- Many play areas don't seem to be that well looked after and they suffer from graffiti and vandalism. A small minority of older teenagers cause problems for others. "Maybe CCTV would help or more regular visits by the police? Dogs can be a problem in some parks "they shouldn't be allowed near play areas".
- Not enough equipment in many play spaces that is interesting to older children and teenagers. They would like things like zip wires, monkey bars, bigger and more challenging climbing frames, better roundabouts, see-saws and areas for bikes.
- "We could do with more MUGAs and artificial turf pitches (free to use)".
- Need toilets in all of the bigger parks with play facilities – particularly to help access for disabled children and young people.
- There are a few youth shelters but often they aren't in the right place and so are misused by small numbers of young people who put others off. "They sit on top of the one in Sheringham near Ladybird!" In Bodham there is wooden youth shelter but it's broken down.

Comments from local youth groups included:

- Fakenham Skate Park is good as a venue for outreach work and we use outdoor gyms in promoting healthy free to use opportunities.
- Some of our projects make particular use of natural outdoor spaces like woodlands and countryside sites to demonstrate the association with good mental health and wellbeing.
- Children and young people are growing all the time and need to see their environment reflect that. To limit the number of spaces available limits the opportunity to children and young people to try new things and develop new skills.
- Youth shelters would be better if re-thought; in the past, too many were placed out of the way of the rest of the community and then caused concern because people didn't know what was going on in and around them. Young people should not be marginalised.
- In terms of priorities for the future we need more and better play areas with more challenging equipment for teenagers, outdoor gyms and greater access to wild natural areas (grass, ponds, trees for climbing, sand/mud etc).

Open Youth Trust (North Norfolk)

The Open Youth Trust is a county-wide voluntary sector youth organisation based in Norwich but providing outreach services and youth activities across the county including North Norfolk. The outreach worker for North Norfolk highlighted a number of points:

- Overall, there seem to be enough reasonable quality play areas across the district for younger children but insufficient facilities for teenagers. In particular there are few opportunities for

teenagers to meet with friends, leading to young people hanging around near shops, meeting in parks, and at play areas designed for younger children. A common complaint from teenagers is that they keep getting moved on from place to place as there are no public areas accepted as “theirs”.

- The Skate Park in Sheringham as a good example of the kind of facility that teenagers need both for wheeled sports and as an accepted point for young people to meet with friends.
- The outreach worker also emphasised the importance of involving young people in both the location and design of outdoor youth facilities including youth shelters (of which there are very few in North Norfolk). “Involvement could also include helping to decorate provision through local arts projects”.
- Transport was also a common barrier to young people accessing facilities, meaning some kind of local provision in the towns/villages is needed.

5.3 Play Areas and Youth Facilities - Key Findings

In North Norfolk the District Council is responsible for a number of play areas but it is the Town and Parish Councils that manage the majority of play spaces and outdoor youth facilities.

Quantity

- The voluntary youth organisations working in the District and the young people consulted via the North Norfolk Youth Advisory Board suggest that overall in the main towns there seem to be enough play areas but many smaller villages do not have sufficient provision.
- The youth organisations and young people themselves highlight that overall across the District there are not enough outdoor youth facilities.
- A number of individual town/parish councils note a lack of or under-provision of play spaces in their parish and higher proportion highlight a lack of youth facilities.

Residents survey

- A clear majority of households (60%) say that overall there are enough play areas for younger children.
- In contrast, a clear majority (64%) reported a general need for more facilities for teenagers.

Quality

- The North Norfolk Youth Advisory Board and the young people they consulted noted the wide variability in quality of play areas and youth facilities across the District.
- Young people highlighted examples of good provision including play areas at Happisburgh (by the beach) and Neatishead and the skateparks at Fakenham and Sheringham.
- However, the young people noted that many local play areas are very poor with old and outdated equipment that needs replacing. They would like things like zip wires, monkey bars, bigger and more challenging climbing frames, better roundabouts, see-saws and areas for bikes.
- A significant number of parish councils highlight a need for improvements to local play areas and youth facilities.

Residents survey

- The quality of youth facilities is not rated highly - 76% of respondent households say that they are at best adequate (with 37% of those rating them as poor or very poor).
- In general residents have less concern with the quality of equipped play areas across the District (58% rated them as being good or very good in contrast to 9% rating them as poor or very poor).

Access

- The young people consulted via the YAB noted that provision for younger children is more easily accessible than facilities for teenagers "in the towns you can generally walk to a local play area

within a reasonable time” however “if you don’t live in the towns transport is a problem and in many places there’s nothing to use locally”.

- The lack of transport to access play and youth facilities in the rural areas was also highlighted by the voluntary youth organisations.
- The young people also noted a need for toilets in the bigger parks with play facilities – particularly to help access for disabled children and young people.

Residents survey

- A majority of users (55%) would expect play areas to be within a 10 minute travel time, of which 18% would not wish to travel more than 5 minutes.
- 47% of users would expect youth facilities to be within a 10 minute travel time, of which 14% would not wish to travel more than 5 minutes. However, a small majority (53%) would be prepared to travel 15 minutes (of which 18% would travel longer).
- A clear majority of respondents (63%) would be prepared to travel 15 minutes to make use of Multi-use Games Areas (of which 26% would travel longer).

Priorities for improvement

- Stakeholders indicated that the kinds of facilities that were most frequently rated as being a high priority for improvement were play areas with more challenging equipment for teenagers, skate parks, outdoor gyms and public access to wild natural areas (grass, ponds, trees for climbing, sand/mud etc).
- The need for youth shelters/outdoor meeting places for young people was highlighted by the youth organisations. However, it was also noted that “youth shelters would be better if re-thought; in the past, too many were placed out of the way of the rest of the community and then caused concern because people didn't know what was going on in and around them. Young people should not be marginalised”.

Other Issues / General Observations

- The value of play in relation to improvements to children and young people’s health and wellbeing was highlighted by a number of stakeholders.
- District Council officers and a number of town and parish councils refer to a lack of funding to develop and maintain play and youth facilities to a satisfactory level.
- Stakeholders noted a priority need for consultation with young people and the wider community in the planning, design and location of local play and youth facilities. The North Norfolk YAB confirmed their willingness to be take such an ongoing role as part of a recognised process.
- Play England and FiT provide useful guidance on play and spatial planning; play space design; and managing risk in play. Some of these could be adopted as guidance and Supplementary Planning Documents.

6. Concluding Remarks

The survey work, stakeholder consultation, and desk-based research have highlighted a wide range of issues of value to both the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study and the Playing Pitch Strategy.

Response levels to the residents' survey, town/parish councils' surveys and from other stakeholders have been high. This has ensured that a wide and diverse range of views from local people with an interest in open space, and outdoor sport/recreation facilities have influenced the findings of the study. Most of the main strategic stakeholders have also responded and key issues have been identified to be further considered in the two main reports.

There is a strong degree of consistency across the various sources on key areas of local and strategic need/aspirations, from which we can be confident that the findings are robust and reliable. This provides a strong evidence base to be combined with the detailed facilities audit and analysis. As noted in the introduction there has also been an additional extensive consultation programme specific to the Playing Pitch Study and these findings are provided in the PPS.

The information and findings from the consultation report are further considered and analysed in the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study and PPS reports in relation to the various typologies of open space and outdoor recreation being analysed. In particular the findings provide evidence to support the spatial planning standards recommended for the different categories of open space and outdoor community recreation facilities. All relevant findings will also feed into the main Playing Pitch Strategy report.

Appendix 1 – Demographic Profile of Residents Survey

The residents survey asked a series of questions to determine a demographic profile of the respondents of the survey.

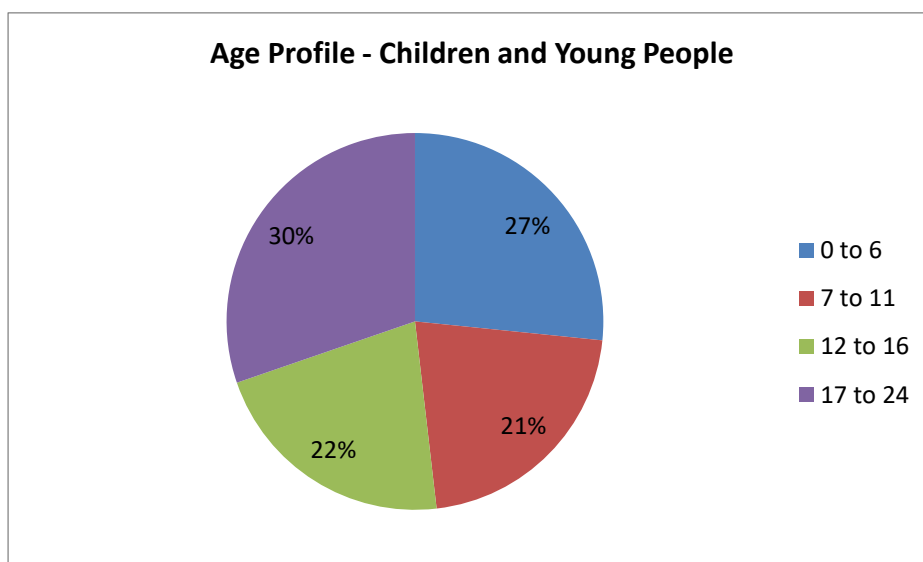
1. Households

Respondents were asked to respond to the survey as a household rather than an individual. In total, 693 surveys were completed with a total of 1403 people represented.

2. Children

Only 18% of households who responded had children/young people within their household. This represented views on behalf of 127 children/young people.

The age profile of these households was split as follows:



3. Disability

19% of respondents considered that a disability limit's their household's activities to some degree.

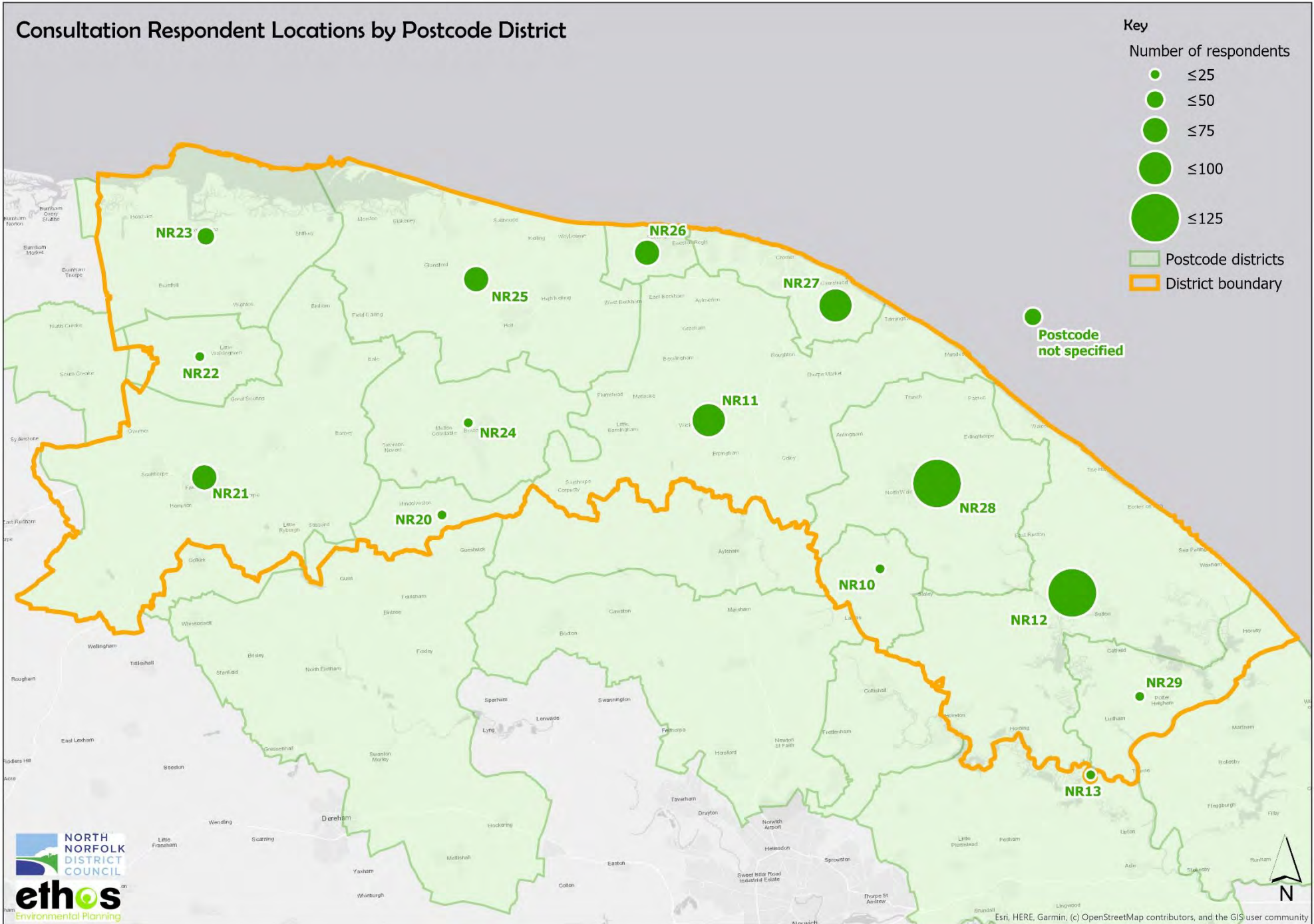
4. Access to a car

Respondents were asked if they have access to a car for transport and of which 91% of respondents said they did.

5. Location of respondents

We were able to determine the geographical distribution of respondents by gathering postcode data. The three areas with the highest number of respondents were; NR12 (106 responses), NR28 (103 responses) and N27 (90 responses). There were 31 respondents who did not specify their postcode.

Consultation Respondent Locations by Postcode District



Appendix 2 – Resident’s Survey

NORTH NORFOLK OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION STUDY SURVEY

This is your chance to help shape the future of Open Space, Play and Outdoor Recreation/Sport Facilities in North Norfolk. Please respond thinking about your household as a whole. The survey should take you about 5-10 minutes to complete.

PART A – TYPES OF OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES THAT YOU AND YOUR HOUSEHOLD VISIT

Q1 Please tick how often members of your household visit or use EACH of the following types of open space, sport and recreation facilities within North Norfolk. (in each row please tick one box only).

Types of open space, sport and recreational facility	Frequency of visit/use				
	Almost every day	At least weekly	At least monthly	Less often	Never
Local recreation grounds and parks					
Children’s play areas					
Facilities for teenagers (e.g. skate parks, shelters)					
Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) – hard surfaced					
Artificial Turf Pitches (e.g. for football and hockey)					
Winter Pitches (e.g. football, rugby)					
Cricket Pitches					
Outdoor Tennis/Netball Courts					
Outdoor Bowling Greens					
Outdoor Athletics Tracks					
Golf					
Footpaths, bridleways, cycle paths, disused railways etc.					
Water recreation facilities (e.g. rivers, lakes, ponds)					
Woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves					
Allotments and Community Gardens					
Informal Open Spaces for ball games, picnics, dog walking etc.					
Beaches					

PART B – ARE THERE ENOUGH FACILITIES?

Q2 Do you think there is a need for more, the same or fewer of the following types of open space, sport and recreation facilities (accessible from where you live)?

Types of open space, sport and recreational facility	Need for more	There are enough	Don't need as many	No opinion
Local recreation grounds and parks				
Children's play areas				
Facilities for teenagers (e.g. skate parks, shelters)				
Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) – hard surfaced				
Artificial Turf Pitches (e.g. for football and hockey)				
Winter Pitches (e.g. football, rugby)				
Cricket Pitches				
Outdoor Tennis/Netball Courts				
Outdoor Bowling Greens				
Outdoor Athletics Tracks				
Golf				
Footpaths, bridleways, cycle paths, disused railways etc.				
Water recreation facilities (e.g. rivers, lakes, ponds)				
Woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves				
Allotments and Community Gardens				
Informal Open Spaces for ball games, picnics, dog walking etc.				
Beaches				

PART C – YOUR OPINIONS OF OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Q3 In general, how does your household rate the quality of the following provisions (accessible from where you live)?

Types of open space, sport and recreational facility	Very Good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor	No opinion
Local recreation grounds and parks						
Children's play areas						
Facilities for teenagers (e.g. skate parks, shelters)						
Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) – hard surfaced						
Artificial Turf Pitches (e.g. for football and hockey)						
Winter Pitches (e.g. football, rugby)						
Cricket Pitches						
Outdoor Tennis/Netball Courts						
Outdoor Bowling Greens						
Outdoor Athletics Tracks						
Golf						
Footpaths, bridleways, cycle paths, disused railways etc						
Water recreation facilities (e.g. rivers, lakes, ponds)						
Woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves						

Allotments and Community Gardens						
Informal Open Spaces						
Beaches						

PART D – TRAVEL TIMES FOR VISITS TO OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES

Q4 How long would members of your household normally be prepared to travel to visit the following types of open space, sport and recreational facilities? Please also tick if you would walk, cycle drive or use other forms of transport.

Types of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities	Time (in minutes) prepared to travel						Preferred method of travel (please tick ONE only)			
	Up to 5 mins	6 to 10 mins	11 to 15 mins	16 to 20 mins	More than 20 mins	Do not wish to visit/use	Walk	Cycle	Drive /Car	Bus/ other
Local recreation grounds and parks										
Children's play areas										
Facilities for teenagers (e.g. skate parks, shelters)										
Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) – hard surfaced										
Artificial Turf Pitches (e.g. for football and hockey)										
Winter Pitches (e.g. football, rugby)										
Cricket Pitches										
Outdoor Tennis/Netball Courts										
Outdoor Bowling Greens										
Outdoor Athletics Tracks										
Golf										
Footpaths, bridleways, cycle paths, disused railways etc.										
Water recreation facilities (e.g. rivers, lakes, ponds)										
Woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves										
Allotments and Community Gardens										
Informal Open Spaces for ball games, picnics, dog walking etc.										
Beaches										

Q5 If the quality of your journey on foot or by bicycle to open space, sport and recreation facilities was improved would household members:

- a) Be prepared to walk/cycle further to reach the facility? Yes No

b) Make the journey more often?

 Yes No**PART E – PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENTS**

Q6 Of the various kinds of open space, sport and recreation facilities what are your household's priorities in terms of potential improvements? For all the kinds of facility in which you have an interest please indicate an order of priority (high, medium, low). Also, please indicate whether the main need for improvement is a) additional facilities – ADD, b) improvements to existing facilities – IMP; or c) better access to facilities – ACC.

Types of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities	Priority			Improvement		
	High	Med	Low	ADD	IMP	ACC
Local recreation grounds and parks						
Children's play areas						
Facilities for teenagers (e.g. skate parks, shelters)						
Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs) – hard surfaced						
Artificial Turf Pitches (e.g. for football and hockey)						
Winter Pitches (e.g. football, rugby)						
Cricket Pitches						
Outdoor Tennis/Netball Courts						
Outdoor Bowling Greens						
Outdoor Athletics Tracks						
Golf						
Footpaths, bridleways, cycle paths, disused railways etc.						
Water recreation facilities (e.g. rivers, lakes, ponds)						
Woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves						
Allotments and Community Gardens						
Informal Open Spaces for ball games, picnics, dog walking etc.						
Beaches						

PART F – OTHER COMMENTS

If you have any other general comments or specific observations about open space, sport and recreational provisions please let us know in the box below:

PART G – ABOUT YOUR HOUSEHOLD

To help us analyse the data from the survey and to make best use of the findings to plan for the future, it would be extremely helpful to know a little about you and your household. This information is strictly confidential and will not be shared with any third party or presented in any way that would identify specific individuals or households.

A How many people are normally resident in your household?

B Are there any children/young people in your household?

Yes

No

If yes, how old are they? Please put the number of children/young people in each age range.

0-6

7-11

12-16

17-24

C Does anyone in your household consider themselves to be disabled?

Yes

No

D Do you have access to a car for transport?

Yes

No

E What is your postcode? (First part only e.g. NR10)

Thank you for completing this survey. Please return the survey in the FREEPOST/Business Reply envelope supplied by the 15th March 2019.