

# Gloucester City Council

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>3<sup>rd</sup> March 2014</b>
	<b>Cabinet</b>		<b>5<sup>th</sup> March 2014</b>
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Open Space Strategy 2014-2019</b>		
<b>Report Of:</b>	<b>Cabinet Member for the Environment</b>		
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		
<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Budget/Policy Framework:</b>	<b>Yes (policy)</b>
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	<b>Kay Lillington, Landscape Architect</b>		
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<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>1. Consultation summary report January 2014</b>		
	<b>2. Open Space Strategy Executive Summary Jan 2014</b>		
	<b>3. Open Space Strategy 2014-2019</b>		
	<b>4. Example of draft Open Space Action Plan</b>		

## 1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present to Cabinet for formal approval a new Open Space Strategy, which sets out a robust, strategic framework for managing open space resources in Gloucester.
- 1.2 To present a consultation summary report detailing the public consultation carried out in May-July 2013.
- 1.3 To seek Cabinet approval to progress the draft Open Space Action Plans (one for each ward) to completion with additional community and member consultation.
- 1.4 To seek Cabinet agreement to use the allocated fees within S.106 funding to procure consultants' input to progress open space capital improvement projects.

## 2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** is asked to consider the information contained in the report and make any recommendations it considers appropriate to Cabinet.
- 2.2 **Cabinet** is asked to **RESOLVE** that
  - (1) The Open Space Strategy for Gloucester 2014-2019 is approved.
  - (2) Officers should progress the completion of Open Space Action Plans for each city ward, in consultation with local residents, ward members and community groups.

- (3) Up to 15% of the available S.106 monies (allocated for fees in the legal agreements) may be used to procure consultants' input for expediting the implementation of S.106 funded open space projects.

### **3.0 Background and Key Issues**

- 3.1 A Public Open Space Strategy for Gloucester was adopted in 2001. The strategy assessed the council's open space portfolio against new government guidance (PPG17), set out a list of recommendations and provided guidance for developers.
- 3.2 The 2001 Strategy and accompanying Supplementary Planning Guidance (New Housing and Open Space, adopted 2001) was a very successful tool for determining levels of open space provision required in new housing developments. To date it has helped the council secure over 40 hectares of new open spaces and over £4million of developer contributions to invest in existing open spaces across the city.
- 3.3 After a decade of successful use, the 2001 document has become outdated. Recent changes in government policy (National Planning Policy Framework replaced PPG17 in 2012) have also required a fresh look at the council's open space framework. A strategy for open spaces is also an important element of the council's overarching Asset Management Strategy.
- 3.4 In developing the strategy, national best practice guidance and exemplar strategies from other authorities have been drawn upon, to help create a strong and effective document.

### **4.0 Alternative Options Considered**

- 4.1 Option to not update the open space strategy would impact on the council's ability to provide an evidence base for the City Plan and future housing development. There would be a lack of focus for open space development and maintenance across the city, no agreed framework for prioritising funding and improvements. With no up to date strategy it would also become increasingly difficult to negotiate new open space provision with developers.

### **5.0 Reasons for Recommendations**

- 5.1 To enable the council to deliver its open space vision of 'a diverse network of quality, sustainable and accessible open spaces to serve the needs and aspirations of the residents of Gloucester'.
- 5.2 To set out a detailed open space evidence base to inform the creation of associated planning policies in the new City Plan.

### **6.0 Future Work and Conclusions**

- 6.1 The Open Space Strategy includes an Open Space Delivery Plan for 2014-2019.
- 6.2 The Delivery Plan identifies a series of main aims and actions that will help the council to deliver its open space vision.

- 6.3 An Open Space Strategy Delivery Group of relevant officers has been formed, meeting quarterly, to work up a detailed timetable for implementation of the actions and regularly review the targets and aims set out in the strategy.
- 6.4 The Group will prepare an annual report for members.
- 6.5 A key part of the delivery of the strategy is to identify the specific needs of local communities across the city, by drawing up Open Space Action Plans for each ward. Further consultation with residents, members and community groups will take place as the Action Plans are developed.
- 6.6 Officers will continue to work closely with the Planning Policy team, to develop robust and appropriate policies to protect both public and private open space across the city in the new City Plan for Gloucester.
- 6.7 Updating and implementing the Open Space Strategy and associated documents will enable the council to set out and achieve its strategic and local open space priorities, make best use of resources and continue to provide clear guidance for developers.

## **7.0 Financial Implications**

- 7.1 Further consultation work will involve officer time and will be funded through existing budgets.
- 7.2 Delivery of the strategy's aims will require capital investment. The extent and timing of delivery will depend on the availability of resources. Existing capital budgets will fund some areas of work, as will Section 106 developer contributions and external funding from grant-giving bodies.
- 7.3 The council currently has £648k of S.106 funding available to spend, specifically on open space, play and sports improvement projects across the city (details as specified within individual S.106 agreements). A further £865k of open space funding has been secured by way of completed S.106 agreements, but is not yet due for payment (triggers for payment are reached as each development progresses).
- 7.4 Each agreement allows for up to 15% of the sums received to be used towards fees for consultation, design and implementation of the projects.
- 7.5 Opportunities for additional external funding may also arise through collaboration with community organisations or Friends groups, who may be able to make funding bids for open space improvements identified in the strategy.
- 7.6 The maintenance costs of any new facilities will be funded through re-allocation of existing schedules in the Grounds Maintenance contract. Commuted sums for maintenance will also be secured from developers on adoption of new open spaces.

(Financial Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report)

## **8.0 Legal Implications**

- 8.1 Disposal of any land designated as public open space will require formal disposal using statutory legal procedures.
- 8.2 Potential impact of any community 'right to buy' or Community Asset Transfer of open spaces or facilities through The Localism Act will need consideration. The council adopted a Community Right to Bid procedure in July 2013, which may apply to open spaces and their associated facilities.
- 8.3 Potential for communities to apply to designate 'Local Green Space' through the National Planning Policy Framework would give such areas formal protection similar to Green Belt land.

(Legal Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report)

## **9.0 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications**

- 9.1 The strategy effectively mitigates the risk of not using open space assets to their full potential and helps ensure value for money.

## **10.0 People Impact Assessment (PIA):**

- 10.1 Active and well used open spaces, with positive involvement of local residents will help build strong communities.
- 10.2 The PIA Screening Stage was completed and did not identify any potential or actual negative impact, therefore a full PIA was not required.

## **11.0 Other Corporate Implications**

### Community Safety

- 11.1 Improved community involvement and better management of open spaces will help to improve community safety.

### Sustainability

- 11.2 Strategy identifies many positive environmental benefits of protecting and enhancing the city's open spaces.

### Staffing & Trade Union

- 11.3 None

**Background Documents:** None

## Open Space Strategy, consultation summary, January 2014

### The consultation events



- **18 events held across all 15 city wards, between May-July 2013, in conjunction with City Plan consultation.**
- **650 attendees to the 18 consultation events.**

- Attendees were invited to contribute their views and ideas by participating in a number of activity stations relating to potential development, open spaces, ward information, meeting places and community action
- A specific open space questionnaire was available for each ward, asking residents for views on parks in their local area.
- The main open space strategy document also available to anyone who wanted further information.
- 124 open space questionnaires were returned, plus several written responses.

### Response summary

**60%**

- **60% of questionnaire respondents said they thought their local parks were 'great' or 'good'.**
- **Gloucester Park & Robinswood Hill are seen as a city-wide resource.**

<i>How do you feel about the parks and open spaces in your ward? (summary for all wards)</i>		
<b>They're great</b>	<b>27%</b>	33 responses
<b>They're good</b>	<b>33%</b>	41
<b>They're ok</b>	<b>26%</b>	32
<b>Not so good</b>	<b>9%</b>	11
<b>Really bad</b>	<b>1%</b>	2
<b>No opinion</b>	<b>4%</b>	5

**"We have some beautiful open spaces and I enjoy the variety of more formal parks to wilder spaces."**

*Resident, Barnwood*

### Key issues



The top five key open space issues and themes identified by residents were (in order of highest number of responses):

- 1. Providing new or improved play spaces.**
- 2. Dealing with dog issues – fouling, dog control, signage and enforcement.**
- 3. Improving cleanliness, maintenance and litter control.**
- 4. Better promotion, marketing, information and awareness of parks for residents.**
- 5. Providing lots of free activities and events in local parks.**

Other issues consistently raised were:

- **More seating & picnic areas wanted in parks**
- **Loss of open space/green areas, concern about over-development**
- **Better grass cutting & vegetation management**
- **Improving community/personal/child safety**
- **Improving sports and fitness facilities, providing supervised sports activities**
- **Increasing patrols/wardens/police/reducing anti-social behaviour**

<b>Age of respondents</b> (summary for all wards)		
<b>Under 18</b>	<b>7%</b>	9 responses
<b>18-64</b>	<b>66%</b>	82
<b>65+</b>	<b>24%</b>	30
<b>Not given</b>	<b>3%</b>	3
<b>98% of respondents live in Gloucester City</b>		

**“I use Armscroft Park regularly. It is a real lifeline.”**

*Resident, Kingsholm & Wotton*

### **Potential future development**



The City Plan consultation events also gave residents the opportunity to respond to future development opportunities across the city, with potential development sites identified. There were some key sites that residents felt would result in loss of existing open space facilities or opportunities, these are:

- **Land at The Wheatridge (county council land, currently used as informal open space)**
- **Land at Hempsted (owned by Lysons Trust charity and currently used as farmland)**
- **Land at Leven Close (county council land, sports ground, currently closed)**
- **Land at Bishops College (county council land, currently closed, but some sports facilities in use and managed by Aspire)**
- **Ex. Civil Service sports ground, Estcourt Road (owned by Redrow Homes, currently closed)**
- **Land at Grange Road (privately owned, currently used as farmland)**
- **Land at Clearwater Drive (county council land, currently used as informal open space)**

### **The next steps**



- **Build on this initial conversation with residents by developing Open Space Action Plans for each ward, with community input, to help identify priority sites and address key issues.**
- **Ensure children and young people are fully involved in the development of the Action Plans.**
- **Work closely with policy planners to ensure that the developing City Plan policies protect or mitigate against the loss of existing private playing fields or other undeveloped land within the city.**

# Gloucester City Open Space Strategy 2014-2019

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

The open space strategy sets out how Gloucester City Council plans to protect, manage and enhance its open spaces over the next five years and beyond.

There have been significant changes since the previous strategy was adopted in 2001. Local authorities have had to re-assess levels of funding for all of their essential services and the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) has set out new requirements for open space provision.

The strategy has been developed with these changes in mind and acknowledges that in many areas the council will increasingly need to work with partners and volunteers to deliver the safe, active and well managed spaces that we aspire to.



### Purpose of the Open Space Strategy

The strategy has a threefold purpose;

- it provides a sound body of evidence for developing robust, sustainable open space policies within the proposed City Plan;
- it provides a series of objectives with a co-ordinated action plan for council officers and partner organisations to work towards and;
- it provides city residents with a clear understanding of the city council's open space aspirations and proposed programme of improvements, including opportunities for getting involved in shaping their local parks.

The strategy is very much a working document and in particular the Open Space Action Plans identifying the green space needs, aspirations and priorities for each city ward will be developed in conjunction with local communities.

**The Open Space Vision:** *'To create and manage a diverse network of good quality, sustainable and accessible open spaces to serve the needs and aspirations of the residents of Gloucester.'*



## The importance of green space

The contribution that good quality, safe and accessible open spaces can make to the overall quality of life within a community is well documented. There are numerous health, social, cultural, environmental and educational benefits.

The city has a wide range of open spaces including natural wildspace, formal sports grounds and play areas. It's important that there is a clear and sustainable plan for looking after all of these spaces, to ensure their long term protection, care and enhancement.

Consultation across Gloucester in 2013 found that 60% of those who responded thought their local parks were either 'Great' or 'Good', but residents also wanted the council to improve on cleanliness, safety, maintenance and dog issues. Providing new or improved play spaces, seating, lots of free activities and better marketing of parks were also most important to residents.



## Key facts about Gloucester's open spaces

- There are over 150 individual areas of public open space in the city covering 300 hectares, together with allotments, cemeteries, Robinswood Hill Country Park (101 hectares) and Alney Island Nature Reserve (90 hectares), a total open space area of 519 hectares.
- There are six designated Local Nature Reserves (LNR) and two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the city.
- Just over 12% of the city's total land area is publicly accessible green space.
- The council has an adopted policy to provide a minimum of 2.8 hectares of open space per 1000 population. City-wide the open space provision is 4.3 hectares per 1000, which exceeds this standard (largely due to the two very large natural open spaces at Robinswood Hill and Alney Island).
- Open space is not equally distributed across the city and in some areas access to good quality, local open spaces is particularly limited.
- There are 45 formal children's play areas in the city. Over £1million was invested in upgrading play areas between 2009-2013.
- There are several sports grounds and facilities that serve the city as a whole, such as the Oxstalls Sports Centre/Plock Court outdoor pitches and Blackbridge Jubilee Athletics track. Access to formal sports and play provision is not equally distributed across the city.
- Between 2001 (when the previous strategy was adopted) and 2013, the council secured 40 hectares of new open space and over £4million worth of investment for improvements to parks and open spaces across the city.



## Key themes of the Open Space Strategy

The document assesses the existing quality and quantity of open space provision within the city. In terms of overall open space provision, it identifies that the distribution of open space across the city is adequate, but uneven.

The strategy identifies and sets a quantity standard for open space provision across the city of 2.8ha per 1000 population. However, because open space is not distributed evenly, there are six city wards where there is a significant shortfall in terms of the adopted standard:

- Barton & Tredworth (0.24ha/1000)
- Moreland (1.04ha/1000)
- Quedgeley Severn Vale (1.08ha/1000)
- Tuffley (1.19ha/1000)
- Hucclecote (1.42ha/1000)
- Kingsholm & Wotton (1.74ha/1000)

Due to the densely built-up nature of these wards, it is unlikely that creating additional new open spaces will be possible. Instead the strategy will seek to improve the quality of facilities in existing parks in these wards, as well as ensuring that residents are made aware of other parks and recreational opportunities in adjacent areas.

Ensuring the city's green spaces are managed and maintained cost effectively and using sustainable practices, is also vital. Involving the community in looking after the open spaces is very important and can help residents develop a sense of ownership and pride in local parks.

Although not directly under the city council's control, protection of private playing fields and sports facilities is also a key priority. Ensuring the council has robust planning policies to protect or mitigate against the loss of private open spaces to potential development sites and ensuring there is sufficient new open space provision falls within the remit of this strategy.

The document also identifies the need to produce supplementary guidance specifically for allotments and outdoor playing pitch provision.



## Objectives of the Open Space Strategy

- To increase user satisfaction in our parks and open spaces over the next 5 years, as measured by an annual residents open space survey.
- To invest at least £200k capital spending per year for 5 years on open spaces, through developer contributions, grants, capital works and disposals.
- To achieve at least 3 Green Flag parks and open spaces in the next 5 years.
- To create or refurbish at least 2 children's play areas per year for the next 5 years.
- To increase the amount of open space under a wildlife management regime by 5 hectares before the end of 2017.
- To review our open space portfolio and identify 10 sites for investment, disposal or alternative uses by the end of 2014.
- To consult with the public, local groups and organisations to develop Open Space Action Plans and priorities for all 15 city wards by the end of 2015.
- To increase community involvement in open space management by providing support to new or existing Friends and community groups.
- To publish a playing pitch strategy and identify a programme of works and priority sites for investment in sports provision by the end of 2014.
- To increase tree cover across the city's open spaces by planting at least 5,000 trees over the next 5 years.
- To ensure policies are put in place in the council's City Plan to protect existing open space and private playing fields and to help negotiate new open space in housing development.



A full copy of the Strategy can be viewed on the council's website at [www.gloucester.gov.uk](http://www.gloucester.gov.uk) or by contacting Environmental Planning, Herbert Warehouse, The Docks, Gloucester, GL1 2EQ, [heretohelp@gloucester.gov.uk](mailto:heretohelp@gloucester.gov.uk) or by telephone 01452 396396.

## **The Delivery Plan and Open Space Action Plans**

The Delivery Plan breaks down the Objectives into specific, more detailed actions, including target dates for completion. Regular monitoring will be carried out to ensure these targets are being met.

Developing **Open Space Actions Plans** for each ward, with further consultation with local communities and members is the next step, to help identify priority sites and address key issues. These Action Plans will be used to help decide which projects should be carried out (or additional funding sought) and in which order.

## **Funding the improvements**

The council does not have unlimited budgets for open space management and improvement. Careful consideration must be given to ensure that any works carried out to open spaces are affordable and sustainable in the long term.

The strategy acknowledges that even though funding is limited, there are still opportunities for the council to work with partners and volunteers to deliver safe, active and well managed spaces. Sources of additional external funding will also be secured where possible.

## **Conclusion**

Gloucester City Council is committed to providing an integrated network of good quality, safe and accessible open spaces with modern and appropriate facilities.

The Open Space Strategy sets out a framework for protecting and enhancing the city's open spaces, planning for future sustainable development and involving the community in managing and shaping our green environment.

# Open Space Strategy

## 2014-2019





# Open Space Strategy for Gloucester 2014-2019

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## Foreword

Gloucester has a wealth of parks, open spaces and natural environment. Our green spaces are popular and well used by residents as well as visitors to the city. The open spaces play an important role in community life. Gloucester is proud to be a green city.

The city council is committed to a programme of investment in our parks, to help create lively spaces and outdoor facilities for everyone to enjoy. We are proud to be a Bee Guardian City, planting flower meadows to provide food for wildlife and we also fly the Green Flag Award for quality in one of our parks. As we face more and more challenges, we need to ensure that the management and maintenance of our parks is efficient and providing good value for money.

However, we don't do this alone. We welcome input and assistance from many partners, groups, residents and volunteers who, like us, are committed to enhancing and protecting our green spaces.

We want our green spaces to continue to provide a positive environment for healthy activities and quiet relaxation. We will seek to ensure that they change and adapt to suit the needs and aspirations of the city of Gloucester and the communities within it.

**Councillor Sajid Patel, Cabinet Member for Environment**





# Executive Summary

## Introduction

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There have been significant changes since the previous strategy was adopted in 2001. Local authorities have had to re-assess levels of funding for all of their essential services and the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) has set out new requirements for open space provision.

The strategy has been developed with these changes in mind and acknowledges that in many areas the council will increasingly need to work with partners and volunteers to deliver the safe, active and well managed spaces that we aspire to.



## Purpose of the Open Space Strategy

The strategy has a threefold purpose;

- it provides a sound body of evidence for developing robust, sustainable open space policies within the proposed City Plan;
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The strategy is very much a working document and in particular the Open Space Action Plans identifying the green space needs, aspirations and priorities for each city ward will be developed in conjunction with local communities.

**The Open Space Vision:** *'To create and manage a diverse network of good quality, sustainable and accessible open spaces to serve the needs and aspirations of the residents of Gloucester.'*

## The importance of green space

The contribution that good quality, safe and accessible open spaces can make to the overall quality of life within a community is well documented. There are numerous health, social, cultural, environmental and educational benefits.

The city has a wide range of open spaces including natural wildspace, formal sports grounds and play areas. It's important that there is a clear and sustainable plan for looking after all of these spaces, to ensure their long term protection, care and enhancement.

Consultation across Gloucester in 2013 found that 60% of those who responded thought their local parks were either 'Great' or 'Good', but residents also wanted the council to improve on cleanliness, safety, maintenance and dog issues. Providing new or improved play spaces, seating, lots of free activities and better marketing of parks were also most important to residents.



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- There are 45 formal children's play areas in the city. Over £1million was invested in upgrading play areas between 2009-2013.
- There are several sports grounds and facilities that serve the city as a whole, such as the Oxstalls Sports Centre/Plock Court outdoor pitches and Blackbridge Jubilee Athletics track. Access to formal sports and play provision is not equally distributed across the city.
- Between 2001 (when the previous strategy was adopted) and 2013, the council secured 40 hectares of new open space and over £4million worth of investment for improvements to parks and open spaces across the city.

## Key themes of the Open Space Strategy

The document assesses the existing quality and quantity of open space provision within the city. In terms of overall open space provision, it identifies that the distribution of open space across the city is adequate, but uneven.

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Ensuring the city's green spaces are managed and maintained cost effectively and using sustainable practices, is also vital. Involving the community in looking after the open spaces is very important and can help residents develop a sense of ownership and pride in local parks.

Although not directly under the city council's control, protection of private playing fields and sports facilities is also a key priority. Ensuring the council has robust planning policies to protect or mitigate against the loss of private open spaces to potential development sites and ensuring there is sufficient new open space provision falls within the remit of this strategy.

The document also identifies the need to produce supplementary guidance specifically for allotments and outdoor playing pitch provision.



## Objectives of the Open Space Strategy

- To increase user satisfaction in our parks and open spaces over the next 5 years, as measured by an annual residents open space survey.
- To invest at least £200k capital spending per year for 5 years on open spaces, through developer contributions, grants, capital works and disposals.
- To achieve at least 3 Green Flag parks and open spaces in the next 5 years.
- To create or refurbish at least 2 children's play areas per year for the next 5 years.
- To increase the amount of open space under a wildlife management regime by 5 hectares by December 2017.
- To review our open space portfolio and identify 10 sites for investment, disposal or alternative uses by December 2014.
- To consult with the public, local groups and organisations to develop Open Space Action Plans and priorities for all 15 city wards by December 2015.
- To increase community involvement in open space management by providing support to new or existing Friends and community groups.
- To publish a playing pitch strategy and identify a programme of works and priority sites for investment in sports provision by December 2014.
- To increase tree cover across the city's open spaces by planting at least 5,000 trees over the next 5 years.
- To ensure policies are put in place in the council's City Plan to protect existing open space and private playing fields and to help negotiate new open space in housing development.



## **The Delivery Plan and Open Space Action Plans**

The Delivery Plan breaks down the Objectives into specific, more detailed actions, including target dates for completion. Regular monitoring will be carried out to ensure these targets are being met.

Developing **Open Space Actions Plans** for each ward, with further consultation with local communities and members is the next step, to help identify priority sites and address key issues. These Action Plans will be used to help decide which projects should be carried out (or additional funding sought) and in which order.

## **Funding the improvements**

The council does not have unlimited budgets for open space management and improvement. Careful consideration must be given to ensure that any works carried out to open spaces are affordable and sustainable in the long term.

The strategy acknowledges that even though funding is limited, there are still opportunities for the council to work with partners and volunteers to deliver safe, active and well managed spaces. Sources of additional external funding will also be secured where possible.

## **Conclusion**

Gloucester City Council is committed to providing an integrated network of good quality, safe and accessible open spaces with modern and appropriate facilities.

The Open Space Strategy sets out a framework for protecting and enhancing the city's open spaces, planning for future sustainable development and involving the community in managing and shaping our green environment.

*Gloucester City Council Open Space Strategy 2014-2019 Executive Summary*





**“We have some beautiful open spaces and I enjoy the variety of more formal parks to wilder spaces.”**

*Resident, Barnwood*



## Section 1: Introduction

Parks and open spaces are increasingly recognised as a vital component of successful towns and cities. Research shows that parks and open spaces are some of the most widely used facilities provided by local authorities.

Urban environments offer a diverse range of open space opportunities. They can help contribute to the health and wellbeing of residents, provide visual and aesthetic quality, opportunities for formal and informal recreation, contact with wild-space, multiple environmental benefits and a safe refuge for wildlife and natural habitats.

Gloucester's parks and open spaces also contribute to our sense of civic pride and provide areas for communities to meet, play and hold a wide range of events.



This strategy sets out how Gloucester City Council plans to protect, manage and enhance its open spaces over the next five years and beyond. It provides a rationale to help secure external funding for the improvement and additional provision of open space and facilities, particularly via developer contributions.

The strategy also sets out the basis for further consultation and collaboration with local residents, community groups and neighbourhood partnerships to help create more detailed open space action plans for each ward in the city.



Gloucester is a predominantly urban area, with a population of 122,000 (2011 census data). The city is tightly contained by the A40 Northern Bypass, the M5 to the east and the River Sever and its floodplain to the west. Although there is access to the wider countryside surrounding the city, within the city boundary only Robinswood Hill Country Park and the Alney Island riverside meadows are freely accessible 'countryside' spaces, available to residents to use for informal recreation.

Residents of Gloucester have access to over 150 individual areas of public open space, covering 300 hectares, together with allotments, cemeteries, Robinswood Hill Country Park (101 hectares) and Alney Island Nature Reserve (90 hectares), a total open space area of 519ha. Residents also have permitted use of a range of privately owned spaces, such as school playing fields and private sports grounds. Open spaces can vary from a doorstep green, to a city park, allotments, nature reserve or large playing field. However, open space provision is not equally distributed across the city and in some areas access to good quality, local open spaces is limited.

The city council's previous Public Open Space Strategy, adopted in 2001, used standards and guidance set out in the national planning document PPG17 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' to quantify the city's open space provision and set minimum standards for new provision and recommendations for improvements to existing spaces. The document and its associated supplementary guidance quantified and analysed the city's existing open space stock successfully contributed to securing over 40 hectares of new open space and over £4 million of investment in parks and open spaces across the city in the decade following its adoption.

## Open Space Challenges

Improving the quality of the open space infrastructure has been, and remains, one of the council's top priorities. However, stretched financial resources have led to increasing pressure to reduce council spending generally and this has brought about a need to re-assess the costs of maintaining these spaces and the way they are managed.

Previous residents' surveys have identified a strong desire for better quality open spaces with a good range of facilities. In order to provide improvements, funding needs to be found and the cost of future maintenance taken into account.



Also, demands on urban land and an on-going need to provide new homes to accommodate an increasing population in Gloucester means that there is added pressure on open space, both public and privately owned, which can often be seen as an easy target for development. The council will ensure that it continues to have robust policies in place to protect the majority of public and private open spaces, such as playing fields. However, it also recognises that in some cases allowing the development of poor quality, inaccessible or marginal open space in return for funds to improve quality and facilities on others may be appropriate. Balanced against this is the need to ensure that future population growth is reflected in the level of open space provision.



There are no easy answers to these challenges, but this strategy sets down solid principles to ensure that the right decisions are made.

Planning for sustainable development is vital and the City Council's Planning Policy team has been working in partnership with Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Borough Councils on a Joint Core Strategy, to help

identify potential sites where new housing allocations and development can be

accommodated in the greater Gloucester area. This will inevitably have an impact on the demand for and distribution of open spaces. Similarly, the City Plan (Local Plan) for Gloucester will identify planning and development issues in local neighbourhoods, including open space.

Due to the complexities and importance of providing sufficient open space and facilities, a strategy is required to set out the rationale for ensuring that the correct quantity of open space is created and secured through the planning process and that existing public and private open spaces are protected from inappropriate development. In conjunction with the wider policy documents, the strategy will ensure that the needs of current and future residents are taken into account, that the quality of the spaces is regularly assessed and improved and that the open spaces are well distributed and accessible to as many people as possible.

This strategy sets out a vision and framework for the city's open spaces. It has also taken into consideration policies, aims and aspirations contained in other council documents and plans, including The Council Plan 2011-2014, Asset Management Strategy 2010-2015, Playing Pitch Strategy 2005 (under review), Green Infrastructure Plan 2013 and City Vision 2012-2022.

## Public involvement

Equally as important as planning and managing our parks is ensuring the involvement of city residents, local groups and organisations in making choices and decisions about the future development and priorities for our open spaces.



We plan to help residents take a detailed look at their existing local open space provision. We will then work with communities to develop Open Space Action Plans for each city ward, identifying the key issues and priorities they would like to address during the life of this strategy. We also want to work with current and new Friends groups to get residents involved with the day to day management of their local spaces.

There may well be some tough decisions to be made in order to achieve the high quality, safe, clean and sustainable open spaces that we aspire to. However, we will ensure that we keep residents fully informed and involved in the process, so that everyone understands the council's intentions and objectives.

## Section 2: Vision and objectives

### City Vision 2012-2022

In 2011 the council held a wide-ranging consultation with residents and partner organisations to help identify the city's future priorities. Supported by previous consultation results and statistical information about the city and its population, the City Vision was created. The Vision identifies key aims of what we want to achieve for the city over the next 10 years, based on these residents' comments.

The two key strands of the Vision are 'Prosperity' and 'Community'. Parks and open spaces featured high in the community priorities, the two key community priorities being:

- **A city where people feel safe and happy in their community**
- **A healthy city with opportunities for all**

The aspirations for local parks and green spaces are further detailed with the key objectives:

- **Encouraging better use of the City's numerous parks and open spaces and work with communities to continuously improve and develop them**
- **Empowering communities to work alongside public bodies and make decisions about their areas for themselves**
- **Working with communities and voluntary and community sector organisations to provide activities for children, young people and vulnerable groups**

### The Council Plan 2011-2014

The Council Plan 2011-2014 further detailed the short term objectives for the city under the headings People, Places, Prosperity.

The Plan includes providing support for communities to help create pride in their city and neighbourhoods, including parks and open spaces, and to offer help and advice to the voluntary and community sector and to forward the aims of the Big Society.

There is a corporate commitment to improve standards of cleanliness, including tackling dog-fouling, a major issue across the city, especially in open spaces.

Open spaces provide wide-ranging community benefits. The council acknowledges this and has shown a commitment to invest in open space facilities, such as the transformation of Gloucester Park, the rolling programme of play area refurbishments, renewing the athletics track at Blackbridge, creating sustainable planting displays and supporting projects to mitigate the effects of climate change.

The council will also seek to promote the city's venues, including parks and open spaces, as locations and facilities for communities to celebrate cultural diversity, including events and festivals.



## Open Space Vision

*To create and manage a diverse network of good quality, sustainable and accessible open spaces to serve the needs and aspirations of the residents of Gloucester.*



## Open Space Objectives 2014-2019

- **To increase user satisfaction in our parks and open spaces over the next 5 years, as measured by an annual residents open space survey.**
- **To invest at least £200k capital spending per year for 5 years on open spaces, through developer contributions, grants, capital works and disposals.**
- **To achieve at least 3 Green Flag parks and open spaces in the next 5 years.**
- **To create or refurbish at least 2 children's play areas per year for the next 5 years.**
- **To increase the amount of open space under a wildlife management regime by 5 hectares by December 2017**
- **To review our open space portfolio and identify 10 sites for investment, disposal or alternative uses by December 2014**
- **To consult with the public, local groups and organisations to develop Open Space Action Plans and priorities for all 15 city wards by December 2015.**
- **To increase community involvement in open space management by providing support to new or existing Friends and community groups.**
- **To publish a playing pitch strategy and identify a programme of works and priority sites for investment in sports provision by December 2014.**
- **To increase tree cover across the city's open spaces by planting at least 5,000 trees over the next 5 years.**
- **To ensure policies are put in place in the council's City Plan to protect existing open space and private playing fields and to help negotiate new open space in housing development.**



## Section 3: Policy background

### National Planning Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in March 2012 and replaces the previous national planning guidance - PPG17 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation'. However, the associated companion guide, 'Addressing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17' is still valid and provides additional guidance to that provided in the NPPF.

Paragraphs 73 and 74 of the NPPF, provided below, set out guidance with regard to open spaces, sport and recreation.

***'Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to health and wellbeing of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required.'***

***Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:***

- ***An assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or***
- ***The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity or quality in a suitable location; or***
- ***The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweighs the loss'***

The NPPF also introduces the concept of 'Local Green Space', whereby local communities, through local and neighbourhood plans, can identify green areas of particular importance to them for special protection (equivalent to Green Belt status). Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed and where it can be demonstrated that the space is related and of particular local significance to the community.

The NPPF stresses the importance of open spaces in terms of providing for biodiversity, promoting healthy lifestyles and in mitigating flood risk and future vulnerability to climate change.

## Local Planning Policy

The council's current adopted standards for open space are detailed in the 2002 Local Plan, which was approved for development control purposes. Chapter 10 of the local plan 'Open Space, Sport and recreation' contains a number of policies specific to the provision and protection of open space and sports pitches, with other chapters detailing policies for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity assets and allotments, promoting community safety and high quality design.

The emerging development plan for Gloucester constitutes the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the Gloucester City Plan (GCP) and will replace the adopted 1983 Gloucester Local Plan and the 2002 Second Stage Deposit Draft Local Plan, which form the existing development policy framework for Gloucester.

The JCS is a partnership between the local authorities of Gloucester City, Cheltenham Borough and Tewkesbury Borough, and will provide the strategic planning framework for the three areas. It will, amongst other things, set housing and employment targets, define broad locations for peripheral development and set strategic development management policies, including landscape protection and green infrastructure. The draft JCS was published in August 2013, consultation was held in Oct/Nov 2013, with a final submission anticipated by the end of 2014. More information on the JCS is available at [www.gct-jcs.org](http://www.gct-jcs.org)

The Gloucester City Plan will sit underneath the JCS and provide more detailed development management policies and smaller scale allocations. The City Plan will include policies for open space, sport and recreation, including a standard for the provision of public open space in new development and policies to protect existing open space from other development pressures. In addition, where new sites come forward, opportunities to maximise delivery and improvements to open space provision will be sought through the development plan process. The City Plan is in the early stages of preparation and will be adopted soon after the JCS. More information on the City Plan is available at [www.gloucester.gov.uk/cityplan](http://www.gloucester.gov.uk/cityplan)

Gloucester's City Vision was adopted in February 2012 and sets out an overarching vision for the city over the next ten years to 2022. One of the key aims identified in the Vision is to ensure Gloucester is a healthy city, with opportunities for all. Open space, sports and recreation form an integral part of achieving this aim. Consequently, one of the priorities set out in the Vision is to encourage better use of the Councils parks and open spaces and to work with communities to continuously improve and develop them.

## Relevant planning documents

- Gloucester City Local Plan 2002  
[www.gloucester.gov.uk/localplan2002](http://www.gloucester.gov.uk/localplan2002)
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), March 2012  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/nppf>

- Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17, September 2001  
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/assessingneeds>
- Draft Joint Core Strategy, August 2013 <http://www.gct-jcs.org>
- Gloucester City Plan consultation documents, May 2013  
<http://www.gloucester.gov.uk/cityplan>
- Interim Climate Change Strategy, 2012

## The Six Acre Standard

In 1925 The National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) made recommendations on planning for and providing outdoor recreational facilities. Since the 1930s these have been known as 'The Six Acre Standard' and they have formed an important part of the planning process contributing to assessments of local provision, the determination of local standards, the adoption of appropriate planning policies and the development of Supplementary Planning Guidance throughout the UK.



The recommendations in the Six Acre Standard were revised in 2001 and again in 2008 when the guidance became known as 'Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play' and the NPFA became Fields in Trust (FiT).



Much has changed in government policy since the FiT guidance was published, however the recent publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) does not conflict with the existing FiT guidance and it is still a valuable tool for local authorities to use to determine the quantity and quality of open space they are providing.

The FiT guidance provides detailed advice to help planners ensure a sufficient level of 'playing space' to enable residents of all ages to participate in sport and games, with an emphasis on access for children to playgrounds and other play space. The guidance has been used as part of this open space strategy, mostly in respect of quantifying and evaluating playing pitch and children's formal play provision.



## Section 4: Open space principles

### Introduction:

Good practice guidance suggests five key attributes of all open space facilities – accessibility, quality, multi-functionality, primary purpose, and quantity.

**Accessibility** – if a space is not accessible, it will not be well used. It is important to make sure spaces are welcoming and accessible to residents. However, quieter spaces can contribute to the visual amenity and biodiversity value of an area.

**Quality** – this depends on two things: the needs and expectations of users (people and wildlife) and good design, management and maintenance – i.e. ‘fitness for purpose’. The ‘purpose’ of a space can be hard to define, as many sites are **multi-functional**. Therefore a ‘**primary purpose**’ is identified in order to help clarify the main functions of the space.

**Quantity** – this is usually measured in terms of the amount of provision. However, for sports pitches this can be over simplistic, because artificial surfaces for example can accommodate many more hours of play (30+ hours per week) than grass pitches (2-3 hours per week). Therefore it is possible to address a deficiency in provision by improving the specification or quality of existing facilities.

Defining open space types and their primary purpose allows local authorities to prepare assessments of needs and audits of existing open space and recreational facilities.

Not all ‘open space’ is green. Areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity” can also be included in the definition of open space, as can civic space, which is often hard paved.

The multi-functionality of open spaces means that they provide many benefits to the urban environment, some examples of which are set out below:

- Strategic functions: defining and separating urban areas, better linking town and country and providing for recreational need over a wide area
- Urban quality – helping to support regeneration and improving quality of life for communities by providing visually attractive green spaces close to where people live
- Promoting health and well-being – providing opportunities for people of all ages for informal recreation, or to walk, cycle or ride within parks and open spaces or along paths, bridleways and canal banks. Allotments may provide physical exercise or other health benefits
- Havens and habitats for flora and fauna – sites may have potential to be corridors or stepping stones from one habitat to another and may contribute towards achieving objectives set out in local biodiversity action plans
- As a community resource – as a place for congregating and for holding community events, religious festivals, fetes and fairs

- As a visual amenity, even without public access, people can enjoy having space near to them to provide an outlook, variety in the urban scene or as a positive element in the landscape

Some open spaces have a special character, habitat or features and are given additional levels of protection through national designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

The open space types for Gloucester are set out below (although many sites are multi-functional.)

### Type A: Parks and Gardens

*Sites formally laid out that have been designed primarily to provide aesthetic enjoyment.*

**Primary purpose:** To offer attractive and well maintained areas that are accessible to all, designed for informal recreational use, tree and planting for environmental benefit and space for community activities and events.



### Type B: Informal green space

*Open spaces with mainly unstructured planting, large grass area, some paths and seating.*

**Primary purpose:** Flexible space for informal play and recreation, space for events and planting for environmental benefit

Can include publicly accessible woodlands, scrub, grassland (commons, meadows) wetlands, open and running water & wasteland.



### Type C: Allotments

*Areas of land for growing fruit, vegetables and other plants, either in individual allotments or as a community activity (not private gardens).*

**Primary purpose:** To provide opportunities for those people who wish to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.



## Type D: Countryside & natural spaces

*Areas of undeveloped or previously developed land with residual natural habitats or which have been planted or colonised by vegetation and wildlife, including woodland and wetland areas.*

**Primary purpose:** Wildlife conservation, biodiversity, environmental education and awareness, informal recreation & enjoyment.



## Type E: Green infrastructure

*A planned network of multifunctional green-spaces and interconnecting links, which is designed, developed and managed to meet the environmental, social and economic needs of the community.*

**Primary purpose:** Main function could be a green river corridor, balancing pond or drainage feature. Many open spaces also have this as a secondary function.



## Type F: Civic Spaces

*Formal spaces including civic and market squares, other hard surfaced community areas designated for pedestrians.*

**Primary purpose:** To provide a setting for civic buildings, opportunities for open air markets, demonstrations and civic events.



## Type G: Cemeteries

*Cemeteries and churchyards including disused churchyards and other burial grounds.*

**Primary purpose:** Burial of the dead, memorial gardens, quiet contemplation





## Type H: Spaces for Children & Young People

*Areas designated primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, usually associated with housing areas.*

**Primary purpose:** To provide exciting and safe areas for children and young people to meet, explore and socialise. Includes equipped play areas, ball courts, outdoor basketball hoop areas, skateboard areas, teenage shelters/hangouts, BMX tracks.



## Type I: Amenity green space

*Most commonly (but not exclusively) in housing areas, includes informal recreation green spaces and village greens.*

**Primary purpose:** Informal activities close to home or work, enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas. May contain easements for underground services.



## Type J: Sports provision

*Natural or artificial surfaces either publicly or privately owned used for sport and recreation includes school playing fields.*

**Primary Purpose:** To enable participation in organised outdoor physical activity



## **Private open spaces**

Private open spaces are identified in the strategy, but the council does not have direct control over these.

However, many provide formal and informal recreational opportunities for residents, or even if they are not directly accessible, they are highly valued for their visual amenity and create a green break in the urban fabric of the city. Current planning policy SR.2 protects (in most cases) against loss of private playing fields and policy SR.5 promotes design for shared (community) use for new sports facilities in schools and colleges.

There are a number of shared use facilities available to residents in local secondary schools across the city. Access to these facilities, particularly sports pitches, is an important part of the city's open space network, and the council will continue to liaise with the schools and education authority to ensure this provision is sustained.

There are also other private playing fields and associated facilities, owned by companies or organisations that share use with the public. Loss of such private playing fields can have a significant impact on residents' options for accessing formal sports facilities. Planning policies are in place to ensure that these spaces are protected from development wherever possible, but should development be given the go ahead, as part of the planning process, the policies enable the council to negotiate with the developer to provide alternative facilities nearby, to replace those being lost.

There are a number of other sites across the city where areas of undeveloped private land are used informally as open space, although there is no legal right of access. Many residents see these undeveloped sites as integral part of the open space network. However, sometimes these sites are proposed for residential or other development. The council will seek to secure formal open space provision within new residential developments on these sites wherever possible.



## Helping the Environment

Many of the city's open spaces perform a more strategic or functional role. There are three major factors that we need to consider when developing or enhancing existing and new open spaces:

### 1. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) are a method of managing surface water in built development to replicate natural drainage. SUDS help to prevent pollution, control flooding, recharge groundwater and enhance the environment.



The main types of SUDS designs are filter strips, swales, filter drains, permeable surfaces, basins and ponds. SUDS are a requirement in all major new developments. Many SUDS features will have a dual function as open space assets managed for public benefit and may be integrated into both new and existing open spaces.

The council published SUDS guidance in July 2013, setting out what is required from developers and what they will be expected to contribute to future maintenance.

### 2. Green Infrastructure (GI)

Green Infrastructure (GI) is a strategically planned network of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. Managed as a multifunctional resource, it is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities. Green Infrastructure can include parks, open spaces, playing fields, woodlands, allotments and private gardens. In Gloucester it is particularly relevant to the routes of watercourses through the city.



A Green Infrastructure (GI) Plan for Gloucester has been developed as part of the Joint Core Strategy. The philosophy behind the strategy is that anyone living or working in the urban areas of Gloucester, Tewkesbury or Cheltenham will within a short walk be able to access a GI space such as a swale, which connects into other areas of open space, creating access to a green network of spaces. These open spaces will in turn be connected by brooks or streams to the strategic GI asset of either the River Severn to the west or the Cotswold AONB in the east.

Developer contributions will be sought to maintain these GI assets and help overcome historical problems such as lack of bridges or access. On the strategic

scale it is hoped that the River Severn and its washlands will be managed in a positive manner as is currently the case with the Cotswold AONB.

### 3. Climate Change

Studies have shown that a significant reduction in the urban heat island effect can be achieved through increased open space provision. This is not only a result of shade from trees but from the evapo-transpiration from areas of grassland.

Climate change means the need for open space has heightened importance as we increasingly have to deal with hotter summer temperatures as green spaces help to cool the city environment.



Open spaces and green infrastructure also have an impact on mitigating against surface and storm water runoff and are a vital component of flood mitigation. The council has an adopted Climate Change Strategy and is committed to working with residents and businesses to help address climate change issues.

### 4. Helping our wildlife

We are increasingly aware of how our actions can impact on the environment around us. The city council acknowledges its responsibility to the native flora and fauna that resides in our parks and open spaces.

We are committed to protecting the natural environment, both in our designated nature reserves and across the city's open space network as a whole. In 2011 the Bee Guardians identified Gloucester as a bee friendly city. Since that time we have developed a palette of bee friendly tree species and pictorial flower meadow mixes, which have been planted right across the city to help increase the feeding opportunities available to endangered bee species. This programme will continue, along with our management and improvement of natural habitat across the city.

We are investing in our natural spaces to benefit wildlife. We have a herd of rare breed Gloucester cattle, which are used to graze our sensitive and protected nature reserves and flood meadows. We have goats grazing the geologically important quarry site at Robinswood Hill. We take hay cuts from our wildflower meadows to enable the rare flowers to set seed.

## Section 5: Setting the Standard

### Current & Future Needs – a city-wide analysis

Gloucester is a growing city; it is also the only part of Gloucestershire with a growing younger population. The population of Gloucester based on 2011 census data is 122,000 and there is a projected population increase in excess of 10,000 in the next 10 years. The council needs to ensure that there is sufficient provision of open space and sports facilities to cater for this increase.

Coupled with indoor sports centre provision, the city houses a number of large outdoor sports facilities that cater for the whole city catchment area (including some settlements just beyond the city boundary). These include Oxstalls tennis centre and synthetic hockey/football pitch, Blackbridge athletics track, several bowling greens plus a number of cricket, rugby and football grounds.



A Playing Pitch Strategy was produced in 2005 and is currently being reviewed alongside this document. An analysis of existing sports clubs (football, cricket, and rugby) and existing pitch provision (quantity and quality) is being undertaken, and the projected increase in population will also be factored in to determine the level of provision required. The playing pitch strategy will set out in detail the council's aims and objectives for pitch provision, development & management over the next 5-10 years.

The council recognises that provision for sport and play is not just about providing large amounts of playing field space, providing high quality facilities is also vital to ensure success. **The playing pitch strategy will therefore consider opportunities to develop sporting 'hubs', providing enhanced provision around existing clusters of pitches and facilities. There is potential for one hub at Plock Court/Oxstalls Sports Park to serve the central and northern part of the city, and at Blackbridge/Winget to serve the southern area.**

The council recognises that provision for sport and play is not just about providing large amounts of playing field space, providing high quality facilities is also vital to ensure success. **The playing pitch strategy will therefore consider opportunities to develop sporting 'hubs', providing enhanced provision around existing clusters of pitches and facilities. There is potential for one hub at Plock Court/Oxstalls Sports Park to serve the central and northern part of the city, and at Blackbridge/Winget to serve the southern area.**

The FiT 'Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play' guidance, which is widely acknowledged as the national benchmark, identifies three main criteria for good sport and play provision - Quantity, Quality and Accessibility. Whilst policy OS.2 (provision of open space at 2.8ha/1000 population) set out in the 2002 Local Plan is still the current formally adopted standard, we have used the FiT standards as guidance to update the council's open space standards (see table below) and in this strategy we have used this proposed standard to quantitatively assess our existing formal sport and play area portfolio (see Section 8 for ward by ward breakdown). This information will in turn feed in to the City Plan process to inform updated open space policies, for adoption in 2014.

As the city grows, the council's planning policies will require new housing developments to provide sufficient new open space for the additional population, or to provide financial contributions to improve the quality of existing open spaces nearby. There will also be a requirement to build more sustainable settlements. Green infrastructure, sustainable urban drainage systems and climate change issues will be fundamental and will have an impact on open spaces in the city.

## Quantity

The NPPF requires local authorities to provide robust, up to date quantitative and qualitative assessments of existing provision, in order to establish the current and future needs for open space, sports and recreational facilities in their area.

The city council has an existing adopted quantity standard (Policy OS.2 – see details in table below) of the provision of open space at 2.8 hectares per 1000 population.



This sets the benchmark specific to Gloucester for overall provision, including formal sport and play areas, as well as informal green space and nature areas.

To ensure that our open spaces are equipped with sufficient facilities to serve the recreational needs of the current and future

population, we have therefore measured open space provision in three main areas; using the council's adopted standard for general open space plus the FiT benchmark standards for playing pitches (outdoor) and designated equipped playing space (which can include play areas, skate parks, BMX tracks, informal ball games areas etc.). These are set out in the table overleaf.



**Open Space Quantity Standard – comparison table**

<b>Type</b>	Council's adopted open space standard (2001)  Hectares/1000 population	FiT (NPFA) benchmark standard for quantity, all outdoor sport (2008)  Hectares/1000 population	<b>Proposed open space standard for Gloucester (2014-2019)</b>  Hectares/1000 population
Formal sport/playing pitches (urban authority)	1.7	1.6	<b>1.6*</b>
Designated equipped playing space (urban authority)	0.7	0.25 (formal/equipped) 0.55 (informal) <hr/> 0.8ha total	<b>0.25# (formal/equipped)</b> <b>0.55 (informal)</b> <hr/> <b>0.8 total</b>
Informal recreation	0.4	n/a	<b>0.4</b>
<b>Overall open space provision</b>	<b>2.8</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>2.8</b>

Notes

\*Calculations for formal sport/playing pitches relate to outdoor sports (football, rugby, cricket, tennis, hockey, bowls, and athletics) and include public and shared use facilities available to the public, through clubs or organised teams.

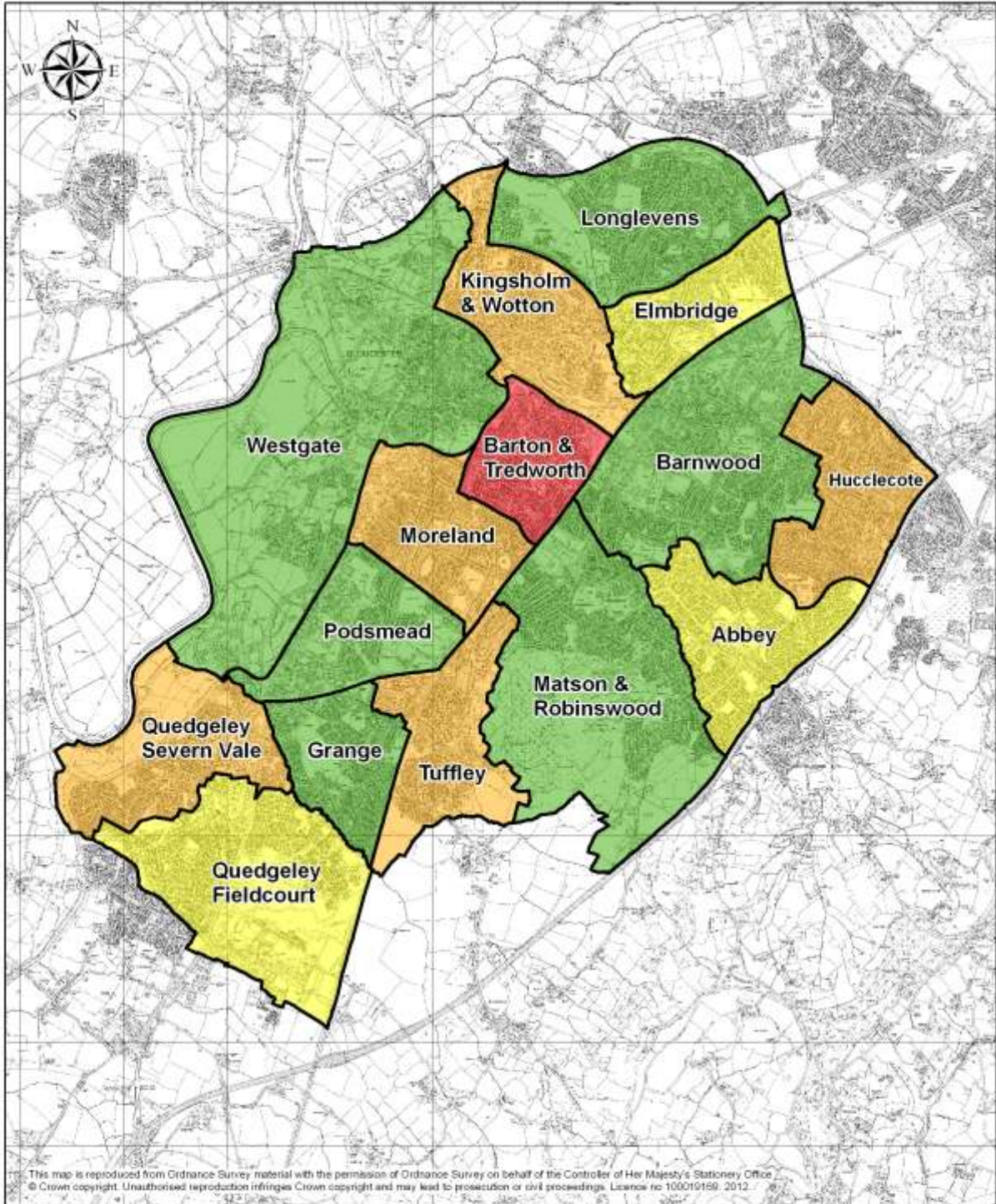
#Calculations in the strategy for playing space relate to formal/equipped space, not informal play space (which could include all other types of open space).

In terms of the overall quantitative open space provision for Gloucester, the above standard is met, largely because of the large areas at Robinswood Hill Country Park and Alney Island Nature Reserve (together totalling 191 hectares). The open spaces, including country parks, allotments and cemeteries total 518.57 hectares, and with a population of 122,000, this provides open space at 4.25 hectares per 1000 population.

However, this does not tell the whole story. Although there is a generous amount of 'natural' green space such as Robinswood Hill and Alney Island, these habitat-rich countryside areas are generally not suitable for many types of formal recreation or sport. Also, open space across the city is not equally distributed, and this means that in some wards there is extremely poor provision and a severe shortage of formal sports and play facilities.

Access to good quality, local open spaces for many residents is limited. The following maps indicate where the deficiencies in provision lie (by ward), for overall provision (map 1) as well as formal sports pitch provision (map 2). It is these issues that this strategy aims to address wherever possible.





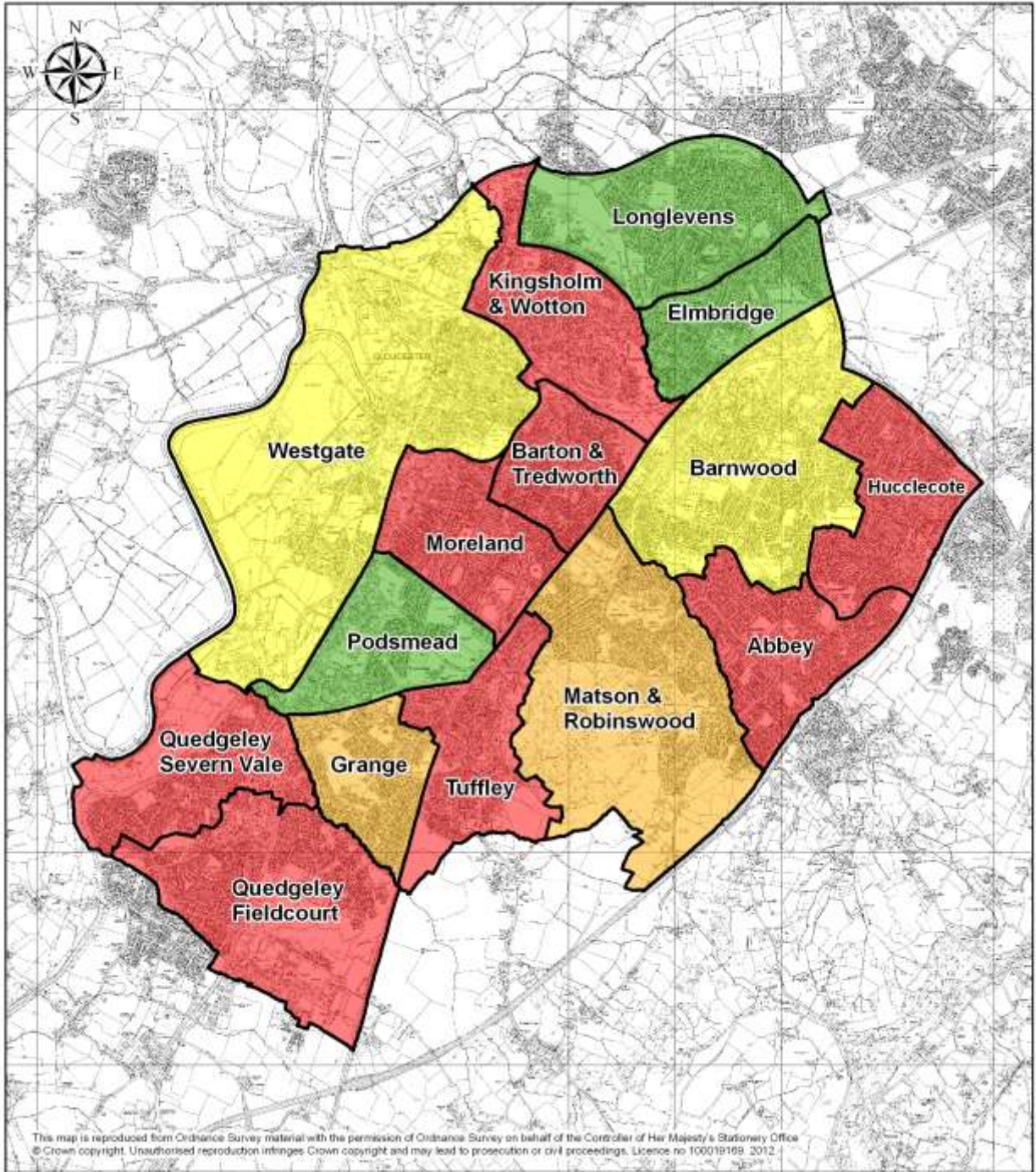
**Wards in Gloucester - Open Space Provision (Quantity)**  
**Proposed Standard: 2.8 hectares per 1000 population**

- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 15px; background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Meets or exceeds proposed standard | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFFF00; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Falls just short of proposed standard (1-29% shortfall) | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFA500; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Falls well short of proposed standard (30-59% shortfall) | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 20px; height: 15px; background-color: #FF0000; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Falls seriously short of proposed standard (60-100% shortfall) |
|---|--|---|---|

Open Space Strategy 2014-2019

**Map 1**





**Wards in Gloucester - Sports Pitch Provision (Quantity)**

**Includes private sportsgrounds and schools with shared use pitches**

**Proposed Standard: 1.6 hectares per 1000 population**



Open Space Strategy 2014-2019

**Map 2**

## Quality

Quality standards are very important, because they set a baseline for the levels of management and maintenance that the public can expect to find when visiting open spaces.



The quality of an open space is often valued by visitors above quantity or accessibility. There is much national good practice guidance available to support this.

The city's open spaces and associated facilities are regularly assessed for quality and safety. Ongoing customer feedback is also taken into account.

Type	Quality standard
All parks and open spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-house site assessments</li> <li>• Green Flag standards</li> </ul>
Equipped play areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City council annual assessment based on FiT Play Value Assessment criteria</li> <li>• Annual RoSPA inspection</li> <li>• Visual/safety inspections every 10 days</li> </ul>
Playing pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-technical visual survey or</li> <li>• Full Technical assessment</li> </ul>

## Green Flag Award

The Green Flag award scheme represents the national standard for quality parks and open spaces.

Green Flag assessment measures sites against best practice principles for open space maintenance, management, sustainability and community involvement.

Sites are selected and submitted by the local authority for independent assessment. Gloucester currently has one Green Flag certified site, at Barnwood Park and Arboretum.



We aim to work towards achieving two additional Green Flag sites during the life of this strategy. Each site will need a detailed management plan to support the Green Flag application.



## Accessibility

The FiT guidance also sets out benchmark standards for accessibility. This is to help ensure that all residents have good access to a range of open space facilities to meet their recreational needs.

Gloucester is a compact and relatively densely populated city, but it also has a generally good spread of open spaces and outdoor facilities. As a general guide, over 90% of residents live within 0.5km of a significant open space, and 100% of households can access an area of open space with 1km of their home.

Despite this seemingly good accessibility, there are some parts of the city which are very poorly served in terms of equipped open space facilities; provision in Gloucester currently does not fully meet the accessibility standards set out in the table below for every part of the city. Fewer than half of households can access a small play area (LEAP) within 400m (5 mins walk), although most households have a large play area (NEAP) within 1km (15 mins walk) and around half have a formal (public) playing pitch within 1.2km.

More specialised sports such as athletics are served by a single city-wide facility – e.g. the Blackbridge athletics track is within 30mins drive of all residents in the city.



Type	Accessibility standard (FiT benchmark)	Current Gloucester provision
LEAP (small play area)	400m walking distance	Does not currently meet this standard
NEAP (large play area)	1km walking distance	Does not currently meet this standard
Playing pitches	Within 1.2km of all dwellings in major residential areas	Does not currently meet this standard
Community tennis courts	Within 20 minutes travel time (walking in urban areas)	Does not currently meet this standard
Athletics track (6 lane) with floodlighting, per 250,000 people	Within 30 minutes drive time	Meets this standard
Bowls	One green within 20 minutes travel time (walking in urban areas)	Does not currently meet this standard

Wherever possible, the council will work towards providing additional facilities in areas that currently do not meet these accessibility standards. However, full compliance with the above standards is unlikely, due to the existing densely built areas of the city. However, many residents are also prepared to travel a little further to access good facilities, so we will ensure that all residents have access to regularly updated information on the council’s website about the location of all open space facilities across the city as a whole.

## Grounds Maintenance

Gloucester's Open spaces are currently maintained by Amey (was Enterprise), the council's grounds maintenance partner, who have a 15 year contract for the city's grounds maintenance, running until February 2022. Maintenance operations are based on an output specification, with regular monitoring of performance.

Some operations are constant throughout the year and others performed on a seasonal or annual basis. Work is generally undertaken in accordance with BS7370: Grounds Maintenance Parts 1-5 1991-1998 and tree work to BS3998 Tree Work Recommendations 2010.

Amey also works closely with the council to develop, update and adapt open spaces and facilities to meet the needs and aspirations of users.

Examples of some of the main open space operations carried out by Amey are:

- Grass cutting and shrub bed maintenance
- Litter picking, emptying litter bins and dog waste bins
- Play area safety inspections and maintenance
- Tree work, including safety inspections
- Sports field preparation and maintenance

The council carries out regular contract monitoring and discussion with Enterprise, to determine best value for money and to implement improved working practices wherever possible.





## Section 6: Working with partners and the community

There are many voluntary, public and private sector partners already involved in looking after the city's open spaces. Some act in an advisory role, others actively manage our spaces, provide key services, perform community liaison or help with funding for specific projects. These partnerships can bring significant benefits. Similarly, integrating open space improvements with wider programmes of neighbourhood working often gives better outcomes. We are committed to further developing a partnership, multi-agency approach to the improvement of our open spaces.

Some examples of our open space partners:

- Amey (grounds maintenance partner)
- Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust
- Gloucester City Homes
- Community Payback (Probation Service)
- The Conservation Volunteers, Gloucester Vale volunteers
- Private landowners/schools
- Quedgeley Parish Council
- Neighbourhood Partnerships
- Friends groups
- Local community groups
- Play Gloucestershire
- Amenity bodies (e.g. Civic Trust)

Across the city there are numerous community groups who are looking after the interests of their local environment. The council acknowledges their input, dedication and local involvement, which helps to improve, enliven and enhance our open spaces.



The council is very fortunate in having dedicated and committed volunteers and Friends groups, who hold regular volunteer work days, where they carry out tasks

such as weeding, scrub clearance, litter picking and planting, to supplement the council's maintenance regime. They also act as our eyes and ears on the ground and report larger maintenance issues to the council.

The council will continue to support and encourage the formation of local Friends Groups and community groups, and welcomes the input of local residents to help in our open space management and maintenance.

## Section 7: Funding

The cost of capital works to improve and develop all of our open spaces and facilities would run into many millions of pounds. There is no single 'pot' of money to pay for open space improvements. However, there are a number of mechanisms by which we can secure capital funding for planned works.



We have already been successful in securing over £4 million of capital since 2001 for open space improvements from a number of sources, such as S.106 funding from housing developments, grants from central government and through the council's own capital works programme.

We have supported a number of community organisations in securing lottery funding to improve their local open spaces. We will continue to advise and assist local groups in making applications for external funding, if they are applying for funds to meet agreed local open space priorities.

We will also develop a framework for identifying and consulting on potential disposals of marginal areas of open space, which could be sold (subject to consultation) in order to invest the capital receipt in the improvement of other local spaces or facilities.

We will need to ensure that any capital works that we undertake are sustainable, giving careful consideration to future maintenance and repair costs.

### Community Asset transfer

Community Asset Transfer (CAT) is a shift in management and/or ownership of land or buildings from public bodies (most commonly local authorities) to communities (community and voluntary sector groups, community enterprises, social enterprises, etc).

The Council recognises the value of enabling local community partners to take more responsibility for local assets, a process which can help to bring in external funding for its sites. With suitable safeguards in place, this can bring real benefits to both residents and the council.

Transfer options can range from freehold, a long lease, a shorter lease or a licence to occupy. However, for most transfers, where grants or loans are sought for capital development, the length of tenure will need to be long enough to secure external investment. Therefore, community asset transfer is usually taken to mean a long lease of at least 25 years or a freehold.

The Localism Act 2011 provides mechanisms for voluntary and community groups, parish councils and local social enterprises to express an interest in taking over the running of a local authority service or facility through community right to bid.

The city council adopted a Community Right to Bid procedure in July 2013, which establishes the formal procedures for identifying and listing assets of community value, which may apply to open spaces and their associated facilities. A Community Asset Register is also being prepared. Further information is available through the council's Asset Management team.

## Section 8: Ward profiles

### Introduction

Although Gloucester is an urban authority, it is generally seen as a green city. However, our open spaces are not evenly distributed. The city area is 4054ha, of which 519 ha is defined as public open space, country park/nature reserve, allotments or cemeteries. This means that just over 12% of the city's land area is publicly accessible green space.

It is anticipated that the city's population will grow from 122,000 (2011 census) to over 135,000 by 2022. Using the councils adopted minimum standard of 2.8ha/1000 residents, 349 hectares of open space is required to serve the city in 2012. Similarly, 378ha would be required by 2022. Therefore, on paper the city meets and exceeds the adopted standard for overall quantity of open space.

However, although it may appear that the city has an excess of open space, it is not just about quantity, the type and distribution of these open spaces is a key factor.

Almost 200ha of the open space land area is located in just two of our green spaces, at Robinswood Hill and Alney Island Nature Reserve and whilst these spaces are freely accessible to the public, their natural habitat precludes uses such as formal sport for example. Similarly, publicly accessible cemeteries (with secondary uses for informal recreation, dog walking etc.) and allotments have very specific open space uses and again, would not accommodate sport or formal play areas.

Main open space type	Area (ha)	Primary uses
Country park/nature reserve/countryside (type D)	199.38	Informal recreation, habitat management
Allotments (type C)	16.93	Food growing
Cemeteries (type G)	27.03	Burials, Informal recreation
Other open space (types A, B, E,F,H,I,J)	275.23	Parks, civic spaces, amenity land etc. Informal recreation Formal and informal sport and play
<b>Total</b>	<b>518.57ha</b>	

Within the remaining open space areas, there are significant deficiencies in the type of spaces and their distribution, most specifically in relation to formal sports and play facilities. It is these locally accessible green spaces and their facilities that are key to ensuring that all residents have sufficient open space options available to them.

Whilst we aspire to provide open spaces within walking distance of every household in Gloucester, in practical terms there simply isn't the land or resources available to create new parks in all areas of deficiency. However, improvements in the quality of facilities provided in the open spaces that serve areas with a shortfall can be achieved, so that more people can benefit from these facilities.

The following pages set out the open space provision for each city ward. Some un-adopted sites still owned by housing developers have been included in the calculations, but only those that are completed and fully open and in public use.

## Abbey ward - open space profile



Abbey ward is a mainly residential ward of late 20<sup>th</sup> century housing estates. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 9,521.

There is a local shopping centre, community centre and primary school in the centre of the ward. The open spaces in the ward were largely created as part of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation, drainage or buffers to the M5 motorway. One exception is Hucclecote Hay Meadows, a remnant of traditional hay meadows with wildflowers, which is a protected Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The ward does adjoin Clock Tower Park in Barnwood ward, so Abbey residents are also able to make use of this large open space and its facilities.



Many of the open spaces in the ward were created as part of the 1980s housing development and were laid out with dense structural tree planting. This vegetation has never been managed, is rapidly maturing and in places is becoming rather overbearing. With the exception of the hay meadows, the ward's open spaces are mainly managed as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows.



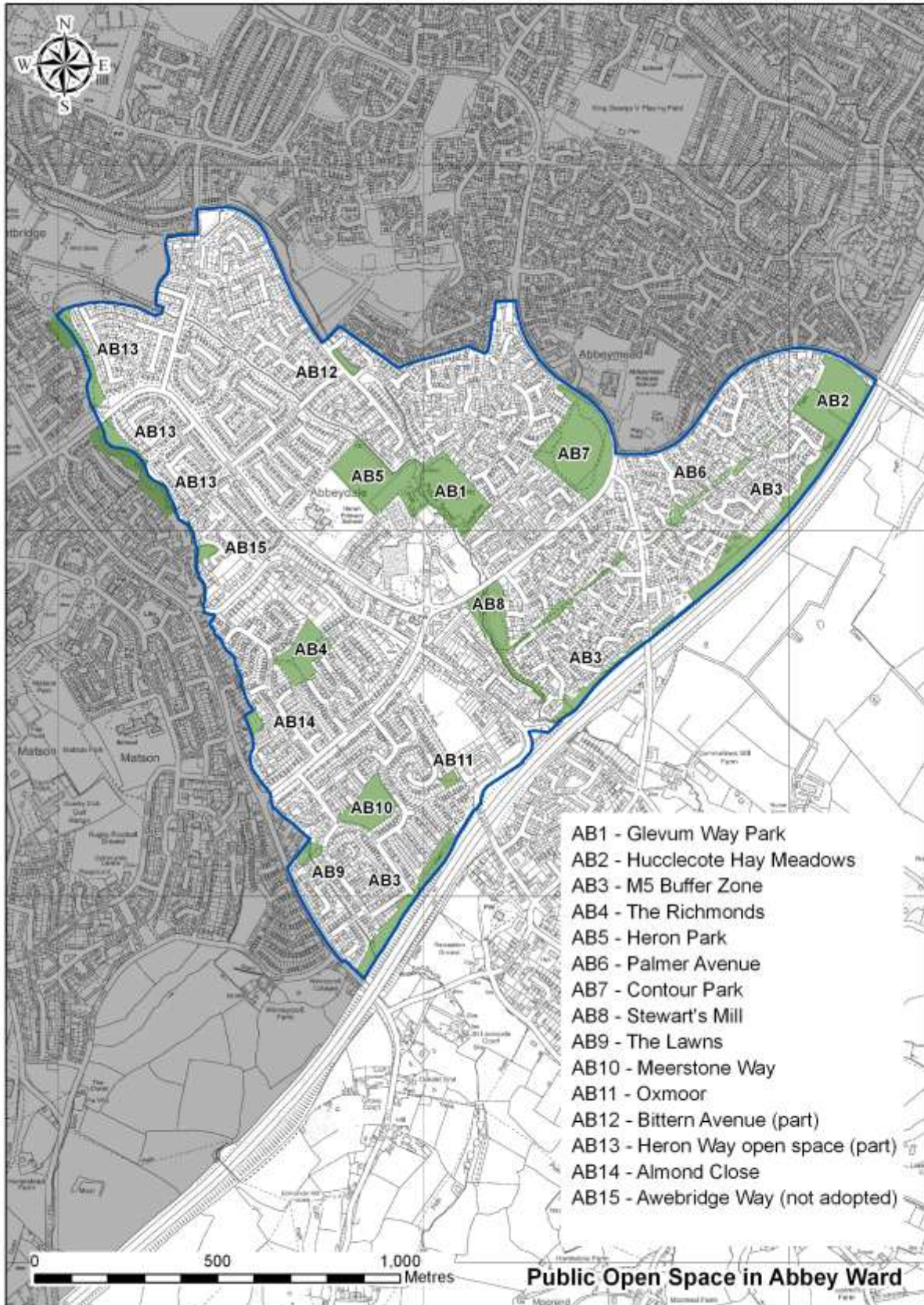
In total the ward has 20.87ha of open space, a provision of 2.2ha per 1000 population, which falls just short of the council's adopted standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There are some formal sports pitches provided in the ward which are generally used by local teams. A bookable synthetic pitch is available at Abbeydale Community Centre and is included in the sports pitch calculation below.

Outdoor sports provision equates 0.21ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There is one play area at Glevum Way which equates to 0.01ha per 1000, which also falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.





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**Public Space**

Ref.	Name	Size (ha)	Description (see list of open space types)
AB1	Glevum Way Park	3.01	J + B + H (0.06ha LEAP) (1 adult, 1 junior football = 1ha)
AB2	Hucclecote Hay Meadows LNR	2.51	D
AB3	M5 Buffer Zone*	3.23	I
AB4	The Richmonds	1.33	B
AB5	Heron Park*	2.35	J (1 adult football = 0.91ha)
AB6	Palmer Ave	0.5	I
AB7	Contour Park	3.67	B
AB8	Stewart's Mill	2.12	E (+ B)
AB9	The Lawns*	0.29	B (+ E)
AB10	Meerstone Way*	1.28	B (+ E)
AB11	Oxmoor*	0.15	B
AB12	Bittern Ave (part)	-	Included in Barnwood Ward calc
AB13	Heron Way open space (part)	-	Included in Matson Ward calc
AB14	Almond Close	0.23	B
AB15	Awebridge Way*	0.2	B
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>20.87ha</b>	

\*note: some open spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

**Allotments**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	none	-	-

**Private/other open space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Heron School	-	No public use
-	Abbeydale community centre	0.17	Public use – bookable synthetic sports pitch

**Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Land off The Wheatridge (not included in open space calculations)	-	County council owned land, reserved for future development, but currently used as informal open space.

## **Opportunities for improved provision**

Abbey ward falls just short of the adopted standard for quantity. The creation of some new open space on the county council owned 'reserved' site at The Wheatridge could be explored, should residential development proposals for the site come forward.

Other improvements in provision should concentrate on providing high quality expanded play and sports facilities, particularly at Glevum Way, and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

The feasibility of creating a site for allotment provision in the ward, by converting an underused part of an existing open space, could be explored.

An area of undeveloped land at The Wheatridge is currently well used by residents for informal recreation. This site is owned by the County Council and was originally reserved for a possible school site. However, there may be future plans to develop the site for housing. Any proposals will need to give consideration to the wildlife using the site and provision of open space may be required as part of the new development.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Abbey Ward Open Space Action Plan.**



## Barnwood ward - open space profile

Barnwood ward is a large ward containing a mix of uses, including residential estates, schools, cemetery and large industrial, retail & commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 10,356.

Some of the open spaces in the ward were created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation. Barnwood Park and Arboretum originally formed the grounds of a large private house and Clock Tower Park was part of the grounds of a hospital. Saintbridge balancing pond, allotments and Coney Hill cemetery all perform very specific functions.



Maintenance of the spaces varies depending on the use ranging from short mown grass to more natural sites managed for wildlife at Barnwood Arboretum and Saintbridge Pond.



In total the ward has 62.06ha of open space, a provision of 5.99 ha per 1000 population, which is well in excess of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There are some formal sports pitches provided in the ward which are used by local and other teams. There are several privately owned sites in the ward with accessible or shared use outdoor facilities

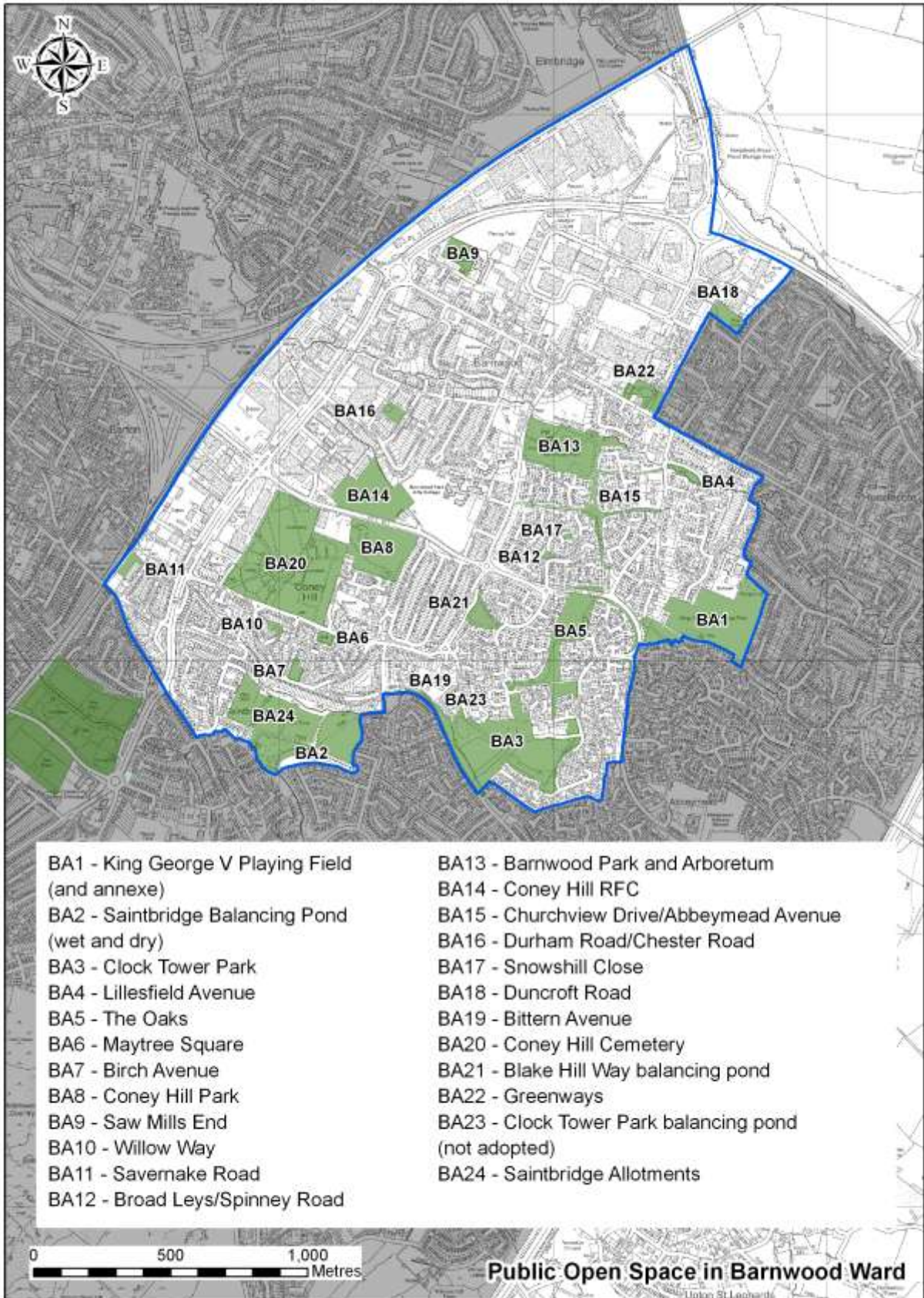
and these are included in the sports pitch calculation below.

Outdoor sports provision is 1.36ha per 1000, which falls just short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.



There are seven play areas in the ward, equating to 0.11ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.





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**Public Space**

<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Size (hectares)</b>	<b>Description (see list of open space types)</b>
BA1	King George V Playing field (and annexe)	6.35+0.93= 7.28	J + H + B 3ha sport 1 rugby, 1 cricket, 2 junior football, LEAP 0.06ha
BA2	Saintbridge balancing pond (wet and dry)	2.39+1.98= 4.37	E + B Wet = 1.98ha, dry = 2.39ha
BA3	Clock Tower Park (excl. Balancing pond?)	7.66	A + H + J 1 adult football, 2 tennis, 1 MUGA, 1 NEAP
BA4	Lilliesfield Avenue	0.35	I
BA5	The Oaks POS	3.94	J+ B + H 1 LEAP, 0.7ha 1 adult football
BA6	Maytree Square	0.26	A
BA7	Birch Avenue	0.32	B + H 0.04ha LEAP
BA8	Coney Hill Park	3.89	J + A + H 068ha LEAP, MUGA, BMX 1 adult football
BA9	Saw Mills End	0.66	J 1 adult football
BA10	Willow Way	0.17	C
BA11	Savernake Road	0.31	B
BA12	Broad Leys/Spinney Road	0.08	I
BA13	Barnwood Park and Arboretum	4.68+1.51= 6.19	A
BA14	Coney Hill RFC	3.73	J + B 2.14ha - 2 rugby pitches
BA15	Churchview Drive/Abbeymead Ave	1.41	I
BA16	Durham Road/Chester Road	0.36	B + H 0.04ha LEAP
BA17	Snowhill Close	0.07	I
BA18	Duncroft Road	0.72	B + H 0.04ha LEAP
BA19	Bittern Ave	1.29	E (includes site AB12 in this calc)
BA20	Coney Hill Cemetery	12.33	G
BA21	Blake Hill Way balancing pond*	0.87	E
BA22	Greenways	0.9	B + H + J LEAP, MUGA, 1 tennis
BA23	Clock Tower Park balancing pond *	-	E (0.74ha)
	<b>Total (inc. allotments as below):</b>	<b>62.06ha</b>	

\*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

**Allotments**

Ref.	Name	Size (ha)	Description
-	Saintbridge allotments	4.9	C, 37 starter plots, 147 full plots, 3 large community plots

**Private/other open space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Chequers Bridge MUGA	0.06	Currently no public access
-	Coney Hill School	-	No public use
-	MEB playing field	3.64	
-	British Energy site	0.31	Sports facilities used by employees – tennis/bowls
-	Clock Tower Park balancing pond	-	Not adopted yet
-	Coney Hill (Echoes?) MUGA	0.1	
-	Barnwood Park Arts College	1.5	Cricket pitch in shared use
-	Dinglewell School	-	No public use
-	Barnwood School	-	No public use

**Opportunities for improved provision**

Barnwood ward meets the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but many sites fall well short of the expected standard in terms of quality of park infrastructure and facilities. Improvements in provision should therefore concentrate on expanded high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Barnwood Ward Open Space Action Plan.**

## Barton and Tredworth ward - open space profile

Barton & Tredworth ward is a compact and densely built-up ward containing mainly residential properties plus schools and some retail & commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 11,000.



There are only four open spaces in the ward (including a new space at Diamond Jubilee Close), which places a lot of pressure on them. However, the ward does adjoin the main Gloucester Park in Westgate ward, so Barton and Tredworth residents are also able to make use of this large open space and its facilities.

St James' City Farm is located in part of St James Park. The land is leased from the council and the farm is run by GymNation, a local charity. As the farm is free to access and is generally open to the public every day, this area has been included in the open space calculation for the ward.

Maintenance of the spaces varies depending on the use ranging from mown grass to the hard-surfaced play area at Napier Street.

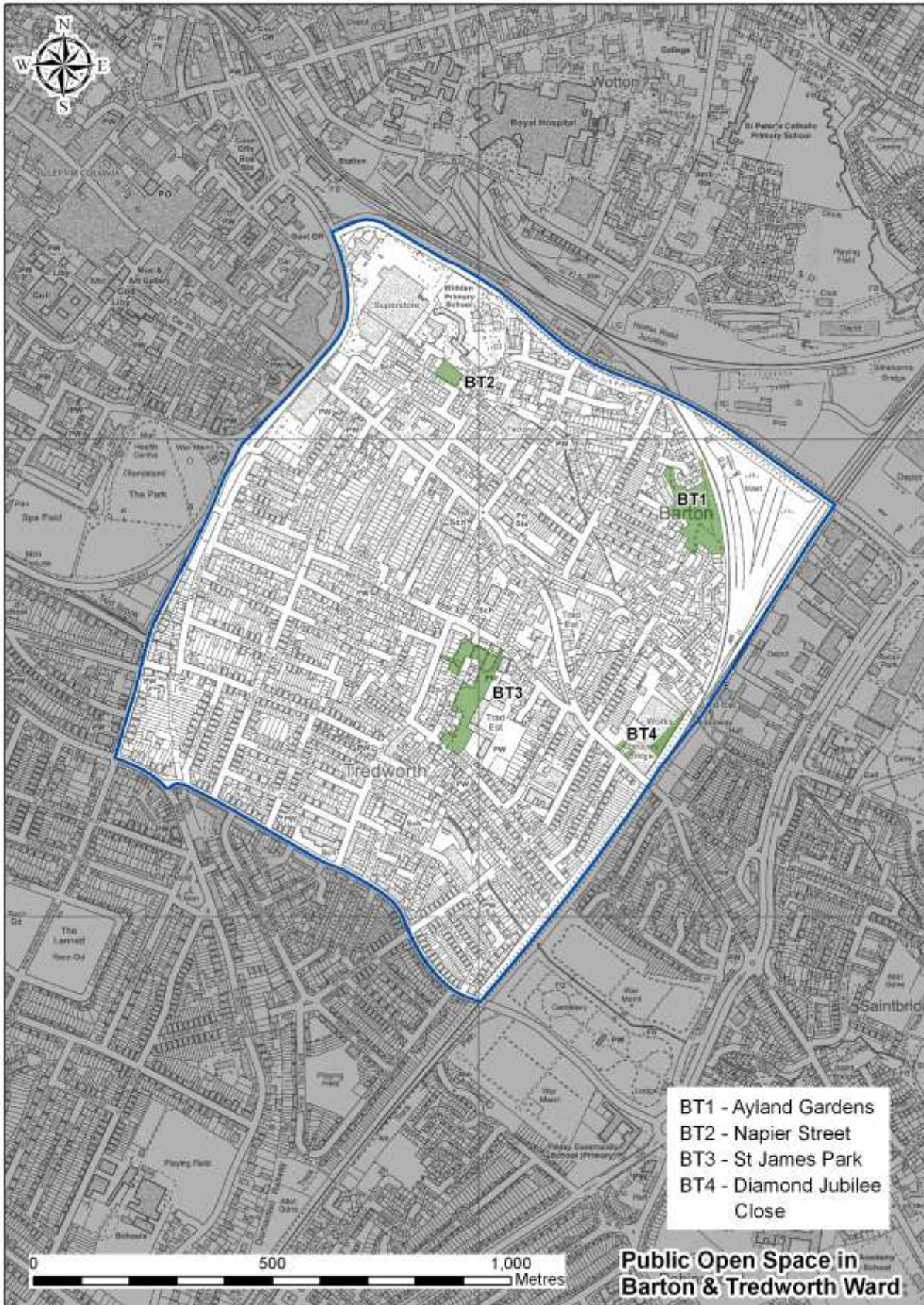
In total the ward has 2.61ha of open space, a provision of 0.24ha per 1000 population, which falls seriously short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There is an accessible, formal MUGA at Widden School with shared use (included in this calculation), but no other formal sports pitches provided in the ward. Outdoor sports provision therefore is 0.01ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.



There are three play areas in the ward, (including a new play area at Diamond Jubilee Close) equating to 0.04ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.





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## Public space

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
BT1	Ayland Gardens	0.97	B
BT2	Napier Street	0.18	H - LEAP, MUGA
BT3	St James Park	1.26	A + H - LEAP, MUGA
BT4	Diamond Jubilee Close	0.2	H + I - LEAP
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>2.61ha</b>	

\*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

## Allotments

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	None	-	

## Private/other open space

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	MUGA Widden School	0.09	Hard surfaced sports court
-	Widden School (grass pitches)	-	No public use
-	Tredworth Infant School	-	No public use
-	Tredworth Junior School	-	No public use
-	St James' School	-	No public use
-	Hatherley Infant School	-	No public use
-	Tredworth Rugby Club (now Kingfisher church), Moor St.	-	Some use by groups - by agreement with owner (county council).
-	Conduit St Community Garden*	0.03	Currently not always open to the public.
-	St James City Farm* (generally accessible to the public during the day. This site has been included in the general open space calculation for St James Park.)	-	Urban farm, open to the public

## **Opportunities for improved provision**

Barton and Tredworth falls seriously short in terms of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity. Therefore opportunities to increase this provision should be sought wherever possible. A new area of open space with small play area has been created as part of the residential redevelopment on the old Gardner Denver factory on Barton Street (Diamond Jubilee Close).

Quality of facilities in the existing open spaces also falls short of expected standards, so improvements should concentrate on improved high quality play facilities at Napier Street and St James Park (potential for full MUGA), plus a potential new play area, MUGA or other sports pitch at Ayland Gardens.

Parks in adjacent wards, such as Gloucester Park and The Lannett also serve the residents of Barton and Tredworth, so ensuring good signage & safe access to these sites is also important.

Ensuring residents are made aware of nearby open space provision in adjacent wards and have well signposted access to sports and play areas is also a priority. Creating a space for allotment provision in the ward would also be desirable.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Barton & Tredworth Ward Open Space Action Plan.**



## Elmbridge ward - open space profile

Elmbridge ward is a mainly residential ward of 20<sup>th</sup> century housing estates plus schools, a community centre, industrial, retail and commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 5,791.



The open spaces in the ward were created as part of the housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation. The ward adjoins Armscroft Park in Kingsholm and Wotton ward, so Elmbridge residents are also able to make use of this large open space and its facilities.

Elmbridge ward's open spaces are mainly managed as short mown grass and pitches with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. The Horsbere Brook and Wotton Brook run

through the two larger spaces at Sandyleaze and Armscroft Park.

In total the ward has 10.86ha of open space, a provision of 1.88ha per 1000 population, which falls just short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

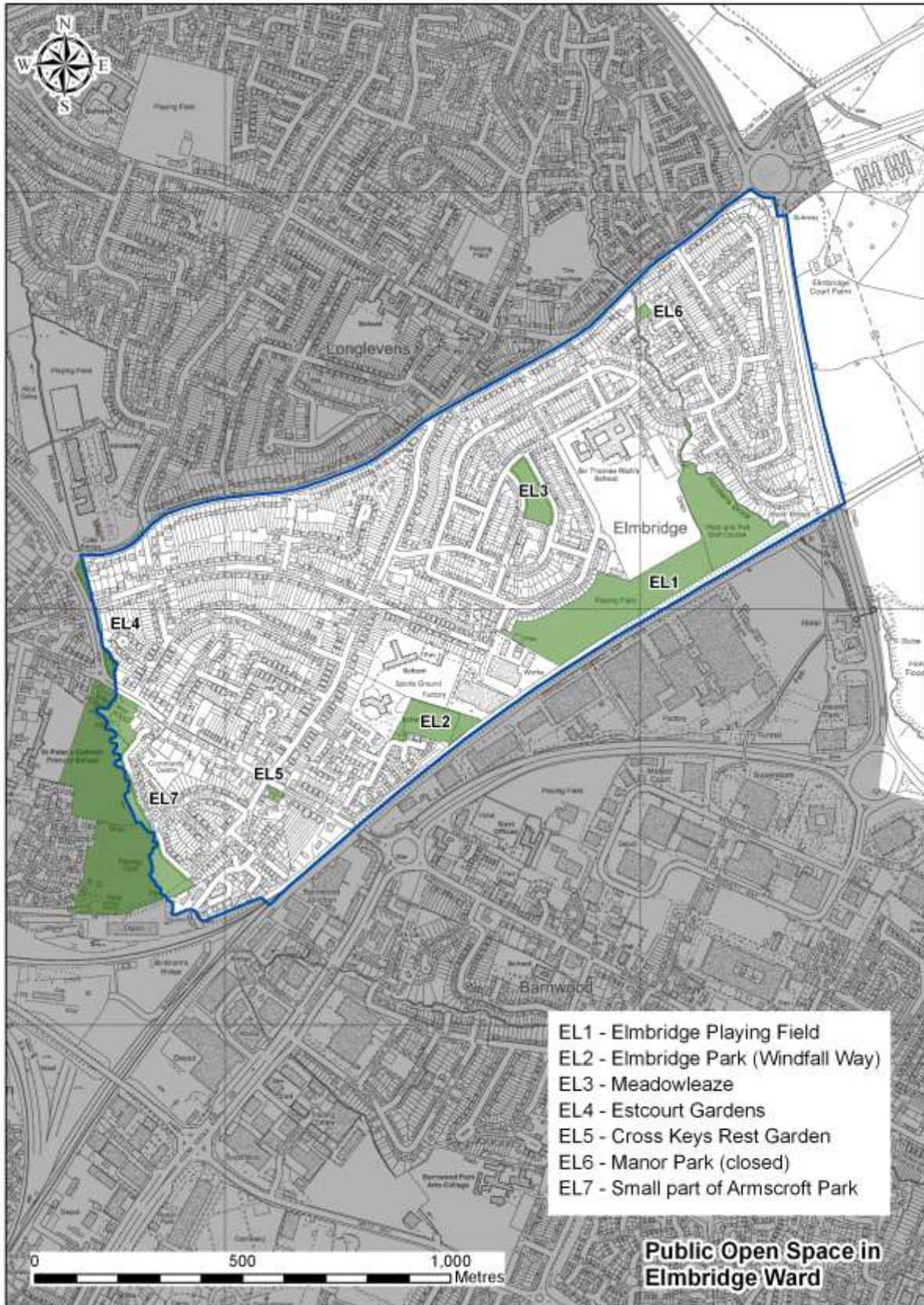
There are some formal sports pitches provided in the ward which are generally used by local teams. A number of shared use outdoor sports pitches are available at Sir Thomas Rich's School and there is a bowling green at Sisson Road. These facilities are included in the sports pitch calculation below.



Outdoor sports provision is 1.58ha per 1000, which just about meets the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There are two small play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.01ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.





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**Public space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
EL1	Elmbridge Playing Field (Sandyleaze)	8.04	J+ B 2 rugby
EL2	Elmbridge Park (Windfall Way)	1.32	J + H + B 1 adult football, LEAP
EL3	Meadowleaze	0.86	B + H LEAP
EL4	Estcourt Gardens	0.47	A
EL5	Cross Keys Rest Garden	0.09	A
EL6	Manor Park open space	0.08	A (site no longer in use)
EL7	Small part of Armscroft Park	-	Included in Kingsholm and Wotton Ward calculation
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>10.86ha</b>	

\*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

**Allotments**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	None	-	

**Private/other open space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Sir Thomas Rich's School	4.0	Shared use sports facilities Rugby/football/cricket
-	Sisson Rd bowling green	0.22	Bowling green
-	Elmbridge Infant School	-	No public use
-	Elmbridge Junior School	-	No public use
-	Elmscroft Community Centre	-	Community facility with outdoor garden space
-	Green Pippin Close central space	-	Informal private space

## **Opportunities for improved provision**

Provision in Elmbridge ward falls just short of the adopted standard for quantity, but as there is currently little opportunity for creation of new open space, improvements in provision should concentrate on providing high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

The feasibility of creating a site for allotment provision in the ward, by converting an underused part of an existing open space, could be explored.

Open spaces in adjacent wards, such as Armscroft Park also serve the residents of Elmbridge, so ensuring there is good signage and safe access to these sites is also important.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Elmbridge Ward Open Space Action Plan.**

## Grange ward - open space profile

Grange ward is a mainly residential ward of late 20<sup>th</sup> century housing development. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 5,846.

There is a local shopping centre, community centre, library, schools and some industrial, retail and commercial premises in the ward.

The open spaces in the ward were created as part of the housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation.



The largest open space at Holmleigh Park, is in shared ownership with the county council (forming the grounds of Beaufort Secondary School), but is open to the public. The ward's open spaces are mainly managed as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows.



In total the ward has 24.54ha of open space, a provision of 4.20ha per 1000 population, which is in excess of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

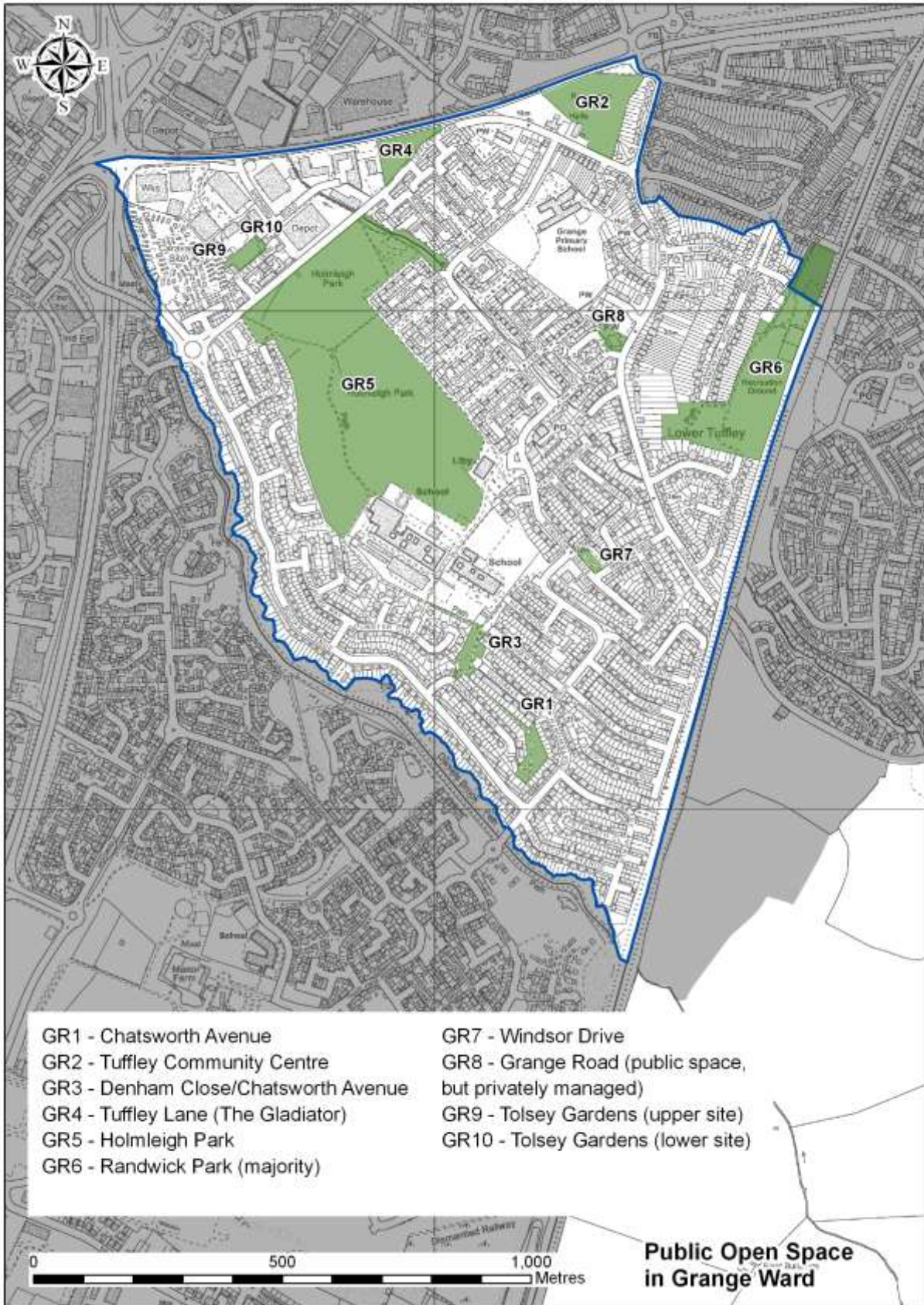
There are several formal sports pitches provided in the ward which are generally used by local teams. A bookable MUGA is also available through Beaufort School/Sports Centre and this is included in the sports pitch calculation below.



Outdoor sports provision is 0.62ha per 1000, which falls well short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There are three play areas in the ward which equate to 0.10ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.





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## Public space

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
GR1	Chatsworth Avenue	0.42	B
GR2	Tuffley Community Centre	1.82	J + B 1 adult football
GR3	Denham Close/Chatsworth Ave	0.38	B
GR4	Tuffley Lane (The Gladiator)	0.63	I
GR5	Holmleigh Park* (part owned by county council, but not fenced)	16.15	J + B + H 2 adult football, LEAP
GR6	Randwick Park (majority)	4.61	A + H NEAP, MUGA, skate Includes site TU3 in this calc
GR7	Windsor Drive	0.12	B
GR8	Grange Road (public space, but privately managed)	0.21	B + H LEAP
GR9	Tolsey Gardens (upper site)	0.2	B
GR10	Tolsey Gardens (lower site)*	new	B (0.06ha)
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>24.54ha</b>	

\*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

## Allotments

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	none	-	

## Private/other open space

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Beaufort School	0.24 (MUGA)	Shared use MUGA
-	Harewood Primary School	-	No public use
-	Grange Primary School	-	No public use
-	Murray Hall Scout HQ	-	No public use

## **Opportunities for improved provision**

Grange ward meets the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but many sites fall short of the expected standard in terms of quality of park infrastructure and facilities.

Improvements in provision should therefore concentrate providing high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

The feasibility of creating a site for allotment provision in the ward, by converting an underused part of an existing open space, could be explored.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Grange Ward Open Space Action Plan.**

## Hucclecote ward - open space profile

Hucclecote ward is a mainly residential ward of 20<sup>th</sup> century housing development. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 8,829.

There is a local shopping centre, community centre and primary schools in the centre of the ward.

The open spaces in the ward were largely created as part of the housing estate development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation, or they are functional for drainage or buffers to the M5 motorway. Hucclecote Green is an older, more traditional area of unfenced village green/common land.



The ward adjoins the King George V Playing Field and Greenways open space in Barnwood ward, so Hucclecote residents are also able to make use of these nearby open spaces and their facilities.

Hucclecote's open spaces are mainly managed as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. Hucclecote hay Meadows are managed by the city council's Countryside Unit and they have plans to improve the habitat value of Appleton Way balancing pond and the M5 buffer zone by managing the grassland for wildflowers.

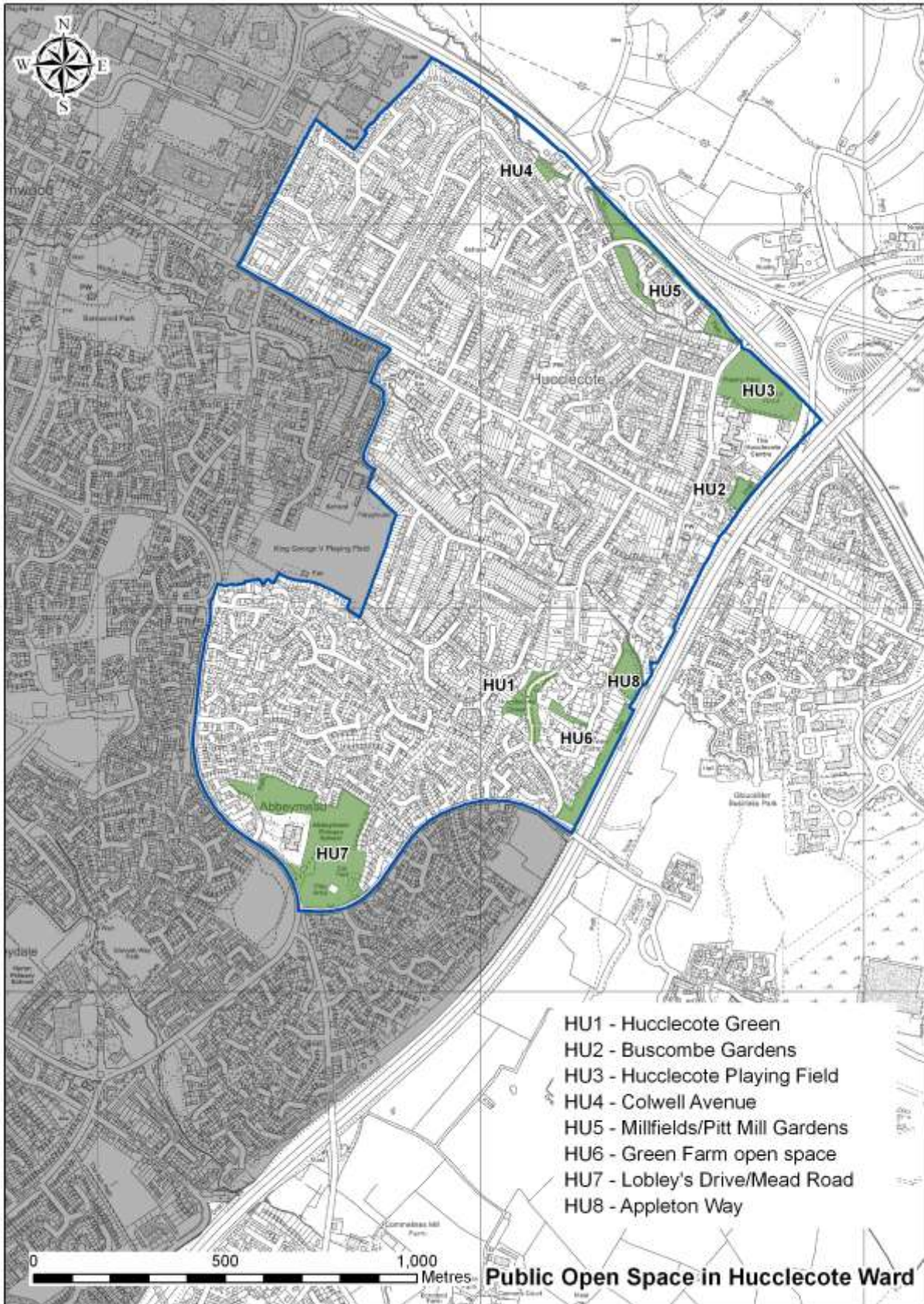
In total the ward has 12.54ha of open space, a provision of 1.42ha per 1000 population, which falls short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.



Outdoor sports provision is 0.39ha per 1000, which falls well short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There is one small play area at Mead Road which equates to 0.01ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.





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## Public space

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
HU1	Hucclecote Green	0.83	B
HU2	Buscombe Gardens	0.35	E
HU3	Hucclecote Playing Field	2.52	J + B 1 adult rugby, 1 cricket
HU4	Colwell Ave (rear of scout hut on Deer Park Road)	0.23	B
HU5	Millfields/Pit Mill Gardens	1.91	B
HU6	Green Farm open space (off Appleton Way)	0.2	B
HU7	Lobley's Drive/Mead Road plus Mead Rd	5.44 + 0.23 = 5.67	J + H + B LEAP, 1 adult football
HU8	Appleton Way balancing pond	0.83	E
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>12.54ha</b>	

\*note some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

## Allotments

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	none	-	

## Private/other space

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Hillview Primary school	-	No public use
-	Hucclecote Centre	-	No public use, site closed
-	Abbeymead Primary School	-	No public use

## Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Land at The Hucclecote Centre (not included in open space calculations – see above)	-	County council owned land, reserved for future development, but partly currently used as informal open space.

## **Opportunities for improved provision**

Hucclecote falls well short of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but there is currently little opportunity for creation of new open space in the ward, so improvements in provision should concentrate providing high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Open spaces in adjacent wards, such as King George V playing field, Hucclecote Hay Meadows and Greenways also serve the residents of Hucclecote, so ensuring there is good signage and safe access to these sites is also important.

Residents in the south of the ward will soon be able to access the extensive new open space facilities being provided just outside the city at Cooper's Edge, across the Lobley's Drive M5 bridge.

The feasibility of creating a site for allotment provision in the ward, by converting an underused part of an existing open space, could be explored.

There is an outline planning consent for residential development of the Hucclecote Centre site. A planning agreement ensures that this development will include an area of new open space, as well as financial contributions to provide local sports and play facilities.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Hucclecote Ward Open Space Action Plan.**



## Kingsholm and Wotton ward - open space profile

Kingsholm and Wotton ward is a mixed ward with 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century housing development, schools, community facilities, retail, industrial, commercial premises and a large hospital. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 7,408.

The open spaces in the ward were created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation. Hillfield Gardens were once the grounds of a large, private house.

Kingsholm and Wotton's open spaces are a mixture of short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. Hillfield Gardens has a more intimate garden-like character with flower borders and other features.



In total the ward has 12.88ha of open space, a provision of 1.74ha per 1000 population, which falls short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

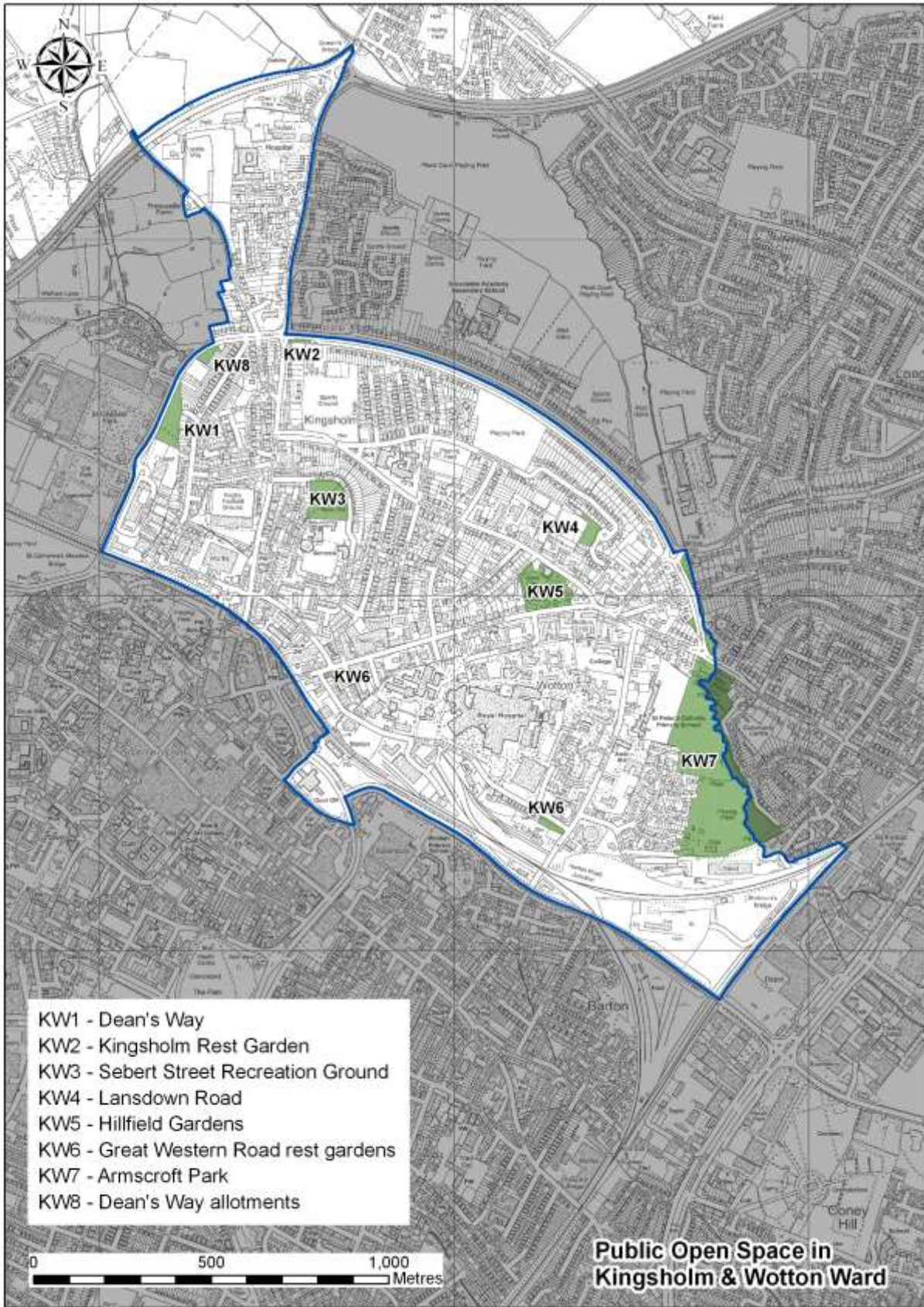
There are some formal sports pitches provided in Armscroft Park which are used by a local rugby team. There are private tennis courts at Wotton Tennis Club and Kingsholm Square, which have member/resident access and these are included in the sports pitch calculation below. However, the large Civil Service club sports ground is not included, as this has been closed down and is no longer accessible for sport.



Sports provision is 0.33ha per 1000, which falls well short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There are three play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.04ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.





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**Public space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
KW1	Dean's Way	0.69	H + B LEAP
KW2	Kingsholm Rest Garden	0.05	I
KW3	Sebert Street Recreation Ground	1.13	H + B LEAP/community space
KW4	Lansdown Road	0.31	B
KW5	Hillfield Gardens	1.39	A
KW6	Great Western Rd rest gardens x 2 (London Road and Horton Road)	0.16+0.02 = 0.18	A
KW7	Armscroft Park	9.01	NEAP/MUGA
	<b>Total: inc allotments below</b>	<b>12.88ha</b>	

\*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

**Allotments**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
KW8	Dean's Way allotments	0.12	C, 6 small plots

**Private/other open space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Horton Rd Cemetery	0.16	Public access
-	Civil Service Club	-	Site closed (April 2011)
-	Gloucester Rugby, Kingsholm Rd	-	No public use
-	High School For Girls, Lansdown Rd	-	Currently no shared use
-	Posy Lane	-	Currently being redeveloped
-	Wotton Tennis Club	0.54	Tennis courts (membership)
-	Kingsholm School	-	No public use
-	St Peters Primary School	-	No public use
-	Redcliffe College, Horton Rd	-	No public use
-	Kingsholm Square	0.15	Private garden for residents (2 x grass tennis court)

**Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Civil Service Playing Field (not included in open space calculations, see above)	-	Land now owned by Redrow Homes.

## **Opportunities for improved provision**

Kingsholm and Wotton falls well short of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but there is currently little opportunity for creation of new open space in the ward, so improvements in provision should concentrate providing high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Plock court in the adjacent Longlevens ward is accessible to many residents in Kingsholm and Wotton, so ensuring there is good signage and safe access to this site is also important.

The feasibility of creating a site for allotment provision in the ward, by converting an underused part of an existing open space, could be explored.

The closed Civil Service Sports Ground off Estcourt Road is currently owned by Redrow Homes. Some initial ideas have been put forward by the developer for the site. The city council's planning policies will look to protect these sites against the loss of private playing fields (or ensure that alternative provision is made elsewhere).

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Hucclecote Ward Open Space Action Plan.**



## Longlevens ward - open space profile

Longlevens ward is a mainly residential ward of predominantly 20<sup>th</sup> century housing development, plus schools, a university campus, community facilities and some retail and commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 9,524.



The open spaces in the ward were mainly created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation, or as routes for watercourses or buffers to the busy A40 ring road. Plock Court is a very large open space and is the city's largest sports ground. Open space is generally clustered to the north and west of the ward, with limited open space to the south and east.

Longlevens open spaces are a mainly maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. There are three large and popular allotments sites in the ward.

In total the ward has 50.28ha of open space, a provision of 5.28ha per 1000 population, which is well in excess of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000. However, the Plock Court Playing Field is also a city-wide facility, which serves the greater Gloucester catchment area.

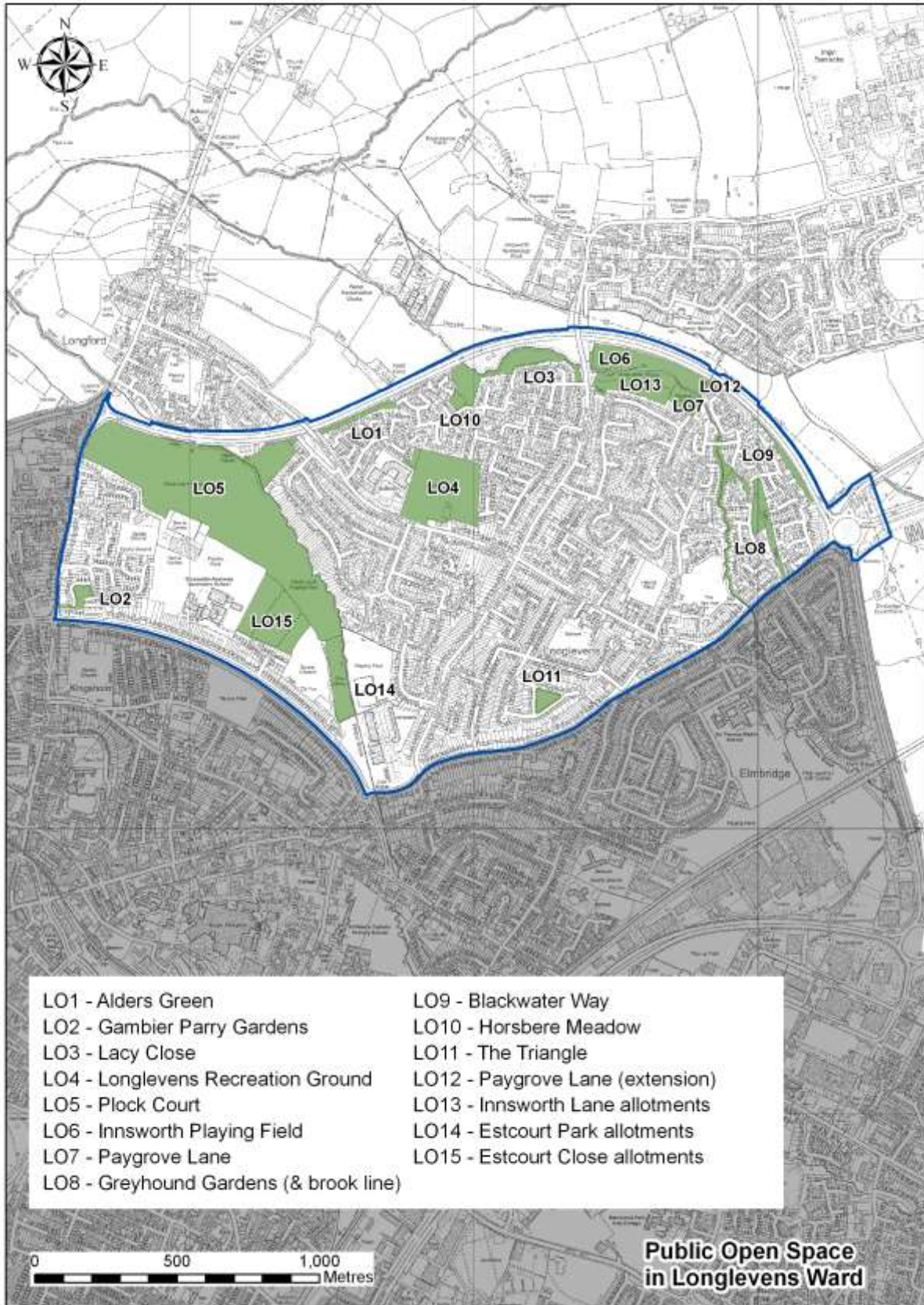


There are a range of formal sports pitches provided in the ward, which are used by both local clubs and teams from across the city. There are also a number of private playing fields and outdoor facilities in the ward. Some of these are accessible to residents and are included in the sports pitch calculation below.

Sports provision is 3.53ha per 1000, which is well in excess of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000, but as stated above, also serves the wider city population.

There are three play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.02ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the FiT benchmark standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.





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## Public space

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
LO1	Alders Green	0.2	B
LO2	Gambier Parry Gardens	0.46	B
LO3	Lacy Close	1.5	B
LO4	Longlevens Recreation Ground	5.72	J + H + B NEAP, MUGA 2 rugby, 2 adult football
LO5	Plock Court	26.37	J + B Various grass pitches, Synthetic pitch
LO6	Innsworth Playing Field	2.1	J + E + B 1 adult football, 2 junior
LO7	Paygrove Lane	0.74	H + B LEAP
LO8	Greyhound Gardens (& brook line)	1.49+0.94 =2.43	B + H LEAP
LO9	Blackwater Way	0.52	I
LO10	Horsbere Meadow	1.22	A + B
LO11	The Triangle	0.55	B
LO12	Paygrove Lane (extension)	0.55	E + B
	<b>Total: (inc allotments below)</b>	<b>50.36ha</b>	

\*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

## Allotments

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
LO13	Innsworth Lane allotments	2.29	C, 94 plots, mixed size
LO14	Estcourt Park allotments	1.72	C, 62 plots mixed sizes
LO15	Estcourt Close allotments	3.99	C, 132 full size plots

## Private space

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Leven Close playing field	-	Currently closed, no public use
-	Longlevens Infant School	0.9	Shared use for weekend junior football
-	Longlevens Junior School	-	No public use
-	University of Glos, Oxstalls Campus	0.65	MUGA for student/public use
-	Lacy Close, A40 side	-	Informal verge
-	Milestone School	-	No public use
-	Bishops College site	1.32	Currently closed, but synthetic/grass pitches still in use (managed by Aspire)
-	GALA club	1.42	Members use, football pitch
-	Debenhams Sports Ground	3.01	Cricket and football pitch (site currently being sold)

**Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land  
(but not public open space)**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Land off Leven Close (not included in open space calculations)	-	County council owned land, potentially reserved for future development, but currently unavailable for recreation.
-	Land at Bishop's College (not included in open space calculations)	-	County council owned land, school is closed, but some sports facilities currently in use via Aspire Trust.

## Opportunities for improved provision

Longlevens meets the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but some sites fall well short of the expected standard in terms of quality of park infrastructure and facilities. Distribution of spaces in the ward is also a little uneven.

Improvements in provision should therefore concentrate on expanded high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Increasing the sporting use of the large playing fields at Plock Court could be explored. There is potential to create enhanced new outdoor sports and changing facilities, including a 3G all weather pitch, in association with Oxstalls Sports Centre, currently run by The Aspire Trust, to create a local sports 'hub' for the north of the city.

The County Council currently own the closed playing field off Leven Close and Bishop's College site at Estcourt Close. No plans have yet been submitted for these sites, but the city council's planning policies will look to protect these sites against the loss of private playing fields (or ensure that alternative provision is made elsewhere).

Further improving the allotment sites in terms of secure fencing etc is also desirable.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Longlevens Ward Open Space Action Plan.**



## Matson and Robinswood ward - open space profile

Matson and Robinswood ward is a mainly residential ward of predominantly 20<sup>th</sup> century housing development, plus schools, community facilities and some retail and commercial premises. A large part of the ward



consists of Robinswood Hill Country Park, a golf course and ski centre, as well as some private farmland. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 10,282.

The majority of smaller open spaces in the ward were created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation.

Matson Park was once part of the gardens of a large house and Sneedham's Green is an area of traditional village green/common land, which is grazed by a flock of free roaming sheep. Robinswood Hill is split between a private golf course and ski slope on the eastern side with the public country park on the west side. There is also a large, historic cemetery in the ward.

Matson and Robinswood open spaces are mainly maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. There are two allotments sites in the ward. The country park is managed by the city council's Countryside Unit.

Including the country park the ward has 141.64ha of open space, a provision of 13.78ha per 1000 population, which is well in excess of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000. However, the country park is a city-wide facility also serving the wider Gloucester population.

There are some formal sports pitches provided in the ward which are used by local teams. A rugby pitch is provided on the Old Centralians ground and this is included in the sports pitch calculation below.

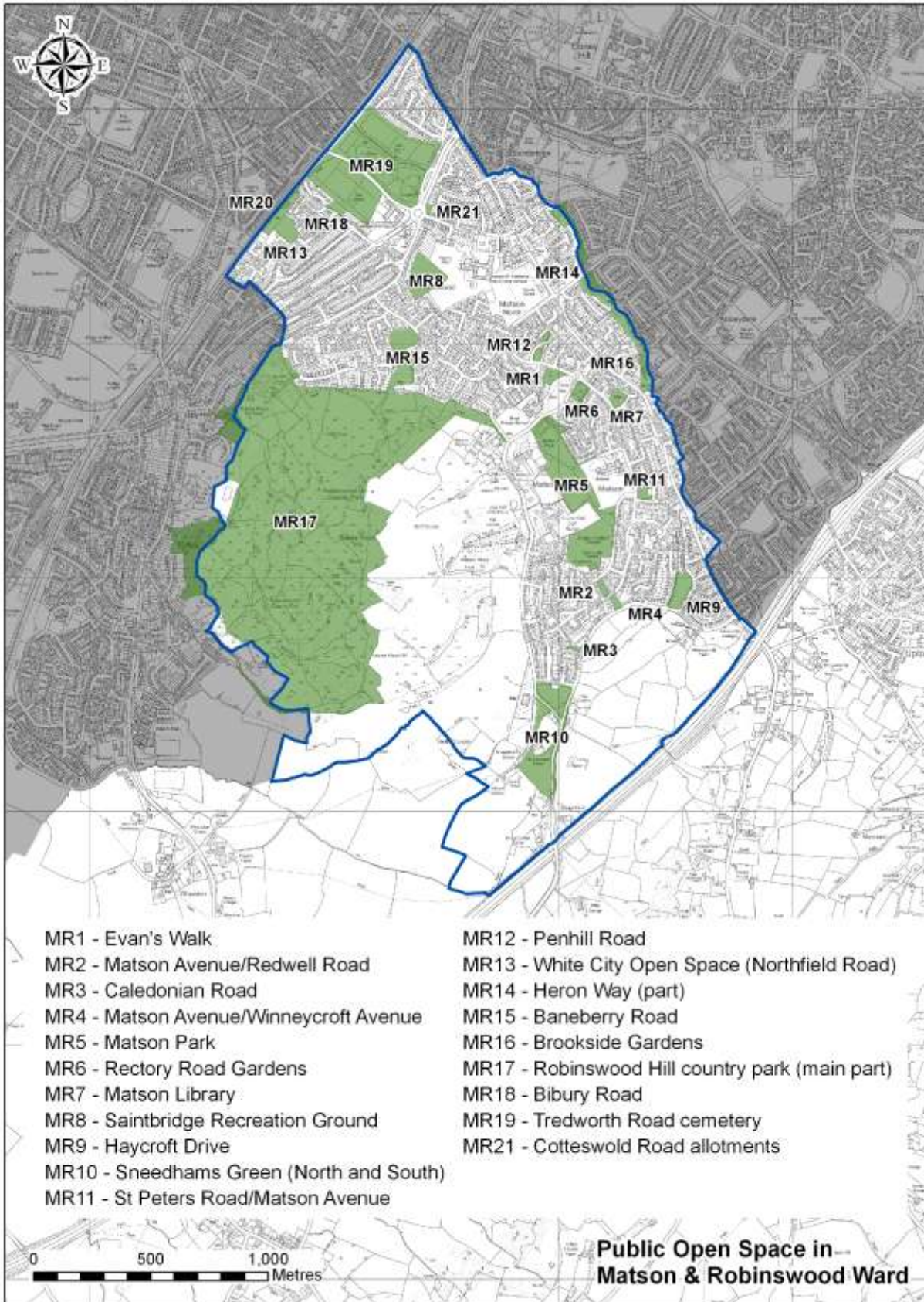
Sports pitch provision is 0.68ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.



There are three play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.03ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.

There are a number of other private outdoor facilities in the ward, such as the ski and snowboard centre and the gold course. Some of these are accessible to residents, but they are not included in the calculation sports provision, as they are not classed as pitch sports.





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**Public space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
MR1	Evan's Walk	0.41	H + B LEAP
MR2	Matson Ave/Redwell Road	0.18	I
MR3	Caledonian Road	0.09	I
MR4	Matson Ave/Winneycroft Ave	0.2	I
MR5	Matson Park	8.77	J + H + E + A LEAP, 1 adult football, 1 rugby MUGA
MR6	Rectory Road Gardens	0.47	A
MR7	Matson Library	0.4	B
MR8	Saintbridge Recreation Ground	1.93	J + B 1 rugby
MR9	Haycroft Drive	1.01	B
MR10	Sneedham's Green (North and South)	1.44+2.99= 4.43	B
MR11	St Peters Rd/Matson Ave	0.24	B
MR12	Penhill Road	0.35	B
MR13	White City Open Space (Northfield Road)	0.72	B
MR14	Heron Way (part)	0.93 + 0.98 = 1.91	E + B Calc includes part that is in Abbey Ward
MR15	Baneberry Road	2.27	B + H LEAP
MR16	Brookside Gardens	1.42	E + B
MR17	Robinswood Hill country park (main part)	101	D
MR18	Bibury Road	0.28	B
MR19	Tredworth Rd cemetery	14.7	G
	<b>Total (includes Robinswood Hill country park, Tredworth Cemetery and allotments below):</b>	<b>141.64ha</b>	

\*note some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

**Allotments**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
MR20	White City allotments	0.76	C, 26 large plots
MR21	Cotteswold Road allotments	0.1	C, 6 small plots

**Private/other open space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	The Venture, White City	0.23	Adventure playground

-	Gloucester Academy site	-	Currently no shared use, may change when new school is opened.
<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Description</b>
-	Finlay Community School	-	No public use
-	Old Centralians ground	0.9	Rugby (x 1?)
-	Moat Primary School	-	No public use
-	Robinswood Primary School	-	No public use
-	Matson Shops island?	-	Highway or housing land?, in public use
-	Hallmark Hotel Driving Range, Matson Lane	-	Golf not included in FiT sports pitch designation
-	Gloucester Golf Club, Matson Lane	-	Golf not included in FiT sports pitch designation
-	Gloucester Ski and Snowboard Centre, Matson Lane	-	Not included in FiT sports pitch designation
-	Robinswood Church?	-	No public use
-	Matson House (Selwyn School)	-	No public use

## Opportunities for improved provision

Matson and Robinswood meets the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but a number of sites fall well short of the expected standard in terms of quality of park infrastructure and facilities. Improvements in provision should therefore concentrate on expanded high quality park infrastructure (paths, seats, bins etc), play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Robinswood Hill Country Park is a major city open space, attracting many thousands of visitors each year, both from local housing estates and beyond. There is a proposed and ongoing programme of improvements to the access, paths, signposting and other facilities at Robinswood Hill, which will benefit local residents and visitors from further afield.

Improving the allotment sites in terms of secure fencing etc is also desirable.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Matson and Robinswood Ward Open Space Action Plan.**



## Moreland ward - open space profile

Moreland ward is a densely built up residential ward of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century housing development, plus schools, industrial, retail and commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 10,284.

The open spaces in the ward were created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation. The ward adjoins the main Gloucester Park in Westgate ward to the north and Tuffley Park to the south, so Moreland residents are also able to make use of these large open spaces and their facilities.



Moreland's open spaces are a mainly maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. There is one allotments site in the ward.

In total, the ward has 10.65ha of open space, a provision of 1.04ha per 1000 population, which falls well short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

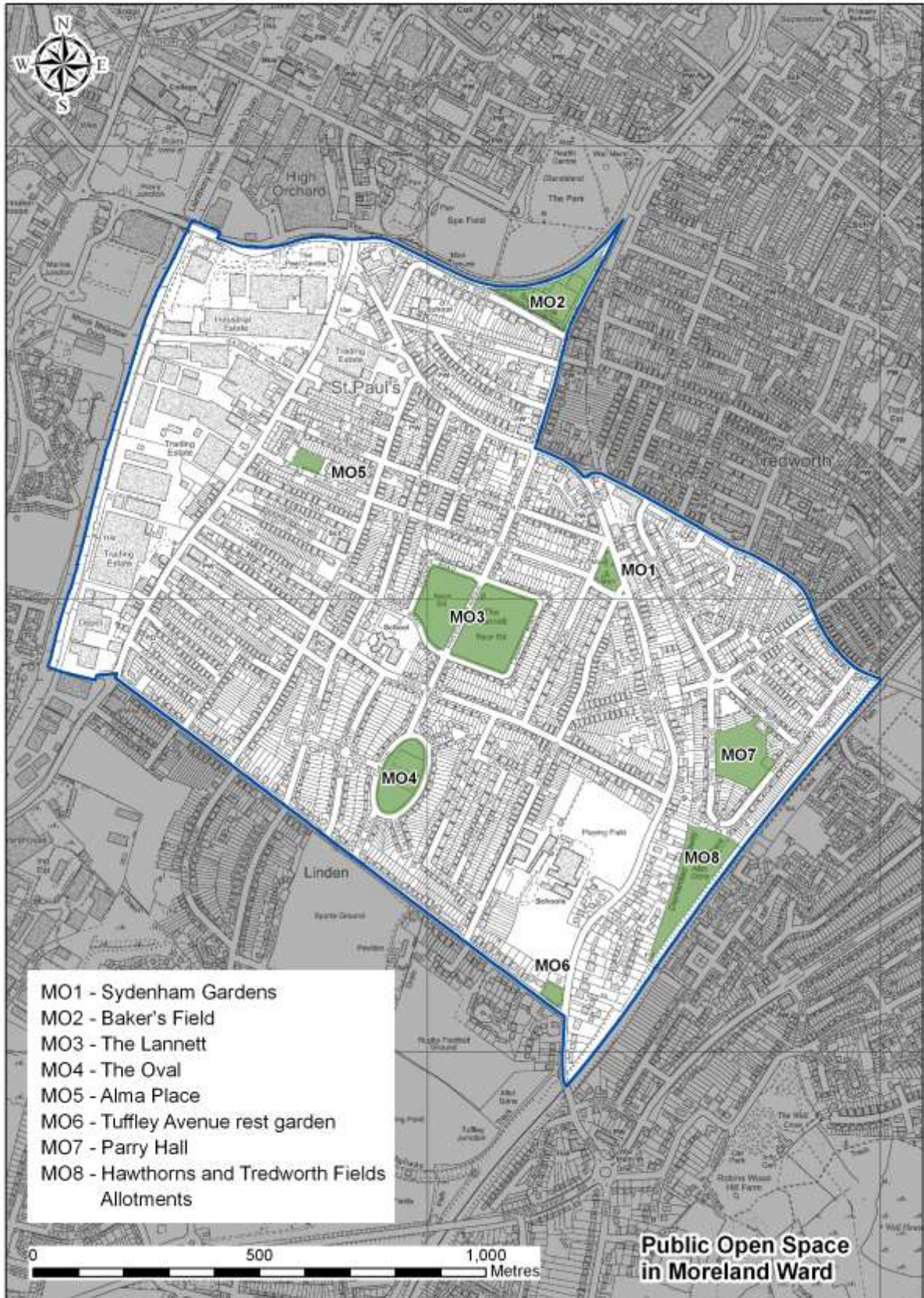
There are some formal sports pitches provided in the ward which are used by local teams. Ribston Hall School allows some shared use of its grass pitches and this is included in the sports pitch calculation below.

Sports pitch provision is 0.38ha per 1000, which falls well short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There are three play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.18ha per 1000, which falls just short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.







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**Public space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
MO1	Sydenham Gardens	0.29	A
MO2	Baker's Field (Gloucester Park)	1.3	H + J MUGA, basketball, fitness, skate, BMX, tennis x 2?
MO3	The Lannett	3.96	J + H + B 2 rugby, LEAP, MUGA
MO4	The Oval	1.35	H + B MUGA, tennis x 4
MO5	Alma Place	0.26	H LEAP, MUGA
MO6	Tuffley Ave rest garden	0.2	A
MO7	Parry Field	1.46	H + B LEAP, MUGA
	<b>Total (includes allotments below):</b>	<b>10.65ha</b>	

\*note some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

**Allotments**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
MO8	Hawthorns and Tredworth Fields	1.83	75 mixed sizes, 1 large community plot

**Private/other open space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Linden School	-	No public use
-	Ribston Hall School	1.4	Shared use, grass football pitches
-	St Pauls School	-	No public use

## **Opportunities for improved provision**

Moreland falls well short of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but there is currently little opportunity for creation of new open space in the ward, so improvements in provision should concentrate providing high quality play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Open spaces in adjacent wards, such as Tuffley Park and Gloucester Park also serve the residents of Moreland, so ensuring there is good signage and safe access to these sites is also important.

Further improving the allotment sites in terms of secure fencing, etc is also desirable.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Moreland Ward Open Space Action Plan.**



## Podsmead Ward - open space profile

Podsmead ward is a mixed ward of predominantly 20<sup>th</sup> century housing development, plus schools, industrial, retail and commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 2,996.



The open spaces in the ward were created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation or as drainage infrastructure.

Podsmead's open spaces are a mainly maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows.

In total, the ward has 12.13ha of open space, a provision of 4.05ha per 1000 population, which meets and exceeds the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There are some formal sports pitches provided at Tuffley Park which are used by local teams. There are also a large number of private playing fields and outdoor facilities in the ward. Many of these are accessible to residents and are included in the sports pitch calculation below. The Blackbridge athletics track also serves as a city-wide facility.

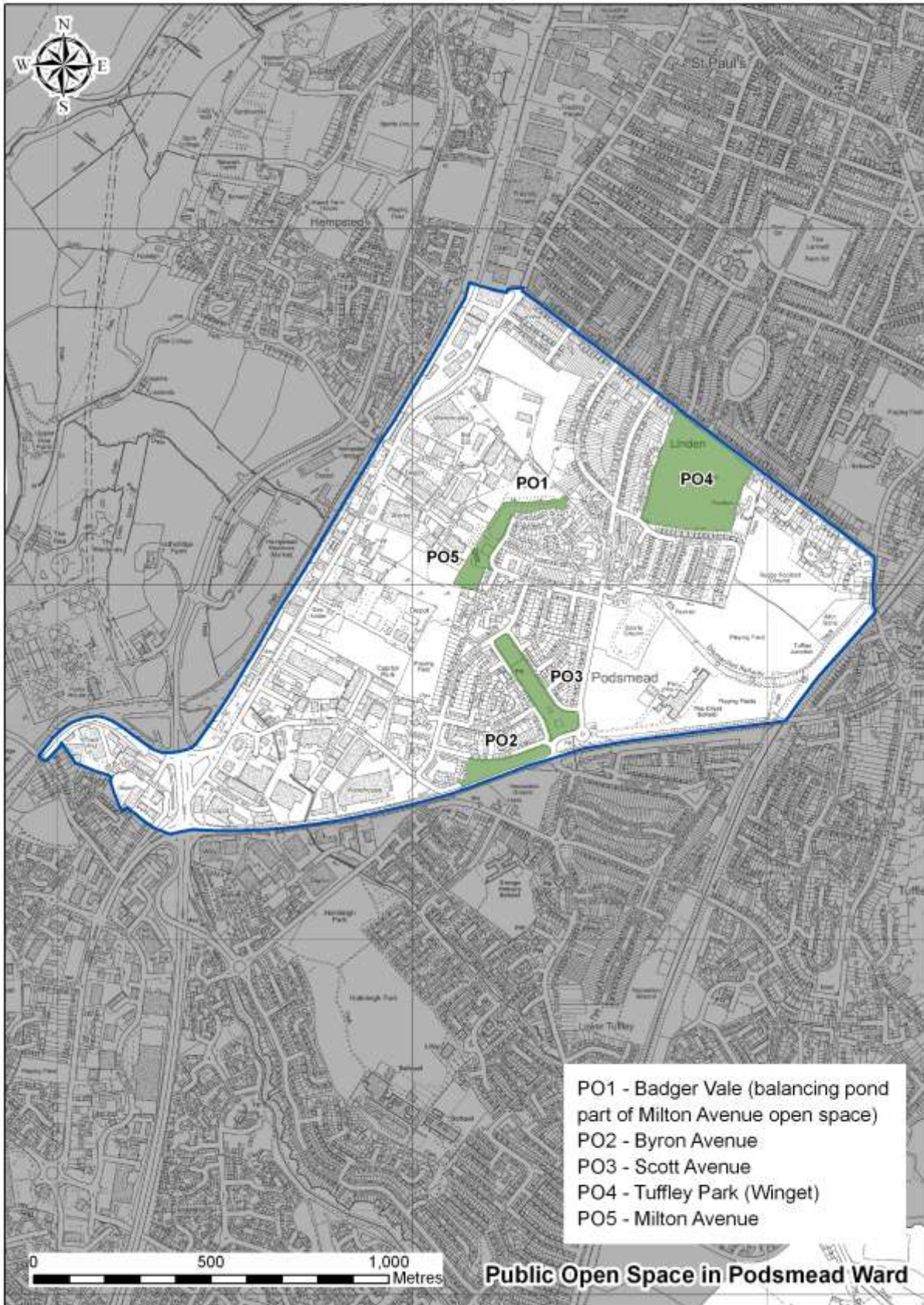


Sports pitch provision is 7.99ha per 1000, which meets and exceeds the FiT benchmark standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000. Pitches in Podsmead also help serve the severely deficient Moreland ward.



There are two play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.13ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.





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## Public space

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
PO1	Badger Vale (balancing pond part of Milton Ave open space)	0.98	E + B
PO2	Byron Ave	1.08	I
PO3	Scott Ave	2.07	B + H LEAP, MUGA, shelter
PO4	Tuffley Park (Winget)	7.07	J + B 2xCricket 2x adult football?
PO5	Milton Ave	0.93	H + B LEAP
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>12.13ha</b>	

\*note some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

## Allotments

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	County council allotments (disused) off Stroud Rd	Future -	New plots proposed with residential development of site

## Private/other open space

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Crypt School	1.6	Some shared use - cricket (rugby?)
-	Blackbridge Athletics Track	2.69	Athletics club use
-	Old Cryptians & Tuffley Ave playing field (Blackbridge)	11.35	Rugby/football pitches
-	Winget bowls club	0.18	Bowling green
-	Tuffley Rovers FC	2.07	Football pitch

## Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Tuffley Ave playing field (Blackbridge) – see above (included in open space calculations)	-	County council owned land, currently used as formal sports pitches.

## **Opportunities for improved provision**

Podsmead meets the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, so there is no real necessity for creation of new open space in the ward, but a number of sites fall short of the expected standard in terms of quality of park infrastructure and facilities. Improvements in provision should therefore concentrate on expanded high quality park infrastructure (paths, seats, bins etc), play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Increasing the sporting usage of the large, relatively underused Tuffley Ave playing field (Blackbridge) is being explored. The site is currently owned by the County Council. There is potential to create enhanced new outdoor sports and changing facilities, including a 3G all weather pitch, possibly in association with Crypt School and Gloucester Athletics Club, to create a local sports 'hub' for the south of the city.

Planning consent for new allotments has been secured as part of the County Council Blackbridge development, but these are not yet constructed. This should happen in the next 3-5 years.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Podsmead Ward Open Space Action Plan.**

## Quedgeley Fieldcourt ward - open space profile

Quedgeley Fieldcourt ward is a mixed use ward. The majority of the housing stock is late 20<sup>th</sup> century, plus a large new estate built in the last 10 years as part of the ongoing Kingsway development of over 3,000 houses (ex. RAF Quedgeley). In addition to the housing there are schools, a local shopping centre, community facilities, a business park and numerous industrial, retail and commercial premises.

2011 census data gives a ward population of 10,449. However, the ongoing development of Kingsway means that the population of this ward is rising more rapidly than in other parts of the city. The open spaces in the ward have mainly been created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation. A number of new open spaces are being created as part of the Kingsway development. It is intended that these will be adopted by the council, so those that are already completed and open for use have been included in the calculations for this ward. Proposed Kingsway spaces not yet constructed haven't been included.



Dimore Playing Field is also included in the overall calculation. Even though it is unadopted, it has been used by local residents for a number of years. However, it has not been included in the sports pitch calculation, because although it is designed to accommodate 2 football pitches (and a cricket pitch); it has never been laid out for formal sport.



Quedgeley Fieldcourt's open spaces are a mainly maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. However, in the Kingsway development, there are two old orchards that are being managed less intensively, with nature conservation and preservation of the historic orchard character in mind.

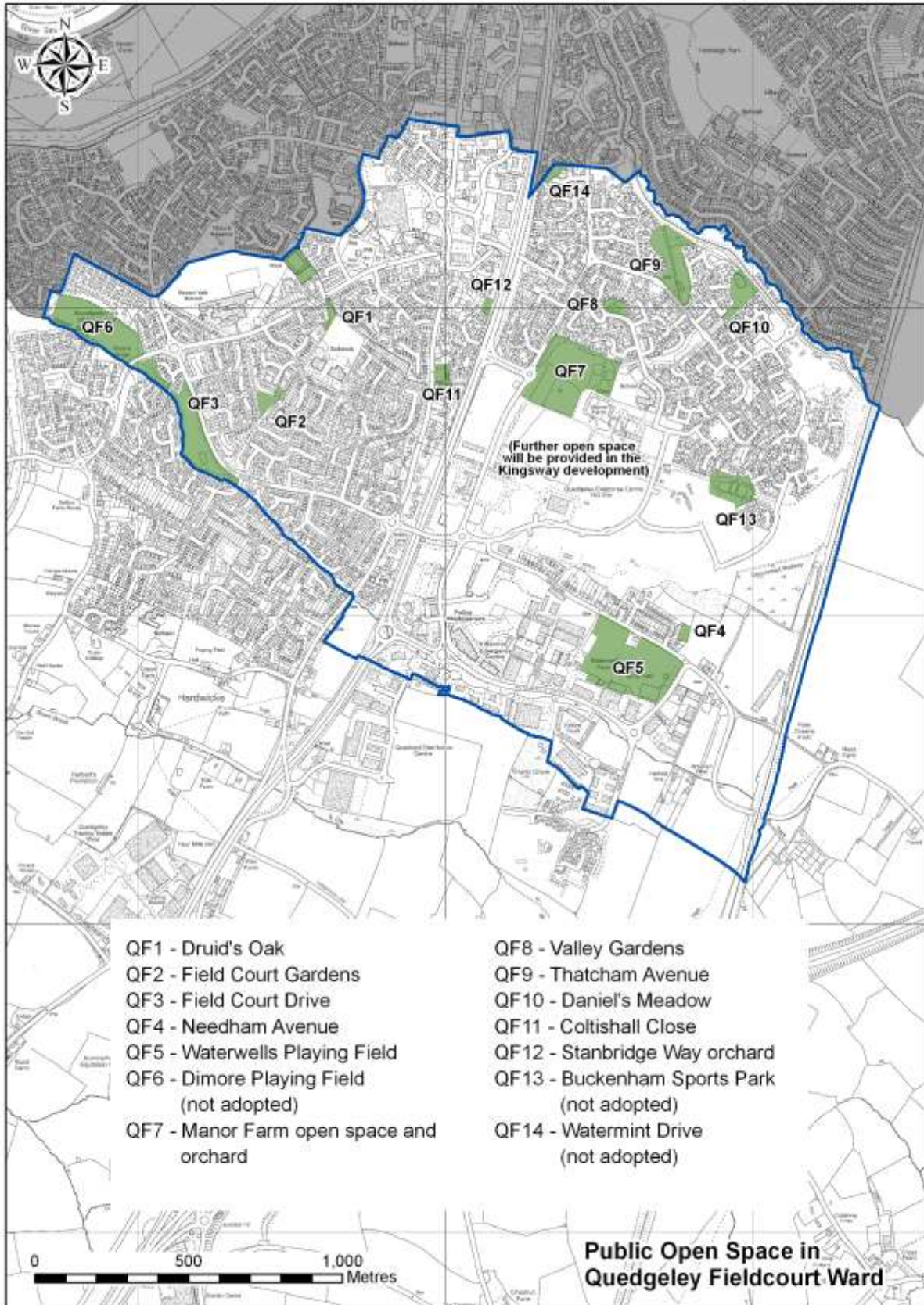
In total, the ward has 22.28ha of open space, a provision of 2.13ha per 1000 population, which falls just short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There are a number of formal sports pitches provided in the ward, which are generally used by local teams. Severnvale School allows some shared use of its synthetic pitch and this is included in the sports pitch calculation below.

Sports pitch provision is 0.48ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000. Additional grass pitches will be created as the Kingsway development progresses. Pitches in Quedgeley Fieldcourt ward also help serve the severely deficient Quedgeley Severn Vale ward.

There are six play areas in the ward, plus some informal youth sports areas, which equate to 0.11ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.





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## Public space

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
QF1	Druid's Oak	0.2	B+ H LEAP
QF2	Field Court Gardens	0.4	B
QF3	Field Court Drive	2.86	H + B MUGA, skate
QF4	Needham Avenue	0.17	B
QF5	Waterwells playing field	5.41	J + H + B MUGA, LEAP, synthetic pitch, 2 adult football, 2 junior.
QF6	Dimore Playing Field*	3.31	B (+future J – sports pitches not yet laid out)
QF7	Manor Farm open space and orchard	4.81	B + H + J MUGA, NEAP, 1 adult football, historic orchard
QF8	Valley Gardens*	0.33	B + H LEAP
QF9	Thatcham Avenue* open space & woodland	2.03	D + B
QF10	Daniel's Meadow*	0.85	E + B
QF11	Coltishall Close*	0.31	B + E + H LEAP
QF12	Stanbridge Way orchard*	0.14	B
QF13	Buckenham Sports Park*	1.21	J + H + B 2 x tennis courts, 1 x MUGA, NEAP
QF14	Watermint Drive*	0.25	B
QF15+	Kingsway development open spaces*	Additional future sites	To be confirmed
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>22.28ha</b>	

\*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

## Allotments

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Kingsway allotments and community garden (future proposed)	-	New allotments to be provided within next 5 years

## Private/other open space

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Waterwells Drive, Dimore Brook corridor	-	Informal river corridor
-	Kingsway Primary School	-	No public use

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Woolstrop Moat	-	No public use (scheduled monument)
-	Severn Vale School	0.1	Some shared use for sports teams (synthetic pitch, tennis)
-	Field Court Primary School	-	No public use

## Opportunities for improved provision

Quedgeley Fieldcourt falls just short of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity. However, a significant number of new open spaces are being created within the Kingsway development and these are being installed with surfaced footpath/cycleways, seats, bins and high quality sports and play facilities. Only those that are already completed and open to the public (up to April 2012) have been included in this calculation. The remaining sites will be created over the next few years, as the development nears completion.

The open space facilities in Quedgeley Fieldcourt, also help serve the adjacent Quedgeley Severn Vale ward, which is severely deficient in sports pitches. However, the busy A38 dual carriageway, which runs through the centre of the ward does act as a major barrier for residents in the west of the ward and may deter residents from accessing the new open space facilities at Kingsway and Waterwells to the east of the ward.

New allotment provision has also been secured in the Kingsway development, but this is not yet constructed. This should happen in the next 3-5 years.

Needham Avenue is a peripheral open space accessed from a private road off Naas Lane in Quedgeley. Open space provision along Naas Lane is now well served by Waterwells Playing Field, so Needham Avenue may be a site to consider for disposal.

There are several play areas in Quedgeley that are managed by Quedgeley Parish Council. Some of the play equipment is nearing the end of its useful life and the city council will work with the Parish to investigate opportunities for funding new play areas.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Quedgeley Fieldcourt Ward Open Space Action Plan.**

## Quedgeley Severn Vale ward - open space profile

Quedgeley Severn Vale ward is predominantly housing from the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, plus schools, industrial, retail and commercial premises. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 7,128.

The open spaces in the ward have mainly been created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation. Green Farm Orchard is designated as a local nature reserve, as is Quedgeley Arboretum.

A number of Quedgeley Severn Vale's open spaces are natural woodland areas with others maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. The LNRs are managed to an agreed management plan, beneficial to the natural habitat.



In total, the ward has 7.71ha of open space, a provision of 1.08ha per 1000 population, which falls well short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

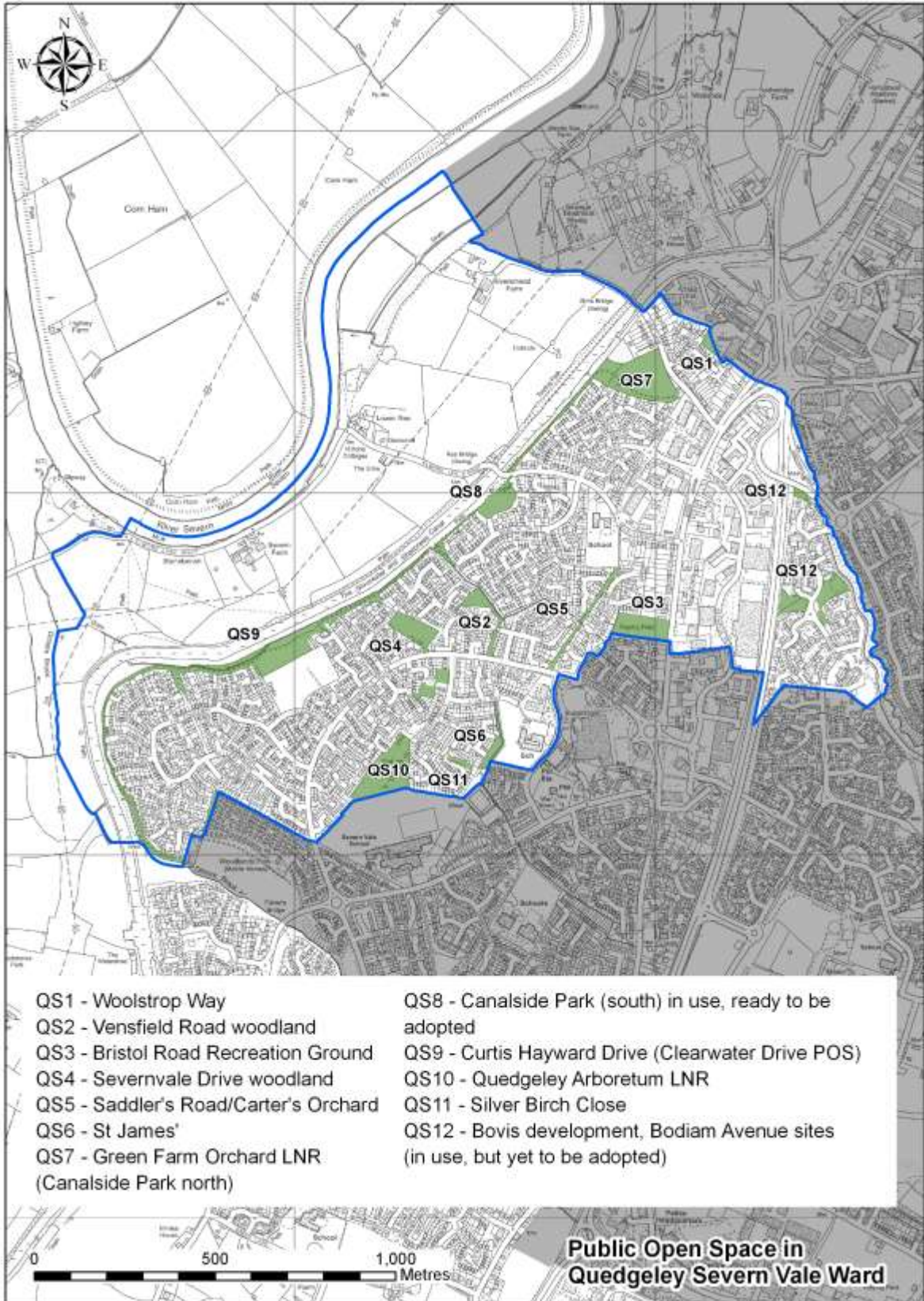
There are no formal sports pitches provided in the ward to meet the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000. Pitches in the adjacent Quedgeley Fieldcourt and Grange wards help serve the severely deficient Quedgeley Severn Vale ward.



There are two small play areas in the ward (both managed by Quedgeley Parish Council), which equate to 0.05ha per 1000, which fall well short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.

The Gloucester and Sharpness Canal and towpath runs through the ward, providing good recreational opportunities. There are some private (school) playing fields and outdoor facilities in the ward, but these are not generally accessible to residents.





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**Public space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
QS1	Woolstrop Way	0.14	H LEAP
QS2	Vensfield Road woodland	0.28	D
QS3	Bristol Road Rec.	0.87	B + H LEAP
QS4	Severnvaile Drive woodland	0.71	D
QS5	Saddler's Road/Carter's Orchard	0.29	I
QS6	St James'	0.26	I
QS7	Green Farm Orchard LNR (Canalside Park north)	2.33	D
QS8	Canalside Park (south) in use, ready to be adopted	0.84	I + B + E check size
QS9	Curtis Hayward Drive (Clearwater Drive POS)	0.31	B
QS10	Quedgeley Arboretum LNR	1.55	D
QS11	Silver Birch Close	0.13	B
QS12	Bovis development, Bodiam Ave sites (not yet adopted)	Future -	-
	<b>Total:</b>	<b>7.71ha</b>	

\*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

**Allotments**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	none	-	

**Private/other open space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Beech Green Primary School	-	No public use
-	Meadowside Primary School	-	No public use
-	Clearwater Drive reserved site	-	Informal, permitted public use, site likely to be developed in the future
-	Gloucester & Sharpness Canal and towpath	-	Linear footpath with permitted public access, fishing, cycling etc.

**Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Land off Clearwater Drive (not included in open space calculations)	-	County council owned land, reserved for future development, but currently used as informal open space.

## **Opportunities for improved provision**

Quedgeley Severn Vale falls well short of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but there is currently little opportunity for creation of new open space in the ward, so improvements in provision should concentrate on providing high quality park infrastructure and facilities on existing sites.

Open spaces in adjacent wards, such as Holmleigh Park and Field Court Drive also serve the residents of Quedgeley Severn Vale, so ensuring there is good signage and safe access to these sites is also important.

There are a number of woodlands and more natural open spaces in the ward. These will have different management requirements and it is anticipated that a survey/action plan for these will be carried out to ensure their long term viability.

The Canalside Park open space is a linear walkway/series of spaces running parallel to and linking with the canal and the main towpath, which is popular for informal recreation. Improvements to the signage, linkages, vegetation management and accessibility of this open space are proposed to encourage more people to use the space.

There are several play areas in Quedgeley that are managed by Quedgeley Parish Council. Some of the play equipment is nearing the end of its useful life and the city council will work with the Parish to investigate opportunities for funding new play areas.

An area of undeveloped land at Clearwater Drive is currently well used by residents for informal recreation, linking to the city council's Clearwater Drive open space (QS9) and canalside park. This site is owned by the County Council and was originally reserved for a possible school site. However, there may be future plans to develop the site for housing. Any proposals will need to give consideration to the wildlife using the site and provision of open space may be required as part of the new development.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Quedgeley Severn Vale Ward Open Space Action Plan.**

## Tuffley ward - open space profile

Tuffley ward is a residential ward of predominantly 20<sup>th</sup> century housing development, plus schools, some local shops and private farmland. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 5,888.

The open spaces in the ward were created as part of housing development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation or as a buffer to the mainline railway.

Tuffley's open spaces are a mainly maintained as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. There is one allotments site in the ward. The east of the ward also meets the boundary of Robinswood Hill Country Park.



In total, the ward has 7.02ha of open space, a provision of 1.19ha per 1000 population, which falls well short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

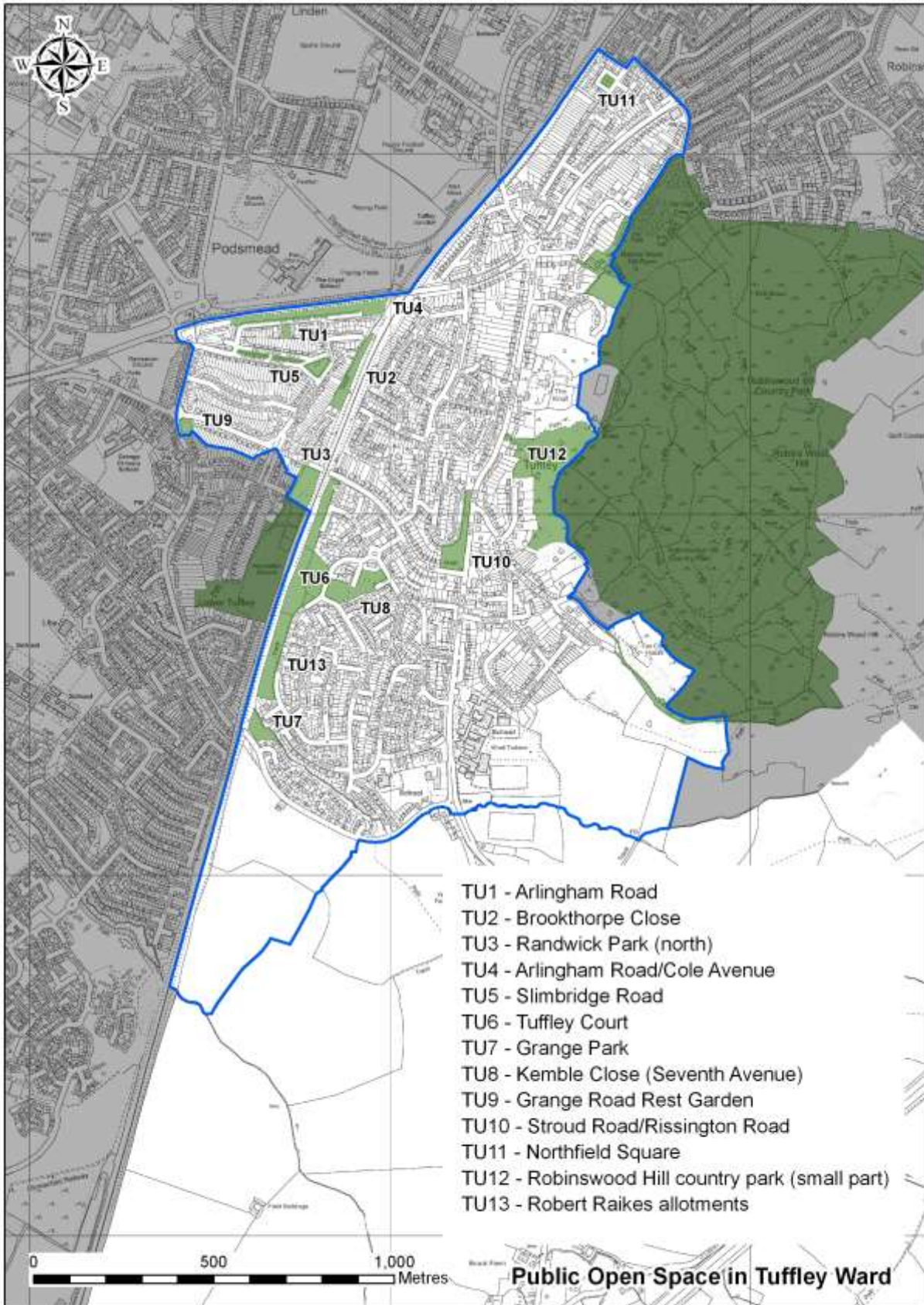
St Peters High School allows some shared use of its pitches (and these form the sports pitch calculation below), but there are no other formal sports pitches provided on open space in the ward. Sports pitch provision therefore is 0.26ha per 1000,



which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000. Pitches in the adjacent Grange and Podsmead wards help serve the severely deficient Tuffley ward.

There is one play area in the ward, which equates to 0.01ha per 1000, which falls severely short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.





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**Public space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
TU1	Arlingham Road	0.08	B
TU2	Brookthorpe Close	0.55	B
TU3	Randwick Park (north)	-	Included in Grange ward calc
TU4	Arlingham Rd/Cole Ave	0.55	I
TU5	Slimbridge Road	0.75	B
TU6	Tuffley Court	1.87	B + H MUGA, shelter
TU7	Grange Park	0.34	B
TU8	Kemble Close (Seventh Ave)	0.8	B + H LEAP
TU9	Grange Rd Rest Garden	0.17	A
TU10	Stroud Rd/Rissington Rd	0.82	B
TU11	Northfield Square	0.11	B
TU12	Robinswood Hill country park (small part)	-	Included in calculation for Matson ward
	<b>Total (includes allotments below):</b>	<b>7.02ha</b>	

\*note some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

**Allotments**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
TU13	Robert Raikes allotments	0.98	C 31 large plots

**Private/other open space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Tuffley Primary School	-	No public use
-	St Peters High School	1.57	Shared use synthetic and rugby pitch

**Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Land off Grange Road (not included in open space calculations)	-	Currently open farmland on edge of city.

## **Opportunities for improved provision**

Tuffley falls well short of the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but there is currently little opportunity for the creation of new open space in the ward, so improvements in provision should concentrate on providing high quality park infrastructure and facilities on existing sites.

Open spaces in adjacent wards, such as Robinswood Hill and Randwick Park also serve the residents of Tuffley, so ensuring there is good signage and safe access to these sites is also important.

There is an opportunity to create a full, informal MUGA and improved children's and teenage play area at Tuffley Court open space.

Further improving the allotment site in terms of secure fencing etc is also desirable.

An area of undeveloped farm land off of Grange Road has been identified in the Joint Core Strategy as a potential infill housing site. This allocation is subject to further consultation in 2014. Any housing proposals would need to provide open space as part of the new development.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Tuffley Ward Open Space Action Plan.**

## Westgate ward - open space profile

Westgate ward is the largest ward by area in the city. A mixed ward encompassing Gloucester city centre, plus open farmland leading down to the River Severn, the ward contains housing development, schools, community facilities, retail, industrial, commercial premises, the city's landfill site and main sewage works. 2011 census data gives a ward population of 6,619.

Some of the open spaces in the ward are quite historic, including the grounds of Llanthony Secunda Priory (now held in Trust) and Gloucester Park. Others are civic spaces such as King's Square. There are also more natural spaces such as Alney Island Nature Reserve.



Westgate's open spaces are managed in a mixture of ways. The city centre spaces tend to be formal and mainly hard surfaced; there are areas of short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. Some are more informal. Alney Island is managed by the city council's Countryside Unit.



Including the Alney Island nature reserve, the ward has 120.42ha of open space, a provision of 18.19ha per 1000 population, which is well in excess of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

There are formal sports pitches provided in Gloucester Park and at Hempsted Recreation Ground, which are used by local teams. Private sports facilities are also available at Gordon League (rugby pitches) and Riverside Sports Centre (tennis courts) and these are included in the sports pitch calculation below.

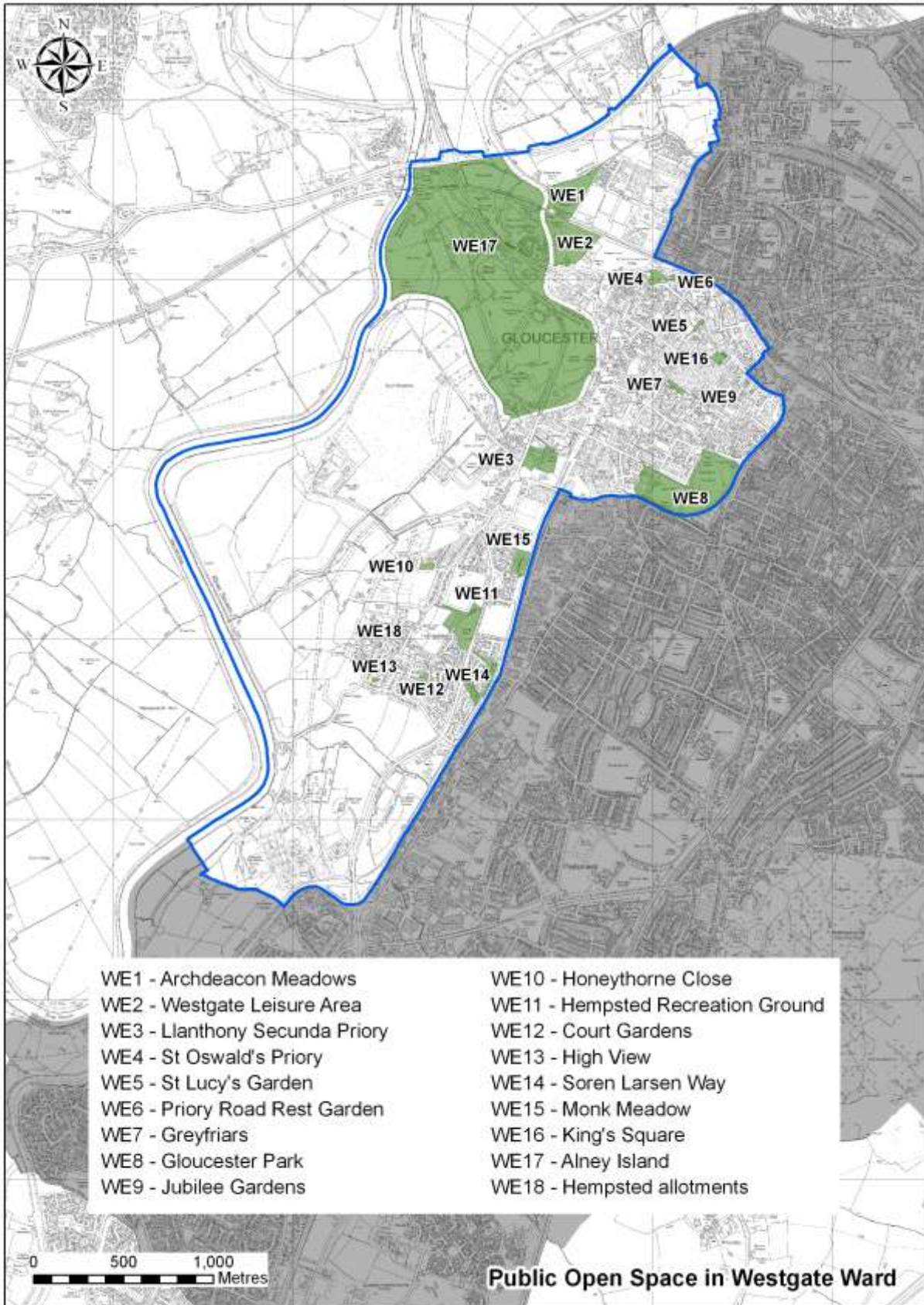
Sports pitch provision is 1.15ha per 1000, which falls short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There are four play areas in the ward, which equate to 0.06ha per 1000, which falls well short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.



There are a number of other private open spaces in the ward, including the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal & towpath, many of which have easy public access (see table below).





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**Public space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description (see list of open space types)
WE1	Archdeacon Meadows	3.81	B
WE2	Westgate Leisure Area	5.1	A
WE3	Llanthony Secunda Priory*	2.2	A
WE4	St Oswald's Priory	0.64	A
WE5	St Lucy's Garden	0.15	A
WE6	Priory Rd Rest Garden	0.09	A
WE7	Greyfriars	0.32	A
WE8	Gloucester Park	11.39	A + H + J LEAP, bowls, cricket, 1 adult football
WE9	Jubilee Gardens	0.06	A
WE10	Honeythorne Close	0.31	B
WE11	Hempsted Recreation Ground* (inc. 0.6 extension off Horseshoe Way)	2.94	B + H LEAP, 1 adult football
WE12	Court Gardens	0.14	I
WE13	High View	0.12	I
WE14	Soren Larsen Way	1.52	B + H LEAP
WE15	Monk Meadow Open Space	1.15	B + H LEAP
WE16	King's Square	0.44	F
WE17	Alney Island Nature Reserve & Richard's Wood	90	D
	<b>Total (inc. allotments below and Alney Island):</b>	<b>120.42ha</b>	

\*note: some spaces are not owned by the city council, but are currently fully accessible for public recreation and have therefore been included in the open space calculations.

**Allotments**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
WE18	Hempsted	0.04	C 2 large plots

**Private/other open space**

Ref.	Name	Size	Description
-	Cathedral grounds	-	Informal recreation/gardens
-	Severn Trent nature reserve	-	Wildlife reserve, no formal public access
-	Netheridge Farm	-	Informal access via public footpath network
-	Hempsted Meadows/Netheridge reserve	-	Informal access via public footpath network
-	Sudmeadow Landfill	-	Informal access via public footpath network
-	Gordon League RFC	3.90	Rugby pitches, club use
-	Sylvanus Lysons Trust Land,	-	No public use

	Hempsted Lane		
-	Gloucester FC, Sudmeadow Road	-	No public use
-	Brunswick Square	-	Private garden, informal public access allowed
<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Description</b>
-			
-	Town Ham field (ex. Allotments)	-	Owned by city council, but not currently in use
-	St Michael's Square garden	-	Informal public access
-	Gloucester Docks	-	Docks open spaces and quayside paths, public access permitted
-	Kings School playing fields	-	No public access
-	Port Ham/Castlemeads	-	Canal and River Trust land, informal public access
-	Llanthony Lock	-	Informal public access permitted on local footpath network
-	Riverside Leisure Centre	0.23	Tennis courts for members use
-	Gloucester and Sharpness Canal and towpath	-	Canal and River Trust land, informal public access permitted
-	Gloucester Quays/Peel Centre	-	Informal access to quayside
-			
-			

**Possible future development sites affecting areas of existing open land (but not public open space)**

<b>Ref.</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Description</b>
-	Land off Hempsted Lane (not included in open space calculations)	-	Currently private farmland, owned by Sylvanus Lysons Trust.

## **Opportunities for improved provision**

Westgate ward meets the council's adopted standard for open space quantity, but a number of sites fall well short of the expected standard in terms of quality of park infrastructure and facilities. Improvements in provision should therefore concentrate on expanded high quality park infrastructure (paths, seats, bins etc), play and sports facilities and ensuring optimum maintenance and usage of sports pitches on existing sites.

Alney Island is a large area of natural countryside, enveloped by the river Severn, but just a short walk from the city centre. An ongoing programme of improvements to the access, paths, signposting and other facilities at Alney Island will encourage more users to walk, cycle and explore the area.

Investment in the Westgate Leisure Area is also planned, so that this once thriving space is brought back into more active use, with footpath links to the Severn Way and the wider countryside made more prominent.

There is a very small allotment site in Hempsted consists of just two plots. The feasibility of creating a larger site for allotment provision in the ward, by converting an underused part of an existing open space, could be explored.

Civic Spaces such as Kings Square are likely to see changes proposed as the landscape of the city centre adapts to current and future challenges. Providing high quality, functional and sustainable city centre open spaces is one of the council's key priorities.

The city council is currently developing a new area of open space at Hempsted Meadows/Netheridge Farm. This natural open space is incorporating improved habitat for wildlife, plus creating new walks and links to the wider footpath network along the canal and beyond. The city council also manages The Severnside Project, which has been working with local landowners, partners and volunteers on the western fringe of the city, between the canal and River Severn, to manage and improve the wildlife habitat and the footpath network.

An area of undeveloped farm land off of Hempsted Lane has been identified in the Joint Core Strategy as a potential infill housing site. The land is owned by a charity, The Sylvanus Lysons Trust, who have submitted initial proposals for residential development on the site. Any housing scheme would need to provide open space as part of the new development.

**Other local priorities will be developed in consultation with the local community as part of the development of the Westgate Ward Open Space Action Plan.**



## Section 9: Open space delivery plan

### Introduction

In order to meet the objectives of this strategy there will need to be much further work done by council officers, to develop the mechanisms to implement and monitor the proposed action points and to consult with each local community and agree a set of detailed open space priorities.

Developing Open Space Action Plans for each city ward, in consultation with local residents and councillors, will identify specific proposals to improve quality and facilities in local parks and spaces. These will be put together with the corporate priorities to create an overall action plan, which will be ratified by councillors.

Some action points will require a financial investment, so progress will depend on capital funding streams. This may include disposal of some marginal areas of land, if the ambition to make multiple quality open space improvements during the life of this strategy is to be realised. All proceeds from the disposal of open spaces would be ring fenced for reinvestment back into parks and open space improvements, based on an approved list of priorities, so that all areas of the city can benefit. Priority will be to ensure, as far as possible, that each part of Gloucester has some good quality open space and a range of outdoor facilities as soon as reasonably possible.

Public consultation is essential in ensuring that decisions are influenced by the views of local people. Parks are about people. The parks groups that already exist across the city, who commit time and effort to improving their local spaces are also vital to helping us improve the quality of our parks. Our Neighbourhood Management officers will continue to monitor parks and open space, meet with residents and liaise with local groups and Neighbourhood Partnerships, to ensure residents' needs and concerns are heard and addressed.

Quality grounds maintenance is also key to improving user satisfaction in our open spaces and the council will continue to work closely with our grounds maintenance partner, Enterprise, to look at how we can make improvements whilst providing good value for money.

We will monitor the delivery plan and review progress annually, updating completed work and making approved changes as necessary.

## Key sites and priorities

There are a number of key open spaces in Gloucester, which serve an enhanced role in the city's open space portfolio. These principal spaces can often provide a backdrop to festivals and events; some attract visitors from outside the city and all help to give the city its unique character.

Name	Primary uses	Primary objectives to 2019
<b>Gloucester Park</b>	City's main historic park City centre location Sports ground <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major events and gathering space (e.g. Gloucester Festival)</li> </ul> QEII Fields designation 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to improve and manage to a high standard – working towards achieving Green Flag standard.</li> <li>Promote for events</li> </ul>
<b>Robinswood Hill Country Park</b>	Country Park Major area of natural habitat Winter sledging hill HQ of Glos Wildlife Trust SSSI (geological) in quarry area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beacon/highest point in the city</li> </ul> QEII Fields designation 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved visitor facilities, upgraded ranger centre including mobile catering facility, improved signage, leaflets, trails and seating</li> <li>Promote for suitable events</li> </ul>
<b>Plock Court playing field</b>	Main sports ground Synthetic pitch Oxstalls tennis centre /changing facilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major events</li> </ul> QEII Fields designation 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved quality and management of sports provision</li> <li>Creation of natural wetland habitat area</li> <li>Promote for events</li> </ul>
<b>Alney Island Nature Reserve</b>	Riverside walks Designated Local Nature Reserve Flood Plain <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Severn Bore viewing</li> <li>Events on Oxlease field</li> <li>Close to city centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved access, visitor experience, links to wider countryside</li> <li>Promote for suitable events</li> </ul>
<b>King's Square</b>	Main city centre civic space <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flexible space for events all year round</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with partners to invest in improved civic space provision in the city centre</li> </ul>

To recognise their wider importance to the city three of these open spaces; Gloucester Park, Plock Court and Robinswood Hill Country Park were designated as protected Queen Elizabeth II (QEII) fields in 2012.

This is a campaign operated by Fields in Trust to protect outdoor recreational spaces in communities all across the country as a permanent living legacy of the Queen's 2012 Diamond Jubilee in 2012 and the 2012 London Olympics. The campaign aims to protect 2,012 outdoor recreational spaces as a permanent living legacy of these landmark occasions. Once designated, they cannot be used for other purposes, unless replaced with other suitable land of equal area.

## Delivery Plan 2014-2019

**Key - EP=** Environmental Planning Team, **PP=** Planning Policy Team, **CP=** Corporate Property Team, **NMS=** Neighbourhood Management Service, **Crem=** Crematorium and Cemeteries Team, **CU=** Countryside Unit, **Aspire=** Aspire Sports and Leisure Trust

### General

What we will do	How we will do it	How we will measure success	Timescale for action	Who will lead on delivery
<b>Consult residents, councillors and local groups on draft open space strategy</b>	Via Friends Groups, Neighbourhood Partnerships, stakeholder groups, newsletters, direct consultation sessions	Formal adoption of strategy	Consultation summer 2013, Formal adoption February 2014, Publish adopted strategy by March 2014	NMS EP
<b>Develop Open Space Action Plans for each city ward</b>	Via Friends groups, Neighbourhood Partnerships, stakeholder groups, newsletters, direct consultation sessions	Formal adoption of 15 Open Space Action Plans	Publish Draft Action Plans for consultation, with formal adoption by December 2015. Action plans to be reviewed annually.	NMS EP PP
<b>Invest at least £200k capital spending per year into open space improvements</b>	Developer contributions, existing capital budgets, grants and site disposals.	Increased quality of site facilities	£200k per annum (i.e. £1m over 5 years), reviewed annually	EP NMS CU
<b>Identify 10 under-used open spaces and seek alternative uses or disposal</b>	Assessment of existing open space portfolio. Formal disposal process if required	Increased public use of spaces or additional funds for open space from sales of land	By December 2014	EP NMS CP
<b>Carry out annual parks user satisfaction survey</b>	Postal survey of sample households from each city ward and online via website	Increase user satisfaction each year	Annually – end of year 2014-2019	NMS EP
<b>Provide and develop policies to protect private playing fields from development</b>	Formal planning procedure via City Plan	Adopted City Plan with formal policy protection for private playing fields	Consultation Spring 2014  Formal adoption after JCS, late 2014	PP EP
<b>Build on Bee City status to provide food plants for bees and other insects</b>	Continue to plant bee-friendly meadow flowers and trees.	Increased number of trees and flower areas	On-going	NMS EP

**Open Space Delivery Plan 2014-2019 continued****General**

<b>What we will do</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>	<b>How we will measure success</b>	<b>Timescale for action</b>	<b>Who will lead on delivery</b>
<b>Update supplementary planning guidance to provide detailed open space guidance for planners and developers</b>	Formal planning procedure via City Plan	Adopted planning guidance	Draft document by December 2015	PP EP
<b>Provide up to date information on all open spaces and facilities on council website</b>	Input existing paper information, GIS mapping, photos etc to create open space resource on our website	Accessible on-line information and knowledge base for the public.	By December 2015	NMS EP
<b>Use our open space network to help combat the effects of climate change</b>	Work with volunteer groups and contractors to plant trees 1,000 trees per year in our open spaces	Increased tree cover to help mitigate negative environmental impacts	5,000 trees planted by December 2019	EP NMS Enterprise Volunteers
<b>Secure new open spaces, facilities and funding as part of new housing development</b>	Negotiate with housing developers	Additional open spaces or upgraded facilities	On-going	EP
<b>Promote our open spaces for events and community activities</b>	Information on spaces, facilities and booking method as part of updated website information	Increased public events in our open spaces	On-going	NMS Marketing Gloucester Aspire
<b>Monitor action plan progress annually, with a 5 year review of this strategy</b>	Evolve Open Space Strategy Working Group into Open Space Strategy Monitoring group (officers)	Achieve actions identified in Delivery Plan	Quarterly meetings, annual review and report	Open Space Strategy Monitoring Group
<b>Provide technical and practical support to community groups to secure external funding</b>	Officer support and advice to community groups	Increased external funding applications and improved facilities on site	On-going	NMS EP
<b>Support community involvement in managing the city's open spaces</b>	Officer support and advice to existing or fledgling groups or individuals	Increased public involvement in managing open spaces	On-going	NMS



## Open Space Delivery Plan 2014-2019 continued

### Parks and Gardens

What we will do	How we will do it	How we will measure success	Timescale for action	Who will lead on delivery
<b>Improve parks quality and work towards achieving 2 additional Green Flag awards</b>	Develop management plans for 2 additional sites & address quality issues on site.	Green Flag Award status for 3 parks in total	Annual Green Flag applications: Submit three by March 2019	NMS Enterprise

### Informal green space

What we will do	How we will do it	How we will measure success	Timescale for action	Who will lead on delivery
<b>Increase open spaces managed under a wildlife management regime by 5 hectares</b>	Change maintenance/mowing regimes, introduce additional flora if required	Increased biodiversity of previously gang-mown sites	1 hectare per year to December 2019	EP Enterprise CU

### Allotments

What we will do	How we will do it	How we will measure success	Timescale for action	Who will lead on delivery
<b>Improve existing allotment sites to ensure full use</b>	Monitor sites and identify unused plots	Full occupation of available plots	On-going	NMS
<b>Prepare and publish an Allotment Strategy</b>	In house report	Clear statement on allotment policies and practices	Draft strategy by December 2014 Consultation Spring 2015. Formal adoption by July 2015	NMS
<b>Identify 5 sites where new allotments could be provided on existing open spaces across the city</b>	Assessment of existing open space portfolio.	Increased use of marginal space, more allotment holders	By December 2014	EP NMS
<b>Negotiate allotment provision in new developments</b>	Using planning policy to secure new allotment provision	Allotment provision in new developments	On-going	EP

**Open Space Delivery Plan 2014-2019 continued**

**Countryside and natural green space**

What we will do	How we will do it	How we will measure success	Timescale for action	Who will lead on delivery
<b>Protect and enhance our natural green spaces and habitats.</b>	Long term Stewardship agreements and grants	Improved habitat and management practices	On-going	CU
<b>Increase open spaces managed under a wildlife management regime by 5 hectares</b>	Change maintenance/mowing regimes, introduce additional flora if required	Increased biodiversity of previously grass-mown sites	1 hectare per year	EP Enterprise CU

**Green Infrastructure**

What we will do	How we will do it	How we will measure success	Timescale for action	Who will lead on delivery
<b>Publish draft Green Infrastructure plan</b>	In house report	Increased awareness and understanding of GI needs and benefits	Draft document published Oct 2013, formal adoption by April 2014	EP
<b>Publish SUDS Design &amp; Adoption Guide</b>	In house/consultants report	Improved provision of quality SUDS schemes in new development	Adopted July 2013. To be adopted as SAB (SUDS Adoption Body) document by April 2014.	EP

**Civic Spaces**

What we will do	How we will do it	How we will measure success	Timescale for action	Who will lead on delivery
<b>Work with partners to develop and provide high quality city centre open spaces</b>	Develop masterplan for land owned by the city in conjunction with commercial partners and investors	Improved city centre spaces, increased visitor satisfaction	2014-2019	City Centre Team

## Open Space Delivery Plan 2014-2019 continued

### Cemeteries

What we will do	How we will do it	How we will measure success	Timescale for action	Who will lead on delivery
<b>Manage the city's cemeteries to a high standard</b>	Publish a set of standards for grounds maintenance in our cemeteries	Increased customer awareness and satisfaction	Draft standards by December	Crem
<b>Encourage greater visitor numbers for informal recreation</b>	Increased information and promotion of sites for informal recreation. Publish a leaflet and information on website	Increased footfall	As part of open space marketing/promotion by December 2015	Crem EP
<b>Enhance cemetery sites for nature conservation and habitat improvement</b>	Change existing management regime to be more wildlife friendly	Increased biodiversity	Annual review by December 2015 and ongoing	Crem EP

### Spaces for children and young people

What we want to do	How we will do it	How will we measure success	Timescale for action	Who will lead on delivery
<b>Assess and improve existing children and young people's play areas</b>	Annual play area assessments to establish priority sites for refurbishment	At least two new or refurbished play areas per year	2 sites completed per financial year	EP NMS
<b>To provide further opportunities for recreation for teenagers and young people in existing open spaces</b>	User surveys	Increased user satisfaction through user surveys	Consult with CYP on-going	NMS EP
<b>To negotiate new provision and funding for new open space facilities for children and young people</b>	Negotiation with developers	Increased sites for CYP, better facilities	On-going	EP

**Open Space Delivery Plan 2014-2019 continued**

**Sports provision**

What we want to do	How we will do it	How will we measure success	Timescale for action	Who will lead on delivery
<b>Review and publish an updated Playing Pitch Strategy</b>	In house report	Adopted report with recommendations for improved sports pitches	Consult with sports clubs & bodies 2013. Publish Draft Strategy by Sept 2014. Final adopted version by December 2014.	PP EP
<b>Improve and develop quality sports pitch provision across the city</b>	Identify a programme of works as party of Playing Pitch Strategy	Implement programme of works to increase pitch quality	On-going	NMS EP
<b>Encourage participation in sport and healthy outdoor activity</b>	Increased access to our facilities and clubs	Improved health, better used facilities	On-going	Aspire

**Amenity green space**

What we want to do	How we will do it	How will we measure success	Timescale for action	Who will lead on delivery
<b>Identify potential new sites for tree planting and habitat improvements</b>	Assess potential sites	Increased biodiversity of sites	On-going	EP NMS Enterprise

Key

**EP=** Environmental Planning Team, **PP=** Planning Policy Team, **CP=** Corporate Property Team, **NMS=** Neighbourhood Management Service, **Crem=** Crematorium and Cemeteries Team, **CU=** Countryside Unit, **Aspire=** Aspire Sports and Leisure Trust



## Section 10: Conclusion

In the ten years since the previous Open Space Strategy was adopted, there has been extensive investment in the city's parks and open spaces. New sites have been created as developers build new housing estates and existing facilities have been upgraded using their financial contributions. However, there is still much for us to do.

Although the total provision of open space in Gloucester (including our country parks, nature reserves, cemeteries and allotments) meets and exceeds the proposed minimum standard of 2.8 hectares per 1000 residents, this general overall figure does not paint the whole picture. A detailed ward analysis shows considerable variations across the city, with Barton and Tredworth, Moreland, Kingsholm and Wotton, Hucclecote, Tuffley and Quedgeley Severn Vale wards falling significantly below the standard in terms of quantity.

The inconsistent distribution across the city is further illustrated in the ward by ward analysis of formal sports pitches and children's play provision, again showing some serious shortfalls in quantity. Only 3 wards met the proposed minimum standard for sports pitches and none of the 15 city wards meet the minimum standard for formal play. Access to sites is also key –good quality open spaces and facilities within easy walking distance are generally the most used.

Whilst opportunities to correct deficiencies in open space quantity is limited by lack of available land, the opportunity to increase and develop high quality facilities for sport and play are only limited by the availability of funding. The ability of the council to generate or source capital funding through partners is fundamental to implementing the actions proposed in the Delivery Plan. Ensuring this investment is well maintained and managed is also key to the strategy, as is addressing residents' open space management concerns such as anti-social behaviour, including dog fouling.

Private playing fields and sports facilities contribute greatly to the city's sports provision and are greatly valued and we will continue to support planning policies to protect them against development wherever possible. The 2005 Playing Pitch Strategy is being reviewed alongside this strategy and will provide an up to date and detailed analysis of current and future needs in conjunction with projected population growth.

Ensuring that residents and open space users have their say about how the council plans the future changes to our green spaces is vital to local community cohesion. Involving residents in looking after their local spaces through Friends Groups is even better, and the council is committed to supporting these groups into the future.

Regular monitoring of progress and completion of the numerous proposals set out in the Delivery Plan is vital, to ensure the full value of the strategy is realised.

As Gloucester continues to develop and grow, the council will ensure that our city's well loved and well used open spaces are protected, improved and able to adapt to accommodate future growth and the aspirations of its citizens.



# Draft Open Space Action Plan for **Hucclecote** ward

*Gloucester's Open Space Vision 2014-2019: To create and manage a diverse network of good quality, sustainable and accessible open spaces to serve the needs and aspirations of the residents of Gloucester.*

## Introduction

This draft document is one of 15 ward action plans which support the open space strategy for Gloucester and should be read alongside with the main document (add web link to full strategy).

**What is the Open Space Strategy?** – It is a report that assesses the quality and quantity of parks and open spaces across Gloucester.

The Strategy sets out the proposed standards for different types of open space, identifies where there are shortfalls and proposes actions and improvements which could help address those needs. It identifies a number of strategic open spaces that serve the city as a whole, but also highlights the importance of having high quality, local open spaces, accessible to every community in the city.

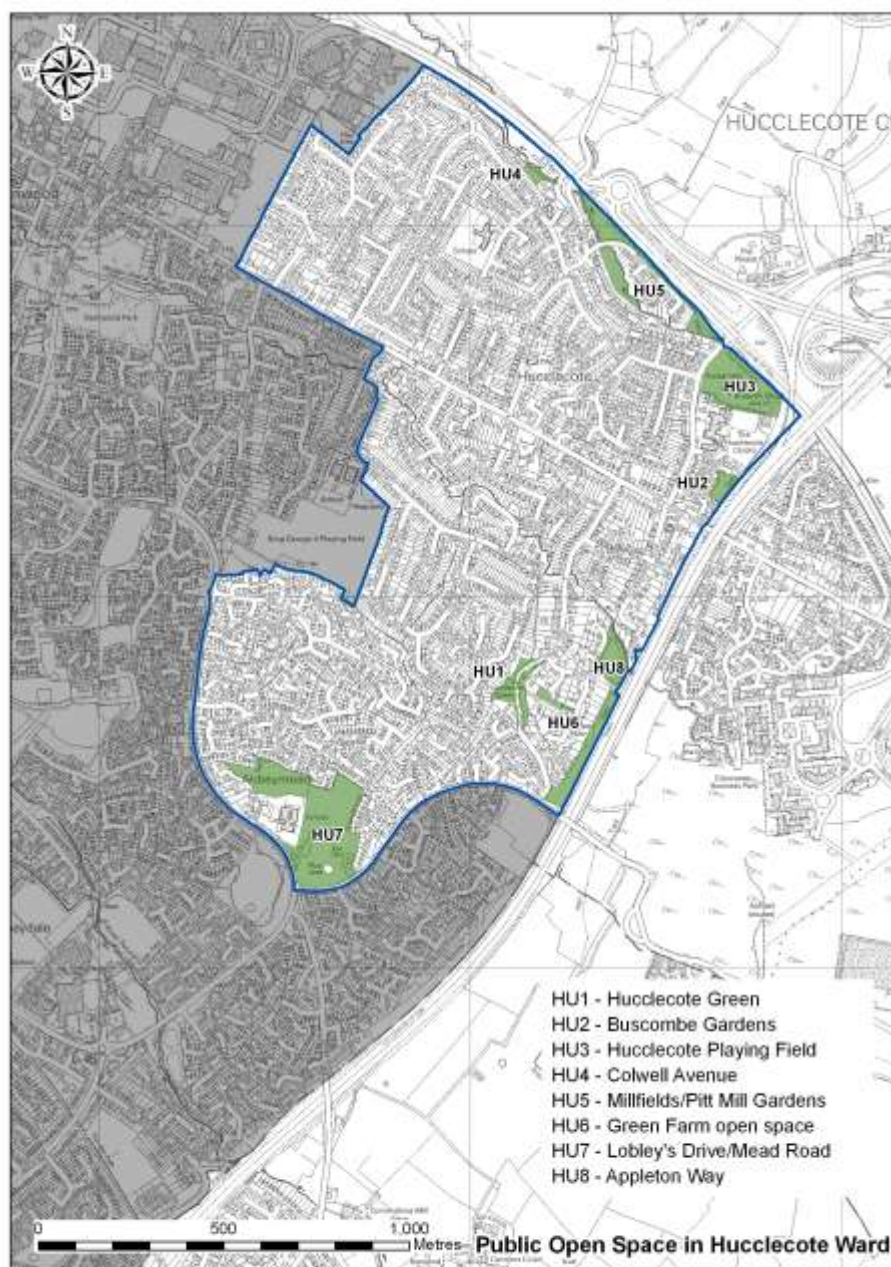
The strategy document sets out a series of Open Space Objectives and a Delivery Plan to help the council deliver the open space vision for Gloucester. One of the main Objectives is to produce an Open Space Action Plan for every city ward.

## What is an Open Space Action Plan for?

This draft Action Plan identifies potential priorities and improvements to open spaces within the Hucclecote ward, which will help develop and improve a network of high quality, active and safe open spaces across the ward and the city as a whole.

## What's not included?

The action plan does not include proposals for green spaces that are not freely accessible to the public, e.g. school grounds, private open spaces and private playing fields, open farmland etc.



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### Open Space in Hucclecote ward

The open spaces in Hucclecote are all on the periphery of the generally residential ward. Only two fields are large enough for playing pitches (Lobley's Drive/Mead Road & Hucclecote Playing Field).

The open spaces were largely created as part of housing estate development, to provide space for formal and informal recreation, or they are functional for drainage or buffers to the M5 motorway and A417 Gloucester Northern Bypass. Hucclecote Green is an older, more traditional area of unfenced village green/common land.

Although open space within the ward is relatively limited, the ward adjoins the King George V Playing Field, Duncroft Road and Greenways open spaces in Barnwood ward to the west and Contour Park and Hucclecote Hay Meadows Nature Reserve in Abbey Ward to the south, so Hucclecote residents are also able to make use of these nearby open spaces and their facilities.

Hucclecote's open spaces are generally managed as short mown grass with associated trees, shrubs and hedgerows. Hucclecote Hay Meadows (Abbey Ward) are managed by the city council's Countryside Unit, who would also to improve the habitat value of Appleton Way balancing pond and the M5 buffer zone by managing the grassland for wildflowers.

### Meeting the proposed standards:

**Quantity** - In total the ward has 12.54ha of open space, a provision of 1.42ha per 1000 population, which falls short of the proposed open space standard of 2.8ha per 1000.

Outdoor sports provision is 0.39ha per 1000, which falls well short of the proposed standard for playing pitch provision of 1.6ha per 1000.

There is one small play area at Mead Road which equates to 0.01ha per 1000, which falls seriously short of the proposed standard for formal play provision of 0.25ha per 1000.

### Quality –

Type	Existing quality
General open spaces	To be confirmed
Play area	To be confirmed
Playing pitches	To be confirmed



**Accessibility –**

The open spaces in the ward are located at the northern, eastern and southern edges of the ward, peripheral to housing, leaving many parts of ward limited access to POS. There are open spaces in adjoining wards, which serve Hucclecote residents living in the west of the ward.

The small play area at Duncroft Road serves almost exclusively Hucclecote residents, despite being located in Barnwood ward. This play area will be upgraded by spring 2014.

Type	Accessibility standard (FiT benchmark)	Current Hucclecote ward provision
LEAP (small play area)	400m walking distance (see plan)	Play area at Mead Road serves the south part of Hucclecote ward.  Duncroft Road play area (Barnwood) serves the NW of the ward.  King George V play area (Barnwood) serves the west of the ward.
NEAP (large play area)	1km walking distance (see plan)	Does not currently meet this standard: Nearest NEAP is at Clock Tower Park, over 2km walking distance to furthest parts of Hucclecote.
Playing pitches	Within 1.2km of all dwellings in major residential areas	Meets this standard: Access to Hucclecote playing field, Lobley's/Mead Road or King George V is within 1.2km for all Hucclecote residents.
Community tennis courts	Within 20 minutes travel time (walking in urban areas)	Meets this standard: Community tennis courts at Greenways (Barnwood) and Clock Tower Park (Barnwood)
Athletics track (6 lane) with floodlighting, per 250,000 people	Within 30 minutes drive time	Meets this standard: Blackbridge Athletics Track at Podsmead
Bowls	One green within 20 minutes travel time (walking in urban areas)	Bowling greens (private clubs) located at British Energy (Barnwood) and Sisson Road (Elmbridge)

**Add map showing walking distances**

**Key city priority sites** – there are no key open space sites in Hucclecote ward

**Key open space sites in Hucclecote ward:**

Site	Size (hectares)	Map ref no:
Hucclecote Playing Field	2.52	HU3
Lobleys Drive/Mead Rd	5.67	HU7

**Key proposed actions:**

Site	Action	Timescale
<b>Hucclecote Playing Field</b>	Investigate options to increase pitch provision on sloping part of site	
	Install new benches and litter bins	
	Improve measures to control dog mess	
	Install MUGA (multi-use games area)	
	Re-instate fence to A417 boundary	
	Increase parking areas (dependent on development of adjoining Hucclecote Centre)	
	Improve cricket pitch maintenance	
	Improve signage to open space	
<b>Lobley's Drive/Mead Road open space</b>	Draw up mini-management plan for this open space, including tree work and path clearance	
	Programme extensive tree management/thinning and improve ditch clearance	
	Improve measures to control dog mess	
	Install additional litter bins	
	Skate park – improve maintenance and explore future expansion, install seating	
	Lobley's car park – improve surfacing, investigate relocation of Amey wood chippings to a different site.	
	Install seating	
	Explore potential for additional junior football pitches at Lobley's (drainage issues)	
	Programme footpath/cycleway clearance, carry out surface repairs as required.	
	Expand play area at Mead Road, to include equipment for older children, explore potential for MUGA	

**Other sites/actions:**

<b>Hucclecote Green Colwell Avenue Green Farm open space Pit Mill Gardens Millfields</b>	<p>Management of these informal spaces will be relatively minimal, to include grass cutting &amp; tree management.</p> <p>Extra dog/litter bins to be installed wherever necessary</p>	
<b>Buscombe Gardens Appleton Way</b>	<p>These spaces are primarily food storage/balancing ponds, and their management and maintenance will reflect this function.</p> <p>However, they also have potential to be developed to improve their wildlife and habitat value. Appleton Way could be linked with improved footpaths and signage to Hucclecote Hay Meadows.</p>	

**Potential disposal/alternative use sites:**

Small area of underused land at Mead Road could be developed for alternative uses (subject to consultation)

**Potential new/additional sites:**

Residential development of land at the Hucclecote Centre will include additional open space

**How will the proposed improvements be funded?**

We can fund some of the works proposed through the council's capital and revenue programmes (Including the grounds maintenance contract).

We will seek external funding for capital works, as well as working with local groups and organisations to access additional external funding.

Some areas will benefit from Section 106 funds, which are paid by developers as part of a legal requirement of planning permission. These funds are usually targeted to specific sites and facilities (generally for formal sport and play improvements).

**How can I have my say?**

Details of consultation will go here.

This action plan will be reviewed annually

Draft Open Space Action Plan for Hucclecote ward, November 2013