



DOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE AND PLAY STANDARDS PAPER

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QUALITY, INTEGRITY, PROFESSIONALISM

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Glossary

AGS	Amenity greenspace
ASB	Anti-social behaviour
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DDC	Dover District Council
DPD	Development Plan Document
FIT	Fields in Trust
FOG	Friends of Group
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GLA	Greater London Authority
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LDF	Local Development Framework
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
MUGA	Multi-use Games Area (an enclosed area with a hard surface for variety of informal play)
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NSALG	National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
SOA	Super Output Areas
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the Open Space Standards Paper prepared by Knight, Kavanagh & Page (KKP) for Dover District Council (DDC). It follows on from the preceding Open Space Assessment Report. Together, the two documents provide an evidence base to help inform the future decision-making processes for open space provision in Dover District.

This study is intended to assist in the Councils Local Plan Review for the area. Given the potential scale of growth in the area, and the implications such growth may have on existing provision, it is important for the Council to have clarity over existing levels of open space and what types of provision should be considered as a priority.

This document helps identify the deficiencies and surpluses in existing open space provision. In addition, it should help inform an approach to securing open space facilities through new housing development and help form the basis for negotiation with developers for contributions towards the provision of open spaces.

Scope

The table below details the open space typologies included within the study:

Table 1.1: Open space typologies

Typology	Primary purpose
Parks and gardens	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.
Natural and semi-natural greenspaces	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.
Amenity greenspace	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.
Provision for children and young people	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, MUGAs, skateboard areas and teenage shelters.
Allotments	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.

This study should be read in conjunction with the Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) which is also being updated by KKP (provided in a separate report). The associated PPS covers the provision and need of formal outdoor sports. The PPS is undertaken in accordance with the methodology provided in Sport England's Guidance 'Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance' for assessing demand and supply for outdoor sports facilities (October 2013).

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Analysis areas

For mapping purposes and audit analysis, the Dover District area is divided into five analysis areas. These use existing Ward boundaries to reflect settlement areas. The use of analysis areas allows more localised examination of open space surpluses and deficiencies. They also allow local circumstances and issues to be taken into account.

The analysis areas in the associated PPS are different as they are intended to reflect how sports are played across the District (in line with the Sport England methodology).

The analysis areas and their populations are shown in the table below.

Table 1.2: Population by analysis area

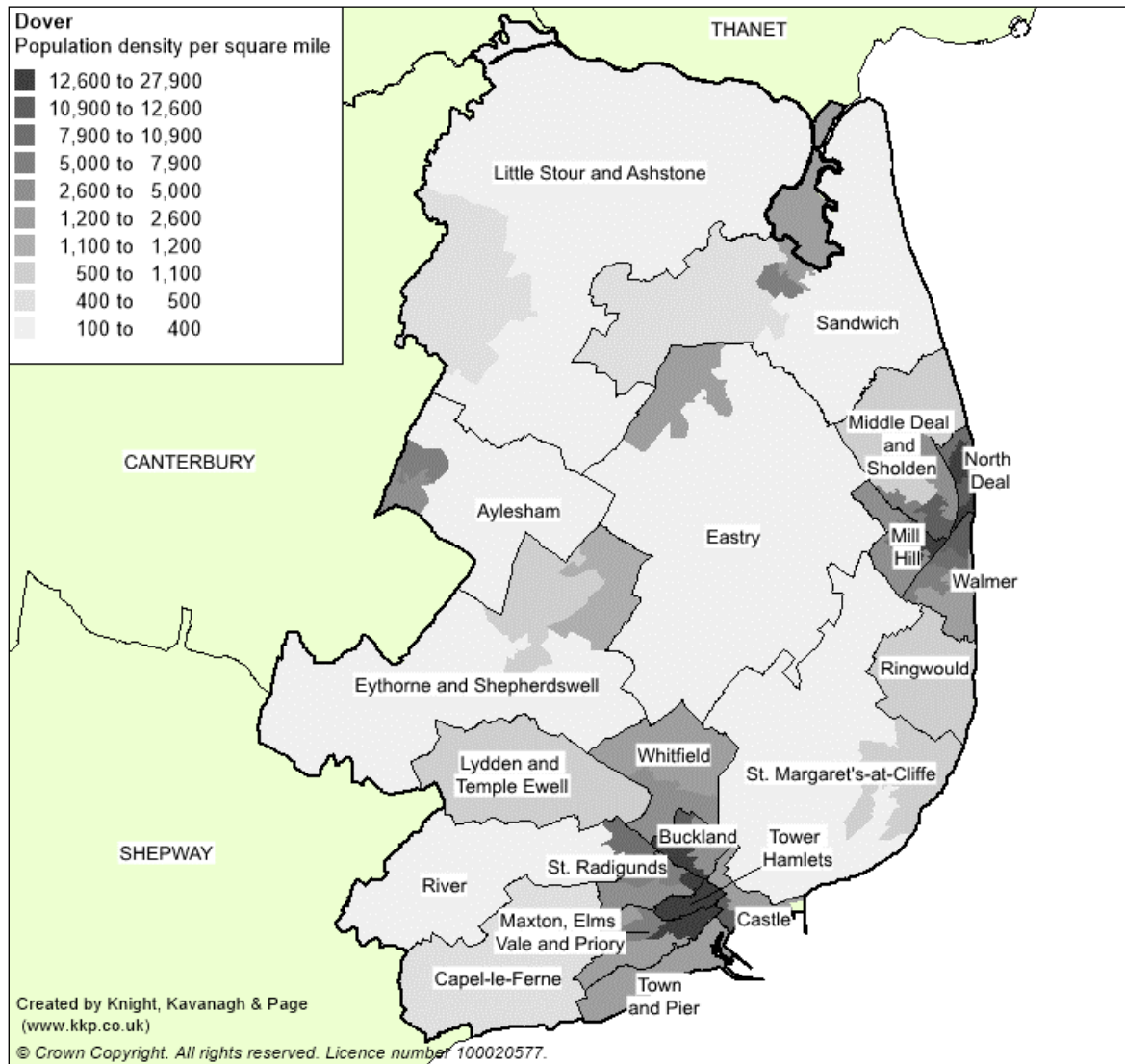
Analysis area	Wards*	Population (2017)†
Aylesham	◀ Aylesham	5,281
Deal/Walmer	◀ North Deal, ◀ Middle Deal & Sholden, ◀ Mill Hill, ◀ North Deal, ◀ Ringwould ◀ Walmer	33,195
Dover	◀ Buckland, ◀ Capel-le-Ferne, ◀ Castle, ◀ Lydden & Temple Ewell, ◀ Maxton, Elms Vale & Priory, ◀ River, ◀ St. Margaret's-at-Cliffe, ◀ St. Radigunds, ◀ Town and Pier, ◀ Whitfield	52,890
Rural	◀ Eastry, ◀ Eythorne & Shepherdswell ◀ Little Stour Eastry & Ashstone	17,247
Sandwich	◀ Sandwich	7,190
Dover District		115,803

Figure 1.1 overleaf shows the map of analysis areas with population density.

* This is based on Wards within the District at the time of writing the Assessment Report (December 2018). It is recognised that the Wards changed in 2019.
Source: ONS Mid-Year Estimates 2017

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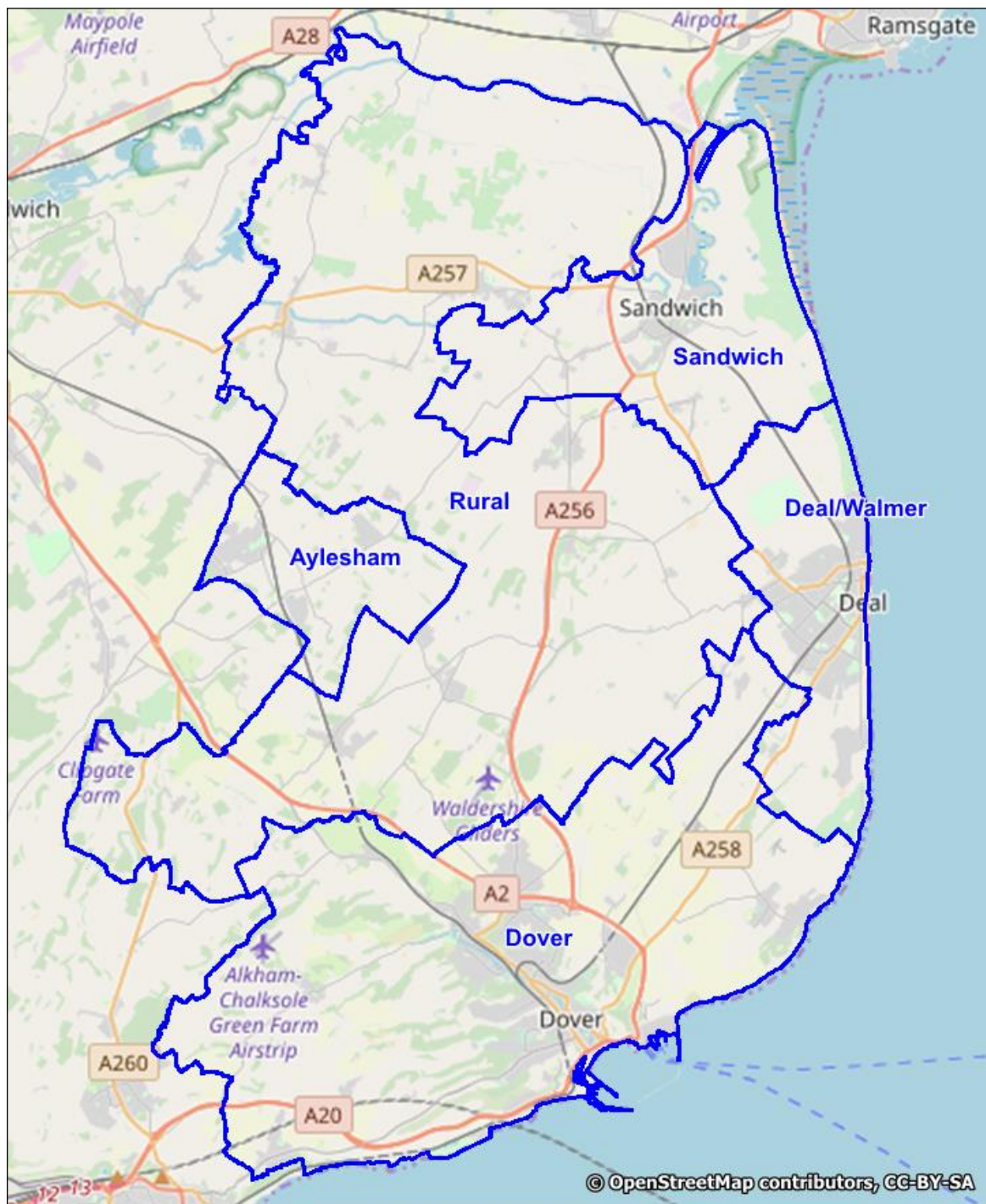
Figure 1.1: Map of Wards in Dover District*



* Based on Wards at time of Assessment Report (December 2018)

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Figure 1.2: Map of Analysis areas



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PART 2: ASSESSMENT REPORT SUMMARY

A summary from the Assessment Report on a typology by typology basis is set out below.

2.1 Parks and gardens

- ◀ There are seven sites classified as parks and gardens, an equivalent to over 51 hectares.
- ◀ Fields In Trust (FIT) suggests 0.80 hectares per 1,000 population as a guideline quantity standard. Overall, Dover District is below this suggested standard.
- ◀ However, other forms of open space also contribute to the perception and role of parks; such as sites like Samphire Hoe Country Park and Betteshanger Country Park. Both sites are classified and included as natural and semi-natural greenspace provision. However, if included in the provision of parks, the FIT suggested standard is surpassed.
- ◀ Most parks provision is in Dover (six sites). The area of highest population density. Whilst several settlements are without parks provision, they are generally areas of lower population density. The exceptions are Sandwich and Aylesham. A Sandwich Parks Project has been established by DDC/Town Council to help address this.
- ◀ Of the seven parks in Dover District, three rate above the threshold (Victoria Park, Kearsney Abbey and Russell Gardens).
- ◀ Sites such as Pencester Gardens and Connaught Park which score below the threshold for quality are recognised as having the potential to be enhanced (see Assessment Report Section 4.4).
- ◀ All sites are assessed as being of high value, with the important social interaction, health benefits, historic value and sense of place sites offer being recognised.

2.2 Natural and semi-natural greenspace

- ◀ In total, there are 28 sites covering over 401 hectares.
- ◀ Fields In Trust (FIT) suggests 1.80 hectares per 1,000 population as a guideline quantity standard. Overall, Dover District is above this suggested standard with 3.47 hectares per 1,000 population.
- ◀ No gaps in catchment mapping are identified based on the 30-minute drive time catchment derived from the survey responses.
- ◀ Three of the four natural and semi-natural sites assessed rate above the threshold set for quality. Only one site (Rear of Clarendon Place) rates below the threshold.
- ◀ All assessed sites rate above the threshold for value; demonstrating the added benefit natural provision can provide in terms of flora and fauna as well as recreational roles.

2.3 Amenity greenspace

- ◀ There are 110 sites in Dover District; over 147 hectares of provision. If combining amenity greenspace (AGS) and closed churchyards, there are 144 sites, over 169 hectares.
- ◀ Fields In Trust (FIT) suggests 0.60 hectares per 1,000 population as a guideline quantity standard. Overall, Dover District is above this suggested standard with 1.28 hectares per 1,000 population for amenity greenspace.
- ◀ No gaps in catchment mapping are identified based on the 10-minute walk time catchment derived from the survey responses.
- ◀ Over two thirds (68%) of amenity greenspace sites in Dover District rate above the threshold for quality. Several of the low scoring sites are marginally below the threshold.
- ◀ The majority of sites scoring below the threshold are smaller sites and are observed as being basic, small pockets of green space and lack ancillary features.
- ◀ In addition to its multifunctional role, amenity greenspace makes a valuable contribution to visual aesthetics for communities – hence all sites rate above the value threshold.

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2.4 Provision for children and young people

- ◀ There are 101 play provision sites in Dover District; a total of around 6.50 hectares. A total of 99 sites receive a quality and value score. Sites to not receive a rating is due to late inclusion or being under construction at the time of visit.
- ◀ FIT suggests a standard of 0.25 hectares per 1,000 population. Overall, Dover District has an equivalent of 0.06 hectares per 1,000 population. If land from the surrounding 'parent' site is also included, then provision level of 0.30 hectares per 1,000 population is noted. However, this would be double counting of the surrounding amenity provision. Hence for this study, the current provision level for play is only focused on equipped play (0.06 hectares per 1,000 population).
- ◀ No gaps in catchment mapping are identified based on the 15-minute walk time catchment derived from the survey responses.
- ◀ Quality of provision is generally good across Dover District with 58% of sites assessed as above the threshold.
- ◀ There is a perceived lack of provision catering for older age ranges. This is thought to be the cause of some instances of anti-social behaviour being reported.
- ◀ The majority of play provision (91%) rates above the threshold for value; reflecting the social, healthy and developmental benefits provision can provide.

2.5 Allotments

- ◀ There are 29 sites classified as allotments in Dover District equating to nearly 23 hectares.
- ◀ Based on Dover District's current population (115,803) it does not meet the National Society Allotment & Leisure Gardens (NSALG) standard. Using this suggested standard, the minimum amount of allotment provision for Dover District is 28 hectares. Existing provision of 23 hectares therefore does not meet this guideline.
- ◀ Of the obtained information, six sites have a waiting list.
- ◀ The majority of sites rate above the quality threshold (90%), suggesting a reasonably good standard of allotment provision in Dover District.
- ◀ All allotments rate above the threshold for value. This reflects the associated social inclusion and health benefits, amenity value and the sense of place offered by such forms of provision.

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PART 3: SETTING PROVISION STANDARDS

3.1 Developing and setting standards

The following section derives and details the proposed local standards recommended for DDC. It details how current provision levels identified as part of the assessment compare to existing standards as well as national benchmarks and whether any adjustments to the proposed standards are required.

It is important to recognise that there are no prescribed national standards for open space provision. In general, very little guidance is offered at a national level for quality with benchmarking of standards focusing on quantity and accessibility levels. Subsequently the following approach has been used to provide an informed reasoning to the setting and application of standards for DDC.

Consultation to update local need for open space provision has been conducted with key local authority officers as well as with parish and town councils. This has been via face to face meetings and surveys to all parish councils. A summary of any instances of demand being highlighted is set out in Part 3.4. A Community Survey was also hosted and promoted online. The results of the survey are set out within the Assessment Report.

An overview of the proposed standards in terms of quality, accessibility and quantity is set out below. Further information on the evidence used to inform these standards is provided in the associated Assessment Report. The proposed standards are then used to determine deficiencies and surpluses for open space in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility (as recommended by Companion Guidance to PPG17).

3.2 Quality

To determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended Companion Guidance to PPG17); the results of the site assessments are colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The primary aim of applying a threshold is to identify sites where investment and/or improvements are required. It can also be used to set an aspirational quality standard to be achieved at some point in the future and to inform decisions around the need to further protect sites from future development (particularly when applied with its respective value score in a matrix format).

The baseline threshold for assessing quality can be set on the pass rate for Green Flag criteria (66%) as the site audit criteria is based on Green Flag. This is the only national benchmark available for quality of parks and open spaces. However, the site audit criteria used for Green Flag is not appropriate for every open space typology as it is designed to represent a sufficiently high standard of site.

Consequently, not all the same criteria are used for scoring all types of open space; as some criteria is more relevant for some forms of open space than others. For example, parks and gardens are assessed against most criteria to reflect the range and quality of facilities/features a park can typically be expected to contain. In comparison, natural and semi-natural greenspace is not assessed for example in terms of lighting or gradient; as neither are considered critical or relevant for natural sites. Whereas for parks, both elements are used as part of scoring parks provision. This approach is based on KKP's prior experience and work with other local authorities. A summary of the criteria used to score each open space type is set out in Appendix 1 of the Assessment Report.

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Sites are also allocated a value score. Quality and value are fundamentally different and can be unrelated. For example, a high-quality space may be inaccessible and, thus, be of little value; while, a poor quality space may be the only one in an area and thus be immensely valuable. As a result, quality and value are also treated separately in terms of scoring.

For value, there is no national guidance on the setting of thresholds. The 20% threshold applied is derived from our experience and knowledge in assessing the perceived value of sites. Whilst 20% may initially seem low it is a relative score - designed to reflect those sites that meet more than one aspect of the criteria used for assessing value.

Table 3.2.1: Quality benchmark standards

Typology	Quality threshold	Value threshold
Parks and gardens	60%	20%
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	60%	20%
Amenity greenspace	50%	20%
Provision for children and young people	60%	20%
Allotments	50%	20%

3.3 Accessibility

Accessibility catchments for different types of provision are a tool to identify communities currently not served by existing facilities. It is recognised that factors that underpin catchment areas vary from person to person, day to day and hour to hour. For the purposes of this process this problem is overcome by accepting the concept of 'effective catchments', defined as the distance that would be travelled by the majority of users.

Results of the community survey have been used to set initial accessibility catchments. These are presented in Table 3.3.1 and are applied to help inform deficiencies in each form of open space provision.

Table 3.3.1: Accessibility catchments

Open space type	Accessibility catchment	Distance equivalent
Parks & Gardens	15-minute walk time	1,200m
Natural & Semi-natural Greenspace	30-minute drive time	n/a
Amenity Greenspace	10-minute walk time	800m
Play areas & provision for young people	15-minute walk time	1,200m
Allotments	15-minute walk time	1,200m

DDC has existing standards set for most types of open space provision. No previous accessibility standard was set for natural and semi-natural greenspace as it was considered inappropriate.

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The accessibility standards for accessible greenspace was prepared with reference to the Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) from Natural England. This cites a series of different catchments dependent upon a sites size. The smallest is for households to be within 300m of a 2-hectare accessible natural greenspace. The DDC standard uses a smaller site size requirement to reflect that residents were content with existing levels of open space; their concerns being more focused on quality issues.

Table 3.3.2: Existing DDC accessibility standards

Open space type	Accessibility standard
Accessible greenspace*	At least one accessible green space of minimum size 0.4 hectares within 300m At least one green space of 2 hectares within 15 minute walking time/1,000m
Children's equipped play space	Local play space within 600m and/or strategic play space within 1,000m At least one equipped play space in each settlement of village level or above.
Allotments/community gardens	At least one site within 15 minute walking time/1,000m

Guidance on walking distance and times is published by Fields In Trust (FIT) in its document *Beyond the Six Acre Standard* (2015). These guidelines have been converted into an equivalent time in Table 3.3.3. FIT also offer appropriate accessibility distances for children's play provision; these vary depending on the age range of the equipment.

Table 3.3.3: FIT accessibility guidelines

Open space type	FIT guideline	Time equivalent	
Parks & Gardens	710m	9-minute walk time	
Natural & Semi-natural Greenspace	720m	9-minute walk time	
Amenity Greenspace	480m	6-minute walk time	
Play areas & provision for young people	LAP	100m	1-minute walk time
	LEAP	400m	5-minute walk time
	NEAP	1,000m	12.5-minute walk time
	Youth	700m	9-minute walk time
Allotments	n/a	n/a	

Recommendation for accessibility standards

For the purposes of this study, using the accessibility catchments derived from the community survey for most typologies is recommended. Best practice advice in the Companion Guidance to PPG17 advocates using locally derived provision standards.

Whilst the FIT accessibility catchments are recognised benchmarks, they are not as relevant locally in comparison to accessibility standards derived from the community survey.

* Consists of parks and gardens, amenity greenspace, closed churchyards

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For parks and gardens, amenity greenspace and allotments the accessibility catchments from the community survey should be used. For allotments this is the same as the existing adopted standard.

For parks and gardens and amenity greenspace separate accessibility standards are recommended as opposed to the existing single accessibility greenspace standard. This provides a more up to date version of distances people are willing to travel, utilising the findings of the community survey and reflecting the benchmark guidance offered from FIT.

It will also enable analysis to distinguish sites of both types of provision providing a key role in terms of accessibility (i.e. a gap in parks provision may be being served by amenity greenspaces). Consequently, these sites could be a priority for enhancement.

The accessibility standard for play areas & provision for young people should still reflect the existing approach of strategic and non-strategic sites. It is recommended that sites considered strategic use the 15-minute walk time identified from the community survey. Non-strategic sites should retain the 600m catchment currently adopted. This approach will reflect the different types of provision and how they may be used. It will also allow identification of non-strategic sites providing a key role and which could be considered as being a potential strategic site. A map of these catchments is set out in Appendix One.

No accessibility standard is recommended for natural and semi-natural greenspace. The role of such provision is often to provide potential wildlife habitats. The focus for this study is predominantly on recreational use of open space. The two can therefore often be competing. As a result, provision categorised as natural and semi-natural greenspace is covered by the Green Infrastructure Strategy. However, the role of some forms of existing provision may need to be recognised. Consequently, the application of the accessibility standards for parks and gardens and amenity greenspace identifies any natural and semi-natural greenspace which provides or has the potential to provide a role in terms of accessible greenspace.

On this basis, considering the above information and following best practice advice which advocates locally derived provision standards, we have set the following accessibility standards for each typology.

Table 3.3.4: Recommended accessibility standards

Open space type	Recommended accessibility standard
Parks & Gardens	15-minute walk time
Natural & Semi-natural Greenspace	n/a
Amenity Greenspace	10-minute walk time
Play areas & provision for young people	Strategic sites: 15-minute walk time
	Non-strategic sites: 7.5-minute walk time
Allotments	15-minute walk time

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3.4 Quantity

Quantity standards can be used to identify areas of shortfalls and help with setting requirements for future developments. To set a quantity standard it is useful to compare existing levels of provision identified as part of the assessment against national benchmarks. The current provision levels are initially detailed in the Assessment Report. It is also important to identify any instances of local need for open space as identified and verified through consultation with local authority officers and parish/town councils.

Guidance on quantity levels is published by FIT in its document *Beyond the Six Acre Standard* (2015). The guidance provides benchmark standards for three types of open space provision; parks and gardens, amenity greenspace and natural and semi-natural greenspace. FIT also suggests 0.25 hectares per 1,000 population of equipped/ designated playing space as a guideline quantity standard for play provision. The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) offers guidance on allotments.

Table 3.4.1 sets out the quantity figures for current provision levels identified, existing quantity standards and the national benchmarks.

Table 3.4.1: Comparison of current provision, existing standards & national benchmarks

Typology	Hectares per 1,000 population		
	Current provision levels	Existing adopted standards	National benchmarks
Parks & gardens	0.45	2.22*	0.80
Amenity greenspace	1.46		0.60
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	3.47	n/a	1.80
Provision for children & young people	0.06	0.06	0.25
Allotment	0.20	0.21	0.25

Recommendation for quantity standards

The recommendation for open space is for the current provision levels to be used as the recommended quantity standards for Dover District. The exception is for natural and semi-natural greenspace which is explained below.

The national benchmark quantity standards are not deemed appropriate for use as they do not take into consideration the local circumstances, distribution and historical trends of the area. An approach using locally derived quantity standards ensures more reflective standards are set as they are based on and take consideration to current local provision levels and views.

* Previously recorded as a combined single Accessible Greenspace standard

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Furthermore, the community survey shows residents are content with existing levels of provision. The amount/availability of provision is considered to be very (18%) or quite satisfactory (47%) by respondents to the community survey.

Table 3.4.2: Survey respondent satisfaction to availability

Very satisfactory	Quite satisfactory	Neither satisfactory or unsatisfactory	Quite unsatisfactory	Very unsatisfactory
17.7%%	46.5%	17.4%	14.5%	3.9%

Consultation with parish councils also asked whether they considered there to be enough open space to meet local needs and if they thought any shortfalls existed. These concerns also help to highlight potential priorities and actions at certain settlements. A summary of the key headlines is set out below (Table 3.4.3).

It is important to recognise that many of the concerns reflect issues with quality and access. There appears to be instances to a lack of provision in specific areas; particularly in terms of allotments and play. However, in general, none of the concerns justify increasing the quantity provision standards for the whole of the District based on these local instances.

Table 3.4.3: Parish council responses summary

Parish council	Highlighted concerns
Ash	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for improved sports and recreational facilities • Exploring opportunities for a site to accommodate provision for older ages. • Lack of public transport to skate parks in Dover and Sandwich • New and future housing will put a strain on existing provision
Aylesham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cripps Close Play Area is considered not fit for purpose • Desire for mix of play provision • PC keen to expand provision for older age groups • No allotments but waiting list exists
Deal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cowdray square used to be an active play area but still wanted • North Deal Playing Field considering ways to improve • Freemans Way considered important site to residents
Dover	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate play area especially for teenagers • Lots of land but facilities out of date • Vandalism at High Meadow LNR. • Perceived anti-social behaviour at Pencester gardens • Connaught Park lacks investment • Dover has problems with health and obesity
Lydden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate quality open spaces. PC would like to provide a children's play area if a suitable site could be purchased/leased. • Accessibility to Lydden recreation field cited as poor
Sandwich	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandwich Parks Project is priority • Lack of provision for under 15-year olds • Some overgrown paths at Gazen Salts Nature Reserve

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Parish council	Highlighted concerns
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poulders Play Area has potential to be better • Demand for allotments
Walmer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of use at Markewood Recreation Ground • Demand for allotments

On this basis, the recommendation is for the current provision levels to be predominantly used as the recommended quantity standards for Dover District.

For natural provision, no quantity standard is recommended. The existing provision level of 3.47 hectares per 1,000 population is well above the national FIT benchmark of 1.80 hectares per 1,000 population. Furthermore, application of the existing provision level as a quantity standard to new housing developments is likely to be unachievable; as a large amount of provision would be required to maintain the existing levels identified.

No changes in the setting of quantity standards for allotments or provision for children and young people is recommended.

A lack of provision catering for older age groups is observed but general play provision is not highlighted as having a particular shortfall. Therefore, there is not considered a requirement to increase the quantity standard but a need to ensure equipment catering for older age ranges is prioritised in opportunities where play provision is to be provided (either through new sites or additional equipment at existing sites).

For allotments, waiting lists are present at some sites across the District. The presence of waiting lists indicates demand for provision exists. Consultation findings from the community survey and parish councils also highlights a need for greater allotment provision. On this basis, consideration to retaining the existing adopted standard of 0.21 hectares per 1,000 population is recommended.

Based on the above, the recommended quantity standards for Dover District are set out in Table 3.4.4.

Table 3.4.4: Recommended quantity standard

Typology		Quantity standard (hectares per 1,000 population)	
Accessible greenspace	<i>Parks & gardens</i>	1.91	0.45
	<i>Amenity greenspace</i>		1.46
Natural & semi-natural greenspace		n/a	
Provision for children & young people		0.06	
Allotment		0.21	

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PART 4: APPLICATION OF PROVISION STANDARDS

The provision standards used to determine deficiencies and surpluses for open space are set in terms of quality, accessibility and quantity.

4.1: Quality and value

Each type of open space receives a separate quality and value score. This also allows for application of a high and low quality/value matrix to further help determine prioritisation of investment and to identify sites that may be surplus as a particular open space type.

Quality and value matrix

Assessing the quality and value of open spaces is used to identify those sites which should be given the highest level of protection, those which require enhancement and those which may no longer be needed for their present purpose. When analysing the quality/value of a site, it should be done in conjunction with regard to the quantity of provision in the area (i.e. whether there is a deficiency).

The high/low classification gives the following possible combinations of quality and value:

		Quality	
		High	Low
Value	High	All sites should have an aspiration to come into this category. Many sites of this category should be viewed as being key forms of open space provision.	The approach to these sites should be to enhance their quality to the applied standard. The priority will be those sites providing a key role in terms of access to provision.
	Low	The preferred approach to a site in this category should be to enhance its value in terms of its present primary function. If this is not possible, consideration to a change of primary function should be given (i.e. a change to another open space typology).	The approach to these sites in areas of identified shortfall should be to enhance their quality provided it is possible also to enhance their value. In areas of sufficiency a change of primary typology should be considered first. If no shortfall of other open space typologies is noted than the site may be redundant/ 'surplus to requirements'.

Implications and recommendations

Following identification of high and low quality sites, a summary of the actions for any relevant sites in each analysis area is shown in the following tables.

The purpose of the tables below is to highlight sites for each typology scoring low for quality and/or value in each analysis area and to provide an indication to its level of priority and/or importance regarding enhancement. Site specific scoring is housed in the project databases. The actions cited are broad and intended to stimulate further investigation.

There is a need for flexibility to the enhancing of sites within close proximity to sites of low quality. In some instances, a better use of resources and investment may be to focus on more suitable sites for enhancement as opposed to trying to enhance a site that is not appropriate or cost effective to do so.

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Table 4.1.1: Aylesham Analysis Area Quality Summary

Summary	Action
Allotments	
◀ No allotments in analysis area	n/a
Amenity greenspace	
◀ Spinney Lane and St Peter's Church rate below quality threshold	◀ Enhancing site quality should be explored where possible
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	
◀ No assessed sites in analysis area	n/a
Parks and gardens	
◀ No parks in this analysis area	n/a
Provision for children and young people	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Easole Street play area and Easole Street basketball area in Nonnington rate below quality threshold ◀ Atlee Avenue play area and The Crescent play area rate below quality and value threshold 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Quality should be enhanced where possible (e.g. improve the range/condition of play equipment) ◀ Enhance quality of site provided it is possible to also enhance value.

Table 4.1.2: Deal/Walmer Analysis Area Quality Summary

Summary	Action
Allotments	
◀ All sites score above threshold	n/a
Amenity greenspace	
◀ Seven sites rate below quality threshold: Freeman's Way, York and Albany Close, Captain's Garden, Wilson Avenue, St Martin's Road, Diana Gardens Playing Field and Hangman's Lane.	◀ Enhancing site quality should be explored where possible
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	
◀ All assessed sites score above threshold.	n/a
Parks and gardens	
◀ All assessed sites score above threshold.	n/a
Provision for children and young people	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Drill Field MUGA, Betteshanger Country Park play area and Travers Road play area rate below quality threshold. ◀ Cowdray Square play area and Queens Rise play area South rate below quality and value threshold. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Quality should be enhanced where possible (e.g. improve the range/condition of play equipment) ◀ Enhance quality of site provided it is possible to also enhance value.

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Table 4.1.3: Dover Analysis Area Quality Summary

Summary	Action
Allotments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All sites score above threshold 	n/a
Amenity greenspace	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14 sites rate below quality threshold; Lydden Recreation Field, Hougham Village Green, Knights Templars, Napier Road, Riverside Centre, Barwick Road, Victoria Road (Zig Zag path), Western Heights Sports Ground, Reach Close Amenity land, Citadel Heights North, Citadel Heights South, Land opposite village green Rose Hill, Kingsdown Freedown and Former Officer's Mess playing field 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing site quality should be explored where possible (e.g. exploring options for improved maintenance, drainage and enhancement of general appearance). Western Heights Sports Ground and Former Officer's Mess playing field potentially help serve gaps in catchment mapping (Table 4.2.4)
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rear of Clarendon Place rates below quality threshold 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site quality to be enhanced where possible; for example, exploring options for ancillary facilities, signage, personal security etc
Parks and gardens	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Four parks rate below quality threshold; Connaught Park, Marine Parade Gardens, Pencerster Gardens and Bushy Ruff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site quality should look to be enhanced where possible in line with other sites of a similar type. For example, increasing the number of ancillary features and facilities.
Provision for children and young people	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15 sites rate below quality threshold; Hougham Village MUGA, Burgoyne Heights South MUGA, Connaught Park play area, Peverell Road play area, Peverell Road basketball net, King George V playing Field play area, Bindon Blood Road basketball area, Beaufoy Terrace youth shelter, Burgoyne Heights play area, Alkham Recreation Ground play area, King George V's playing fields play area 1 and 2, Ottawa Crescent Play Area, St Davids Avenue MUGA and St Davids Avenue play area Five sites rate below quality and value threshold; Bunkers Hill Avenue MUGA, Elms Vale Recreation Ground MUGA, Alexander Field play area, Russell Gardens play area and Gibraltar Square play area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality should be enhanced where possible (e.g. improve the range/condition of play equipment) Enhance quality of site provided it is possible to also enhance value.

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Table 4.1.4: Rural Analysis Area Quality Summary

Summary	Action
Allotments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two allotments rate below quality threshold; Studdal allotments and orchard and Mill Lane allotments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore ways to improve overall quality where possible (e.g. working with associations to put plot inspections in place or hold maintenance days etc)
Amenity greenspace	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 sites rate below quality; Elgars Field, Edge of Coldred village, Westmarsh Village Hall, Downs Road Recreation Ground, Boystown Place, St James's Church, Petts Lane, Wootton & Denton Cricket Club, Jack Foat Trust Off Mill Lane 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing site quality should be explored where possible (e.g. exploring options for improved maintenance, drainage and enhancement of general appearance).
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No assessed sites in analysis area 	n/a
Parks and gardens	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No parks in analysis area 	n/a
Provision for children and young people	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 sites rate below quality threshold; Downs Road Recreation Ground play area 1, 2 and basketball area, Gun Park Play area and skate park, Sweetbriar Lane MUGA, Staple Recreation Ground play area, Tilmanstone Play Space, Mill Lane play area and Circular Road play area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality should be enhanced where possible (e.g. improve the range/condition of play equipment) Enhance quality of site provided it is possible to also enhance value.

Table 4.1.5: Sandwich Analysis Area Quality Summary

Summary	Action
Allotments	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Goretop Lane Allotments rates below quality threshold 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality should be enhanced where possible; explore ways to improve overall appearance and security
Amenity greenspace	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boatman's Hill (Alexander Close) and Laburnam Avenue rate below quality threshold. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhancing site quality should be explored where possible (e.g. explore options for improved maintenance, drainage and enhancement of general appearance).
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All assessed sites score above threshold 	n/a
Parks and gardens	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No parks in analysis area 	n/a
Provision for children and young people	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poulder's Gardens, Worth Play Area and Stonar Close play area rate below quality threshold. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality should be enhanced where possible (e.g. improve the range/condition of play equipment).

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4.2: Accessibility

Accessibility catchments for different types of provision are a tool to identify communities currently not served by existing facilities. It is recognised that factors that underpin catchment areas vary from person to person, day to day and hour to hour. For the purposes of this process this problem is overcome by accepting the concept of ‘effective catchments’, defined as the distance that would be travelled by the majority of users.

Results of the community survey and Settlement Hierarchy for Dover District* have been used to inform accessibility catchment standards. These are presented in Table 4.2.1 and are applied to identify potential deficiencies in each form of open space provision.

Table 4.2.1: Accessibility catchments

Open space type	Recommended accessibility standard
Parks & Gardens	15-minute walk time
Natural & Semi-natural Greenspace	n/a
Amenity Greenspace	10-minute walk time
Play areas & provision for young people	Strategic sites: 15-minute walk time
	Non-strategic sites: 7.5-minute walk time
Allotments	15-minute walk time

Identifying deficiencies

If an area does not have access to the required level of provision (consistent with the catchments and settlement hierarchy) it is deemed deficient. KKP has identified instances where new sites may be needed or potential opportunities could be explored in order to provide comprehensive access to this type of provision (i.e. a gap in one form of provision may exist but the area in question may be served by another form of open space).

Implications and recommendations

The following sections summarise the deficiencies identified from the application of the accessibility standards together with the recommended actions. Please refer to the associated mapping data to view site locations.

In determining the subsequent actions for any identified catchment gaps, the following key principles are adhered to:

- ◆ Increase capacity/usage in order to meet increases in demand, or
- ◆ Enhance quality in order to meet increases in demand, or
- ◆ Commuted sum for ongoing maintenance/repairs to mitigate impact of new demand

These principles are intended to mitigate for the impact of increases in demand on existing provision. An increase in population will reduce the lifespan of certain sites and/or features (e.g. play equipment, maintenance regimes etc). This will lead to the increased requirement to refurbish and/or replace such forms of provision. Consequently, the recommended approach is to increase the capacity of and/or enhance the existing provision available.

* Core Strategy adopted 2011

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Aylesham

Table 4.2.2: Aylesham Summary

Typology	Identified catchment gap need	Action
Parks and gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gap in 15-minute walk time catchment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gap is served by other forms of provision such as amenity greenspace (e.g. Hill Crescent Rec Ground, Hill Crescent, Market Place and Burgess Road) Ensuring quality of such sites and exploring options for enhancement is recommended
Amenity Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No gaps in 10-minute walk time catchment. 	n/a
Provision for children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant gaps in walk time catchments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for Market Square play area to be a strategic site should be considered
Allotments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gap in 15-minute walk time catchment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demand also highlighted. Opportunities to provide a site should be explored.

Deal/Walmer

Table 4.2.3: Deal/Walmer Accessibility Summary

Typology	Identified catchment gap need	Action
Parks and gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some minor gaps in 15-minute walk time catchment to north and south 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gap is served by other forms of provision such as amenity greenspace (e.g. North Deal Playing Field and Markewood Recreation Ground)
Amenity Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No gaps in 10-minute walk time catchment. 	n/a
Provision for children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No gaps in walk time catchments 	n/a
Allotments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No gaps in 15-minute walk time catchment 	n/a

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Dover

Table 4.2.4: Dover Accessibility Summary

Typology	Identified catchment gap need	Action
Parks and gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some gaps in 15-minute walk time catchment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gap is served by other forms of provision such as amenity greenspace (e.g. Elms Vale Recreation Ground, Buckland Community Centre, Sheridan Road, Western Heights Sports Ground, Whitfield Recreation Ground and Former Officers Mess playing field) Gap may also be served by natural sites such as Elms Vale, High Meadow Nature Reserve and Samphire Hoe Country Park Western Heights Sports Ground and Former Officers Mess playing field rate below quality threshold (Table 4.1.3)
Amenity Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No gaps in 10-minute walk time catchment 	n/a
Provision for children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant gaps in walk time catchments. However, lack of strategic site to north. Despite being covered by catchment areas, the area of Maxton is likely to be an actual access gap (due to topography of area) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential for sites such as Peverell Road play area, Whitfield Recreation Ground, Buckland Community Centre and Bindon Blood Road to be strategic sites should be explored Explore opportunities to provide paly provision in area
Allotments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No gaps in 15-minute walk time 	n/a

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Rural

Table 4.2.5: Rural Accessibility Summary

Typology	Identified catchment gap need	Action
Parks and gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Gaps identified in 15-minute walk time catchment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ However, all settlements of village level or above contain at least one accessible open space
Amenity Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ No gaps in 10-minute walk time catchment to settlements of village level or above 	n/a
Provision for children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Gaps in walk time catchments identified to villages of Goodnestone, Great Mongeham, Lydden, Ripple & Woodnesborough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Demand also highlighted by Lydden Parish Council ◀ Support any efforts by villages to provide forms of provision
Allotments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Gaps in 15-minute walk time catchment; noticeably to St Margaret's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Exploring need and opportunities to provide provision at St Margaret's should be explored. ◀ Provision of this type not considered to be expected at village level

Sandwich

Table 4.2.6: Sandwich Accessibility Summary

Typology	Identified catchment gap need	Action
Parks and gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Gap in 15-minute walk time catchment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ Gap is served by other forms of provision such as amenity greenspace (e.g. The Butts, Ropewalk and Town Wall, and Gazen Salts Recreation Ground) ◀ Ensuring quality of such sites and exploring options for enhancement is recommended
Amenity Greenspace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ No gaps in 10-minute walk time catchment 	n/a
Provision for children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ No gaps in walk time catchments 	n/a
Allotments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◀ No gaps in 15-minute walk time 	n/a

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4.3: Quantity

Quantity standards can be used to identify areas of shortfalls and help with setting requirements for future developments.

Setting quantity standards

The setting and application of quantity standards is necessary to ensure new developments contribute to the provision of open space across the area.

Shortfalls in quality and accessibility standards are identified across the District for different types of open space (as set out in Parts 4.1 and 4.2). Consequently, the Council should seek to ensure these shortfalls are not made worse through increases in demand as part of future development growth across the District.

The recommendation for open space is for the current provision levels to be predominantly used as the recommended quantity standards for Dover District.

The recommended quantity standards for Dover District are:

Table 4.3.1: Recommended quantity standards

Typology		Quantity standard (hectares per 1,000 population)	
Accessible greenspace	<i>Parks & gardens</i>	1.91	0.45
	<i>Amenity greenspace</i>		1.46
Natural & semi-natural greenspace		n/a	
Provision for children & young people		0.06	
Allotment		0.21	

Implication and recommendations

The current provision levels can be used to help identify where areas may have a shortfall against the recommended quantity standards for Dover District. Table 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.3.4 show the position for each sub-area as to whether it is sufficient or identified as having a shortfall against the recommended quantity standards for each type of open space.

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Table 4.3.2: Current accessible greenspace provision against recommended quantity standards

Analysis area	Accessible greenspace		Amenity greenspace		Parks and gardens	
	(Hectares per 1000 population)					
	1.91		1.46		0.45	
	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -	Current provision	+ / -
Aylesham	2.54	+0.63	2.54	1.08	-	- 0.45
Deal/Walmer	1.41	-0.50	1.26	-0.20	0.15	-0.30
Dover	2.06	+0.15	1.20	-0.26	0.86	+0.41
Rural	1.99	+0.08	1.99	+0.53	-	-0.45
Sandwich	2.22	+0.31	2.22	+0.76	-	-0.45

The Deal/Walmer Analysis Area is identified as having a quantity shortfall against the recommended accessible greenspace standard. This is as a result of shortfalls in amenity greenspace and parks and gardens.

Table 4.3.3: Current allotment provision against recommended quantity standards

Analysis area	Allotments	
	(Hectares per 1000 population)	
	0.21	
	Current provision	+ / -
Aylesham	-	-0.21
Deal/Walmer	0.17	-0.04
Dover	0.22	+0.01
Rural	0.17	-0.04
Sandwich	0.30	+0.09

Aylesham, Deal/Walmer and the Rural analysis areas are observed as having quantity shortfalls against the recommended allotments standard.

Provision for children and young people

Table 4.3.4 shows the position for each sub-area as to whether it is sufficient or identified as having a shortfall against the recommended standard in terms of provision for children and young people.

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Table 4.3.4: Current play provision against recommended quantity standard

Analysis area	Hectares per 1000 population	
	Current provision	Sufficiency/deficiency against 0.06 recommended standard
Aylesham	0.09	+0.03
Deal/Walmer	0.04	-0.02
Dover	0.05	-0.01
Rural	0.07	+0.01
Sandwich	0.11	+0.05

The Deal/Walmer and Dover analysis areas are identified as having a quantity shortfall against the recommended play standard. The other three analysis areas currently meet the recommended quantity standard.

Identifying priorities

The focus for areas identified as being sufficient against the existing quantity standards will be for priorities to ensure quality and accessibility standards are being met. Table 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.3.4 also highlights those areas of the District with quantity shortfalls in provision.

The recommended quantity standards should also be used to determine the open space requirements as part of new housing developments. In the first instance, all types of provision should look to be provided as part of new housing developments.

If this is not considered viable, the column signalling whether an analysis area is sufficient or has a shortfall against the recommended quantity standards may be used to help inform the priorities for each type of open space within each analysis area (i.e. the priorities will be where a shortfall has been identified).

For example, in the Aylesham Analysis Area, quantity shortfalls are highlighted in allotments provision (see Table 4.3.3). On this basis, this should be identified as a priority in the area. For other forms of provision, a focus should be on ensuring contributions to enhancing the quality and accessibility of existing open space provision.

PART 5: POLICY ADVICE AND STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Strategic recommendations

The following section provides a summary on the key findings through the application of the quantity, quality and accessibility standards. It incorporates and recommends what the Council should be seeking to achieve in order to address the issues highlighted.

Recommendation 1

◀ Explore low quality sites and their potential for enhancement

The approach to these sites should be to enhance their quality to the applied standards (i.e. high quality) where possible. This is especially the case if the site is deemed to be of high value to the local community. Therefore, they should initially be protected, if they are not already so, in order for their quality to be improved.

The implications summary of low quality sites (p15-17) identifies those sites that should be given consideration for enhancement if possible. Priority sites should be those highlighted as helping or with the potential to serve gaps in provision (see Recommendation 2).

There is also a need to recognise the potential crossover of open space and pitches to help meet the wider sports needs of the District. There may be instances where a site with pitches may no longer be required to have the pitches marked out for use (due to a lack of demand as seasonal/participation trends will change year on year for sports pitches). Shorter term such sites could help to meet local needs as an event space (i.e. informal open space). Whilst longer term such sites could have the potential to be remarked with pitch lines if demand warrants additional pitch provision.

Recommendation 2

◀ Sites helping or with the potential to serve areas identified as having gaps in catchment mapping should be recognised through opportunities for enhancement

The implications summary for the accessibility catchment mapping (p19-21) highlights those sites that help or have the potential to serve gaps in provision. Furthermore, there are several sites across Dover District with a multi-functional role which may serve (to some extent) the wider areas of the District.

The Council should seek to ensure the role and quality of these multi-functional sites through greater levels and diverse range of features linked to those types of open space. This is in order to provide a stronger secondary role as well as opportunities associated with other open space types. This may also help to minimise the need for new forms of provision in order to address gaps in catchments or as a result of potential new housing growth developments. This may particularly be the case in areas where the space to create new forms of provision is not a viable option.

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Recommendation 3

- ◀ *Recognise areas with sufficient provision in open space and how they may be able to meet other areas of need*

If no improvements can be made to sites identified as lower quality (p15-17), then a change of primary typology should be considered (i.e. a change of role).

If no shortfall in other open space types is noted (p23-24), or it is not feasible to change the primary typology of the site, only then the site may be redundant/ 'surplus to requirements'.

Sites below the quality and/or value thresholds may have the potential to meet the needs of different forms of open space. Alternatively, they could potentially be surplus to requirements.

Table 5.5.1 sets out those sites of lower quality and/or value which should be investigated further for their alternative uses or potential as surplus. A comment is provided if the site is highlighted in the application of the accessibility standards as helping to serve a catchment gap or it is viewed as a village asset (i.e. providing an important function to the local area).

It is important to recognise that the Deal/Walmer Analysis Area is highlighted as having shortfalls in provision. Consequently, any site being considered as surplus to requirements would need to be justified given quantity shortfalls are identified.

Table 5.5.1: Lower quality and value sites to investigate

Ref	Site	Analysis area	Comment	
14	Spinney Lane	Aylesham		
332	St Peter's Church			
43.2	Hamilton Road Recreation Ground	Deal/Walmer		
49	Freeman's Way			
57	York and Albany Close			
59	Captain's Garden			
81	Wilson Avenue			
181	St Martin's Road			
314	Diana Gardens Playing Field			
345	Hangman's Lane			
19	Lydden Recreation Field		Dover	Village asset
27	Hougham Village Green			Village asset
98	Rear of Clarendon Place			
107	Western Heights Football Ground			
112	Knights Templars			
114	Napier Road, Riverside Centre			
136	Barwick Road			
140	Victoria Road (Zig Zag path)			
141	Western Heights Sports Ground	Serves a catchment gap		

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Ref	Site	Analysis area	Comment	
260	Reach Close Amenity land			
304	Citadel Heights North			
305	Citadel Heights South			
340	Land opposite village green Rose Hill			
366	Kingsdown Freedown			
386	Former Officer's Mess playing field		Serves a catchment gap	
74	Studdal allotments and orchard	Rural	Village asset	
344	Mill Lane allotments		Village asset	
13	Elgars Field		Village asset	
30	Edge of Coldred village			
41	Westmarsh Village Hall			
147	Downs Road Recreation Ground		Village asset	
149	Boystown Place			
266	St James's Church			
290	Petts Lane			
293	Wootton & Denton Cricket Club		Village asset	
331	Jack Foat Trust			
393	Off Mill Lane			
297	Goretop Lane Allotments		Sandwich	Village asset
208	Boatman's Hill (Alexander Close)			
218	Laburnam Avenue			

Recommendation 4

- ◀ *Recognise the role and importance of strategic forms of provision*

The 2013 Dover Parks and Amenity Strategy proposed six strategic accessible sites. These were based on their size, historic character and level of use.

- ◀ Kearsney Abbey
- ◀ Victoria Park
- ◀ Connaught Park
- ◀ Markewood
- ◀ Pencester Gardens
- ◀ Betteshanger Country Park (formerly Fowlmead)

Connaught Park and Pencester Gardens rate as being below the quality threshold. Both sites should look to be enhanced inline with other similar park sites. It is essential the sites are considered in terms of their role in supporting town centre regeneration initiatives and strategic allocations. Site elements to consider include improving access to Connaught Park and the balance between the sites retaining a high standard of quality whilst hosting community events.

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Mention should also be given to the Sandwich Parks Project. The settlement currently lacks a strategic form of open space such as a park. It does however have a number of connecting open spaces. The aspiration is to strengthen the connection of these existing sites to function in a similar role to a strategic form of provision. The intention is for this to better connect sites and users to different areas of the settlement. Part of the challenge needing to be addressed is doing this in a settlement with a strong historic influence. The towns historic and narrow streets mean this is difficult in some places. A project board is in place and funding bids are being put together to enable the project to be undertaken.

On this basis, the following sites are considered as strategic forms of provision:

Table 5.5.2: Updated strategic sites

Site	Summary
Kearsney Abbey, Dover	Linking to Russell Gardens and Bushy Ruff. Area is considered as DDC picturesque landscape area
Victoria Park, Deal	Important sports and event space
Connaught Park, Dover	Activity park
Markewood, Walmer	Sports and recreational space
Pencester Gardens, Dover	Town centre park
North Deal	Community park/recreational space
Sandwich Parks Project	Connection of several open spaces providing recreation, heritage and links to towns history

DDC have also since identified a handful of sites of particular importance but which are not considered as strategic. These non-strategic forms of provision are set out in Table 5.5.3. Elms Vale is viewed by DDC as a good example of this type of provision.

Table 5.5.3: Non-strategic sites

Site	Summary
Elms Vale, Dover	Sports and events space
The Danes, Dover	Sports provision
Marine Gardens, Dover	Landscaped seafront garden
Walmer Green	Events, park run and recreational space
Station Field, Aylesham	Recreational open space
The Linacres, Dover	Recreational open space

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The 2012 Review of Play Area Provision proposed nine strategic play areas.

- ◀ Markewood Recreation Ground Play Area
- ◀ North Deal Playing Field Play Area
- ◀ Victoria Park Play Area
- ◀ Connaught Park Play Area
- ◀ Elms Vale Recreation Ground Play Area
- ◀ Kearsney Abbey Play Area
- ◀ Pencester Gardens Play Area
- ◀ The Butts Recreation Ground Play Area
- ◀ Russell Gardens Play Area

Connaught Park Play Area and Russell Gardens Play Area rate as being below the quality threshold. However, Russell Gardens Play Area was being refurbished at the time of the assessment. This was part of the HLF-funded project. After refurbishment, this site is likely to score above the threshold for both quality and value.

Connaught Park Play Area contains a large amount of equipment but is observed as appearing tired and in need of enhancement. Given the site's role as a strategic site it is important that it is to a sufficient quality in keeping with other strategic sites.

Similarly, the MUGA at Elms Vale Recreation Ground is noted as being tired in appearance especially in comparison to the adjacent play equipment. Ensuring its quality is recommended.

The 2012 Review also highlighted Northbourne Avenue play area (Dover) and William Pitt play area (Deal) for their strategic potential. Subsequently, investment has occurred at these sites to reflect their role.

In addition to the existing strategic sites, there are some play sites with the potential to also be recognised as strategic forms of provision. These include:

- ◀ Market Square Play Area, Aylesham
- ◀ Peverell Road Play Area, Dover
- ◀ Buckland Community Centre Play Area, Dover
- ◀ Whitfield Recreation Ground Play Area, Dover
- ◀ Bindon Blood Road Basketball Area, Dover

The sites are highlighted due to their location and potential for further equipment/facilities to be provided. The four sites in Dover are identified due to their potential to serve the gap in strategic play sites to the north/Whitfield area. DDC should explore these sites collaboratively with relevant partners to establish the suitability of each as a potential strategic site.

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5.2 Implications

The following section sets out the policy implications in terms of the planning process in Dover District. This is intended to help steer the Council in seeking contributions to the improvement and/or provision of any new forms of open space.

How is provision to be made?

The requirements for on-site or off-site provision will vary according to the type of open space to be provided. Collecting contributions from developers can be undertaken through the following two processes.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Planning Obligations are the two main mechanisms available to the Council to ensure future development addresses any adverse impacts it creates. If required, Planning Conditions can be used to ensure that key requirements are met.

Planning obligations

Planning Conditions and Obligations (often known as Section 106 Agreements) require individual developments to provide or pay for the provision of development specific infrastructure requirements. They are flexible and deliver a wide range of site and community infrastructure benefits.

A development should make appropriate provision of services, facilities and infrastructure to meet its own needs. Where sufficient capacity does not exist, the development should contribute what is necessary either on-site or by making a financial contribution towards provision elsewhere.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The CIL is a method of requiring developers to fund infrastructure facilities including open spaces. Charges are based on the size and type of new development. It will generate funding to deliver a range of District wide and local infrastructure projects that support residential and economic growth.

CILs are to be levied on the gross internal floor space of the net additional liable development. The rate at which to charge such developments is set out within a council's Charging Schedule. This will be expressed in £ per m².

More recently, in tandem with the Housing White Paper, an update to the DCLG consultation on CIL proposes an overhaul of the current system.

Seeking developer contributions

This document can inform policies and emerging planning documents by assisting in the Council's approach to securing open spaces through new housing development. The evidence should form the basis for negotiation with developers to secure contributions for the provision of appropriate facilities and their long term maintenance.

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The wider benefits of open space sites and features regardless of size should be recognised as a key design principle for any new development. These features and elements can help to contribute to the perception of open space provision in an area, at the same time as also ensuring an aesthetically pleasing landscape providing wider social, environmental and health benefits. Sport England's Active Design looks at the opportunities to encourage sport and physical activity through the built environment in order to support healthier and more active lifestyles. It is therefore important for planning to consider the principles of Active Design.

In smaller, infill, development areas where open space provision is identified as being sufficient in terms of quantity and subsequently, therefore, provision of new open space is not deemed necessary. It may be more suitable to seek contributions for quality improvements and/or new offsite provision in order to address any future demand.

Off site contributions

If new provision cannot be provided on site it may be more appropriate to seek to enhance the quality of existing provision and/or improve access and linkages to existing sites. In some instances, a development may be located within close proximity to an existing site. In such cases, it may be more beneficial for an offsite contribution to avoid creation of small incremental spaces so close to existing sites.

Standard costs for the enhancement of existing open space and provision of new open spaces should be clearly identified and revised on a regular basis.

Maintenance contributions

There will be a requirement on developers to demonstrate that where onsite provision is to be provided it will be managed and maintained accordingly. In some instances, the site may be adopted by the Council, which will require the developer to submit a sum of money in order to pay the costs of the site's future maintenance. Often the procedure for councils adopting new sites includes:

- ◀ The developer being responsible for maintenance of the site for an initial agreed establishment period.
- ◀ Sums to cover the maintenance costs of a site (if to be transferred to the Council) should be intended to cover an agreed set period.

It is important to note that DDC do not generally adopt new open space provision.

Calculations to determine the amount of maintenance contributions required should be based on current maintenance costs. The typical maintenance costs for the site should also take into consideration its open space typology and size.

5.3 Approach to developer contributions

KKP advocates the requirement for open space should be based upon the number of persons generated from the net increase in dwellings in the proposed scheme. We also promote the use of quantity provision standards (in hectares per 1,000 population) in calculating the open space requirements of new housing development.

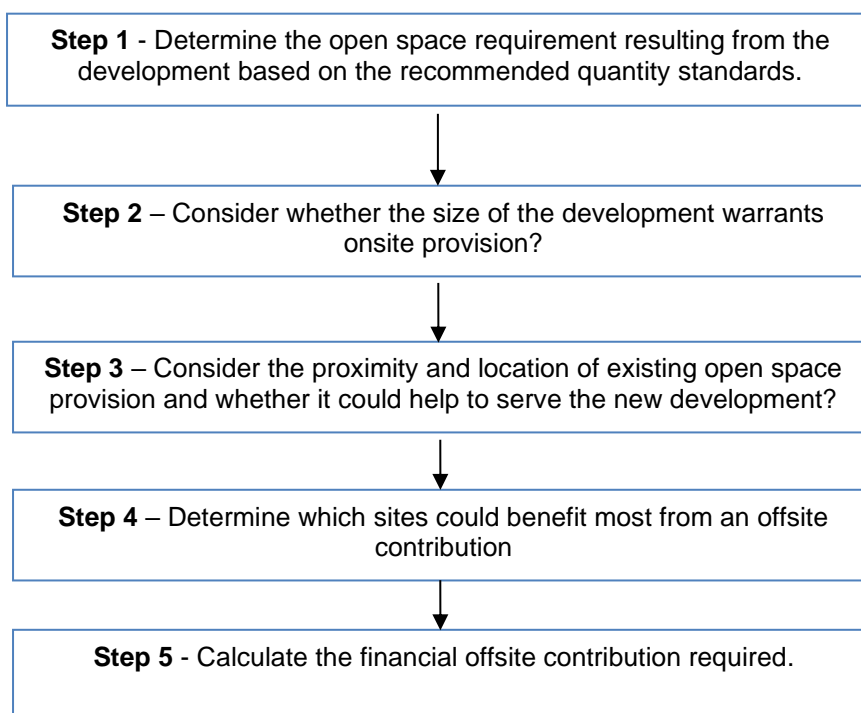
Flexible approach

A focus of this study has been to recognise the role quality and accessibility has in terms of open space provision. Future need should not just centre on quantity requirements of new residential developments. For instance, a new residential development may not warrant onsite provision but contribution to an existing site within close proximity could be.

The flowchart (Figure 5.3.1) sets out the process that should be considered when determining contributions in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility. For larger scale developments, the provision standards should be used to help determine the requirements for open space provision as part of a development.

The figure below sets out the processes that should be considered when determining developer contributions towards open space provision.

Figure 5.3.1: Determining developer contributions



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Determining onsite or offsite contributions

The requirement for on or off-site provision should be undertaken in conjunction with the accessibility and quality of existing open space provision. For instance, if an existing form of open space is located within access to the development there may not be a requirement to provide onsite provision.

It is recognised that open spaces of a particular small size hold less recreational use and value. The presence of additional smaller sites will also add to the existing pressures of maintenance regimes and safety inspections. It is therefore suggested that a minimum area threshold for each typology is used to determine if provision should be provided on or off site.

Both the GLA and FIT offer some guidance to the potential minimum threshold size of sites (Table 5.3.1). New open space provision should look to be provided as offsite contributions (and within adopted access distances) if the calculated open space requirement for the proposed development falls below a certain size threshold. If the requirement is above the threshold, it should look to be provided onsite as part of the development.

Table 5.3.1 sets out the scenario if the GLA/FIT minimum site sizes are used along with the recommended quantity standards for Dover. This is only intended as an example of how 'triggers' could be determined. It is recommended that DDC explores setting a locally specific approach which it is comfortable with applying to future processes.

Table 5.3.1: Minimum area threshold for contributions:

Classification		Minimum area of site	Equivalent new population to trigger on-site contribution*
Allotments		0.4 ha (0.025 per plot)	793
Natural and semi natural		0.4 ha	n/a
Amenity greenspace		0.4 ha	113
Parks and gardens		2 ha	1,932
Play areas†	LAP	0.01 ha	69
	LEAP	0.04 ha	277
	NEAP	0.10 ha	694

Source: GLA Open space strategies: Best practice guidance (2009)

Play area recommendation

Residential developments should normally be required to meet the need for play provision generated by the development on site, as an integral part of the design. Where this is not feasible, payment of a development contribution will be used to install or upgrade play facilities in the vicinity of a proposed development.

* E.g. a development with 113 dwellings would meet the minimum area threshold of 0.4 ha for amenity greenspace to be provided on-site (i.e. $0.4 / 1.46 \times 1000 / 2.4 = 113$)

† Minimum recommended size for play areas by Fields In Trust

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A play area must be sited within an open space sufficient to accommodate the provision and its required buffer zone to ensure residential amenity is maintained. Buffer distances ensure that facilities do not enable users to overlook neighbouring properties, reducing possibility of conflict. Any play requirements should be counted as additional to any other onsite open space requirement (e.g. provision of amenity greenspace should not also be counted as informal play provision).

FIT offer guidance to the appropriate buffer zone areas dependent upon the type of play provision (i.e. the larger the scale of play provision, the greater the buffer zone recommended).

FIT also recommend minimum site areas for different levels of formal play:

- ◀ LAP (Local Area for Play) is approximately 0.01ha or 100 sq. metres,
- ◀ LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) is approximately 0.04 ha or 400 sq. metres
- ◀ Larger forms of play i.e. NEAPs (Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play), FIT recommends an area of 0.10 ha or 1,000 sq. metres.

This means that for a significant number of developments, play provision may take the form of developer contributions to up-grade and expand the local equipped play provision in the vicinity of the development. However, play provision may still need to be made on sites in locations where the nearest existing play site is deemed too far away.

The extent to which the amount of the required provision should be made on site by way of informal provision would be determined on a case by case basis subject to site size, shape, topography, the risk of conflict with existing neighbouring residential properties and feasibility. For instance, the accessibility mapping uses buffer catchments. This does not take into account topography; as such there may be instances where initially an area is covered by the catchment area of an existing site, but which in reality is not within reasonable access to that community. DDC may review such circumstances on a case by case basis. Any informal provision can include useable informal grassed areas but should not include landscaping areas as these are regarded as formal provision. Opportunities to provide inclusive forms of play equipment at sites should be encouraged.

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PART 6: FUTURE GROWTH SCENARIO

Future need for open space and play provision will arise from the population increases from potential housing growth developments. This section sets out the future options for new dwellings during the Local Plan period (currently in the process of being reviewed at the time of writing).

The scenario of growth is based on the 2014 household projections. This sets a housing target equivalent to 12,000 dwellings across the Local Plan period.

The indicative population figure (28,800) is based on the assumption that population growth will average 2.4* persons per dwelling.

Please note that the scenario should be updated as required over the Local Plan period to reflect changes in population projections and average household sizes.

The recommended quantity provision standards are applied in order to determine the requirement for open space and play provision if the current levels of provision are to be maintained.

The formula to determine the initial amount of open space provision required is:

$$\text{New/additional population from development} \times \text{quantity standard} / 1000$$

On this basis, the following open space requirements are calculated as a result of future housing growth:

Table 6.1: Future open space and play requirement

Open space type		Quantity standards (per 1,000 population)		Future requirement (hectares)	
Accessible greenspace	<i>Parks & gardens</i>	1.91	0.45	55.01	12.96
	<i>Amenity greenspace</i>		1.46		42.05
Allotment		0.21		6.05	
Provision for children & young people		0.06		1.73	

The figures provide an initial indication to the levels of open space and play provision required as a result of new housing growth in order for the current levels of provision to be maintained. It should be treated as a starting point for further exploration and negotiation to ensure new populations are served by adequate open space provision.

* Source: ONS Families and Households Release 2017

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APPENDIX ONE: PLAY PROVISION WITH RECOMMENDED CATCHMENTS

