Wiltshire Open Space Assessment Update (2020)

Wiltshire Council

Part 1: Main Report

(FINAL REPORT MARCH 2023)

Wiltshire Open Space Assessment Update (2020)

Contents   Page number

Glossary of Terms

Term		Meaning
ANGSt		Accessible Natural Green Space Standard
CA		Community Area
CIL		Community Infrastructure Levy
FIT		Fields In Trust (originally known as the 'National Playing Fields Association')
GI		Green Infrastructure
GIS		Geographic Information Systems
IMD		Index of Multiple Deprivation
LAP		Local Area for Play
LEAP		Local Equipped Area for Play
LNR		Local Nature Reserve
LSOA		Lower-layer Super Output Area
MUGA		Multi Use Games Area
NEAP		Neighbourhood Equipped Play Area
NEWP		Natural Environment White Paper
NGB		National Governing Body
NPPF		National Planning Policy Framework
PPG17		Planning Policy Guidance Note 17
PPS		Playing Pitch Strategy
PROW		Public Right of Way
SPD		Supplementary Planning Document
SUDs		Sustainable Urban Drainage System

1.0   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Overview

This Open Space Assessment has been undertaken by Ethos Environmental Planning and Wiltshire Council. It will inform Wiltshire Council's new Local Plan and decision-making processes in relation to open space provision up to 2036.

This Open Space Assessment Update (2020) updates the Draft Open Space Study undertaken in 2015[1] and the previous open space assessments undertaken for the four former districts of Wiltshire (before Wiltshire became a unitary authority in 2009) which current local plan policy is based[2]. The majority of the Open Space Assessment Update (2020) was completed in 2020, however it was finalised in March 2023, to include an updated policy context (Section 3), updated play standards (Section 6) and quality assessments (Section 7.4).

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) recognises that access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities. It requires local planning authorities to set out policies to help enable communities to access high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation. These policies must be based on a thorough understanding of the local needs for such facilities and opportunities available for new provision.

High quality, multifunctional open spaces also play an important role in helping to tackle the current climate and ecological emergencies and in supporting the health and wellbeing of Wiltshire's residents, as part of the county's wider green infrastructure network. The Covid 19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance of access to high quality open spaces, and also the inequalities in access, which are linked to poor health outcomes.

The study has been conducted in-line with Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)[3] and the NPPF (last updated in July 2021). The assessment has primarily been affected by the omission of Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG 17) from the national policy framework. Whilst the government has not published anything specifically to replace this document, there is however, still a clear reference made in the new guidance to the principles established within PPG17. As such the underlying principles of this study have been informed by the former guidance provided in 'Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation', and its Companion Guide 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities', which is a tried and tested methodology and takes a consistent approach with many other local authorities.

It should be noted that this study provides an evidence base for planning policy and is not a strategy document. The recommendations (Section 8) of this assessment include the basis for the formulation of policies related to open space that will be considered for inclusion within the reviewed Local Plan, and the assessment can be used to inform more detailed strategy work.

1.2   The Local Plan Review

The Wiltshire Local Plan currently comprises a number of documents which in combination plan for the future development of the local area. They are the Wiltshire Core Strategy (incorporating saved policies from District Local Plans, before Wiltshire became a Unitary Authority in 2009), the Chippenham Site Allocations Plan and various Minerals and Waste plans.

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[1] 2015 draft report provided at Appendix 2 and summarised in Section 3.2.2.14 of this report.
[2] Summarised in Section 3.2.2.2 of this report.
[3] PPG is a web-based resource which brings together guidance on various planning topics in one place. It largely draws on the government's planning policies within the NPPF.

Wiltshire Council is reviewing the Wiltshire Core Strategy adopted in January 2015 (to be recast as the Wiltshire Local Plan) which will identify land for development for the period to 2036. This is in line with Government requirements that Local Plans should be updated every five years.

Approximately 36,738 (2020-2038) new homes are required across Wiltshire, with a focus on Wiltshire's market towns and principal settlements. At the time of writing no decisions have been made on the future locations for growth and development. New and improved open space provision will be required across the study area to support this new development.

1.3   Purpose of this Report

1.3.1   Overall aim and scope of the Open Space Assessment

Within the NPPF, open space is defined as 'All open space of public value, including not just land, but also 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.'

The focus of this study is on publicly accessible open spaces that are managed for public access, with clearly defined boundaries and provide some form of recreational function. Where these spaces include water bodies such as rivers, lakes, or ponds, these have been included within the overall site. Liner features such as rivers, canals or public rights of way, and private/non accessible green spaces are not included in the scope of this work but are covered under other strategies and policies such as green and blue infrastructure and public rights of way, for example. The assessment also excludes playing pitches, which are covered in a separate Playing Pitch Strategy (adopted February 2017).

The aim of the study is to provide an update to the previous Draft Open Space Study undertaken in 2015, and subsequently the previous open space assessments undertaken for the four former districts of Wiltshire which current local plan policy is based on (see Section 3.2.2.2). This will inform open space policies in the emerging Local Plan, which will cover the period to 2036.

The study provides an up-to-date and robust evidence base; auditing the provision (quantity, quality and accessibility) of open space; setting standards for provision; identifying any surpluses or deficiencies; and recommended planning policy and developer contributions. The standards will be used to assess proposals for open spaces during the Plan period, recognising the need for improving the quality of existing open spaces in addition to requirements for new provision.

The assessment has assessed and developed standards for the following typologies of public open space (further information and detailed typology definitions are provided in Section 5):

- Allotments (although often not freely accessible, these form an important part of open space provision and are included in the remit of the study).
- Amenity green space
- Parks and recreation grounds
- Play Space (Children)
- Play Space (Youth)
- Accessible Natural Green Space

1.4   Structure of the report

The open space study is presented in two key parts.

Part 1: the Main Report (this report) follows the five key stages summarised below:

- Step 1 – Identifying Local Needs

- Step 2 – Analysing Existing Provision
- Step 3 – Setting Local Standards
- Step 4 – Applying Local Standards
- Step 5 – Policy Recommendations

Part 2 comprises the Area Profiles that have been developed for the 20 Community Areas defined by Wiltshire Council. The area profiles are intended to be a starting point to inform other strategies and plans, including neighbourhood plans, planning policies, development control policies; parks and open spaces service and action plans. It is intended that the area profiles would be used and read alongside the main report.

Within each of the area profiles, there will be the following information:

- A description of the area;
- Maps showing the provision of green space;
- Quantitative analysis of current provision of open space'
- Analysis of access to open space;
- Summary of quality issues and opportunities; and
- Priorities for the area.

1.5   The Study Area

1.5.1   Overview

Wiltshire Council is one of the largest unitary authorities in England covering approximately 3,225 sq. km and a population of 500,103. It is a largely rural area benefitting from natural and historic features including 3 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, part of the New Forest National Park and a World Heritage Site. Wiltshire has strong sub-regional links and is within commutable distance of London, Bristol, Swindon, South Wales and the South Coast. It also has a greenbelt, the Western Wiltshire Green Belt, which protects the countryside between Bath, Bradford-on-Avon and Trowbridge.

Wiltshire has several large settlements including Salisbury in the south, Trowbridge in the west and Chippenham in the north. Salisbury is a very popular tourist destination with its historic cathedral and proximity to the World Heritage Site of Stonehenge. Trowbridge is a key town for employment, administration and service centre for the West Wiltshire area, having many good transport links to nearby settlements. Chippenham has a bustling town centre and has expanded its urban area and employment sector in recent years due to its proximity to the M4 and good rail links.

There are also a number of market towns in the county, with Devizes and Marlborough in the eastern part of Wiltshire; Calne, Corsham, Cricklade, Malmesbury and Royal Wootton Bassett in the north of Wiltshire; and Bradford on Avon, Melksham, Warminster and Westbury being located in the west. In the south of the county, Amesbury provides the local service centre supporting other small service centres of Downton, Mere, Tisbury and Wilton. There are two garrison towns, Tidworth and Lugershall which are dominated by the presence of the Army, which is the largest local employer.

Wiltshire also contains numerous villages and rural settlements with half of the people in Wiltshire living in towns or villages with fewer than 5,000 people. Across the whole county, deprivation is low, and communities benefit from safe environments.

1.5.2   Community Areas

The study area is split into 20 Community Areas (CAs). The CAs are as follows (as shown in Figure 1):

- Amesbury
- Bradford on Avon

- Calne
- Chippenham
- Corsham
- Devizes
- Malmesbury
- Marlborough
- Melksham
- Mere
- Pewsey
- Royal Wotton Bassett and Cricklade
- Salisbury
- Southern Wiltshire
- Tidworth
- Tisbury
- Trowbridge
- Warminster
- Westbury
- Wilton

Figure 1 Community Areas

The CAs have been used as the starting point for defining the analysis areas for the open space assessment as outlined in the following sections. It is noted that since 2020, there have been minor changes to parish and CA boundaries, however this assessment uses the parish and CA boundaries that were in place in 2020.

1.5.3   Open space analysis areas

In order to analyse the current provision and future requirements for open space across Wiltshire, it is necessary to define 'open space analysis areas'. In Wiltshire, the 20 Community Areas (CAs) have been the starting point for defining the analysis areas. The second key factor being the significant differences in population distribution, varying from urban areas to very rural areas. The population threshold (3500 people) used within the 2015 draft open space study has been reviewed and is considered to be appropriate to take forward in this update. The analysis areas have thus been split into the Community Area Boards, but with urban areas separated. This results in two levels of analysis:

>   **1. Urban Analysis Areas.** These areas comprise the larger parishes with a population above 3500 people (ONS mid 2017 estimate). Whilst some of these areas may not be seen to be 'urban' by the local community (particularly when compared to larger towns and cities), this term has been used for the purpose of the assessment.

>   **2. Rural Analysis Areas.** These areas comprise the smaller parishes with a population below 3500 people (ONS mid 2017 estimate).

It is acknowledged that there are a number of parishes with a population just below 3500, as such there is a 'borderline' of villages which could be classed as 'urban' or 'rural'. Best judgement has been made and it is considered that the split of urban and rural is generally appropriate for the analysis. However, the parishes of Mere (population: 3123), Tisbury (population: 2434) and Downton (population: 3140), have been classed as urban analysis areas, as they act as the Local Service Centres for their CABs.

The following parishes which fall within the Urban Area Analysis have been merged for the purpose of the analysis because several open spaces overlap the analysis boundaries:

- Tidworth and Ludgershall (combined population: 15,553)
- Devizes and Roundway (combined population: 17,324)
- Melksham and Melksham Without (combined population: 23,831)

Trowbridge and Hilperton were previously analysed as a combined urban area, however in acknowledgement of the comments received on the 2015 draft, and the fact that they will remain as two distinct and separate settlements, these parishes have been analysed separately.

Merging the urban analysis areas of Salisbury, Laverstock and Ford, and Wilton was also discussed, as these areas are co-dependent and share open space, however, it was agreed to analyse each area separately, in order to align with the Local Plan Review

Figure 2 Urban and Rural Analysis Areas (blue areas are urban parishes; yellow areas are rural areas)

1.5.4   Population

Community Areas

The population of the defined study area is shown in Table 1 below. The study has drawn on census data from ONS 2017 mid-year population estimates[4]. The total population under the jurisdiction of Wiltshire Council is 500,103 people. The table below provides a summary of population by Community Area (CA) and also shows the number of parishes in each CA.

Table 1 Population by CA in Wiltshire (ONS 2017 estimates)

Community Area	Population	No. of parishes	Size (Ha)
Amesbury	35,309	22	31,421
Bradford on Avon	18,438	9	5,919
Calne	24,056	7	13,173
Chippenham	45,984	16	16,021
Corsham	21,144	4	7,623
Devizes	32,866	17	21,642
Malmesbury	20,399	20	24,494
Marlborough	18,730	19	28,108
Melksham	30,934	11	9,859
Mere	5,760	7	10,128
Pewsey	15,001	26	26,837
Royal Wootton Bassett & Cricklade	32,274	12	15,458
Salisbury	40,786	1	1,848
Southern Wiltshire	26,334	15	22,034
Tidworth	22,190	10	18,307
Tisbury	8,067	16	15,628
Trowbridge	45,745	5	4,168
Warminster	25,619	20	28,048
Westbury	20,402	6	7,328
Wilton	10,065	15	17,491
Totals	**500,103**	**258**	**325,534**

Population of Urban and Rural Analysis Areas

The population of the urban and rural analysis areas has been calculated using the ONS 2017 mid-year estimates for parishes and the CAs, as shown in Table 2. The first column in the table shows each Community Area, with the total population (column 2), then the population in the rural areas i.e., excluding the urban area population (column 5). Column 4 lists the urban analysis areas with the corresponding population in the final column

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[4] These figures are used throughout the assessment.

Table 2 Population of urban and rural analysis areas (ONS 2017 estimates)

Community Area (CA)	Total Population in CA	Rural Population in CA	Urban areas in CA	Urban Area Population
Amesbury	35,309	10,742	Amesbury	11,757
			Bulford	5,081
			Durrington	7,729
Bradford on Avon	18,438	8,545	Bradford on Avon	9,893
Calne	24,056	5,967	Calne	18,089
Chippenham	45,984	10,065	Chippenham	35,919
Corsham	21,144	4,130	Box	3,574
			Corsham	13,440
Devizes	32,866	15,542	Devizes & Roundway (merged)	17,324
Malmesbury	20,399	15,542	Malmesbury	5,729
Marlborough	18,730	10,133	Marlborough	8,597
Melksham	30,934	7,130	Melksham & Melksham Without (merged)	23,831
Mere	5,760	2,637	Mere	3,123
Pewsey	15,001	11,134	Pewsey	3,867
Royal Wootton Bassett & Cricklade	32,274	4,176	Cricklade	4,167
			Lyneham and Bradenstoke	5,533
			Purton	5,420
			Royal Wootton Bassett	12,978
Salisbury	40,786	0	Salisbury	40,786
Southern Wiltshire	26,334	11,402	Downton	3,140
			Laverstock	8,207
			Redlynch	3,586
Tidworth	22,190	4,605	Tidworth & Ludgerhall (merged)	17,585
Tisbury	8,067	5,633	Tisbury	2,434
Trowbridge	45,745	4,613	Hilperton	5,578
			Trowbridge	35,554
Warminster	25,619	7,803	Warminster	17,816
Westbury	20,402	4,849	Westbury	15,553
Wilton	10,065	6,056	Wilton	4,009
Total	**500,103**	**149,805**		**350,298**

2.0　METHODOLOGY

2.1　General

The starting point for this study has been the guidance in Section 8 of the NPPF, which adheres to but has superseded PPG17. The policy gives clear recommendations for the protection of and appropriate provision for open space, however it does not provide any detailed guidance on how to conduct an open space assessment. It is therefore both logical and acceptable to reference the guidance for assessment provided in the former PPG17 and its Companion Guide. PPG17 placed a requirement on local authorities to undertake assessments and audits of open space, sports and recreational facilities in order to:

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

The Companion Guide to PPG17 recommended an overall approach to this kind of study as summarised below:
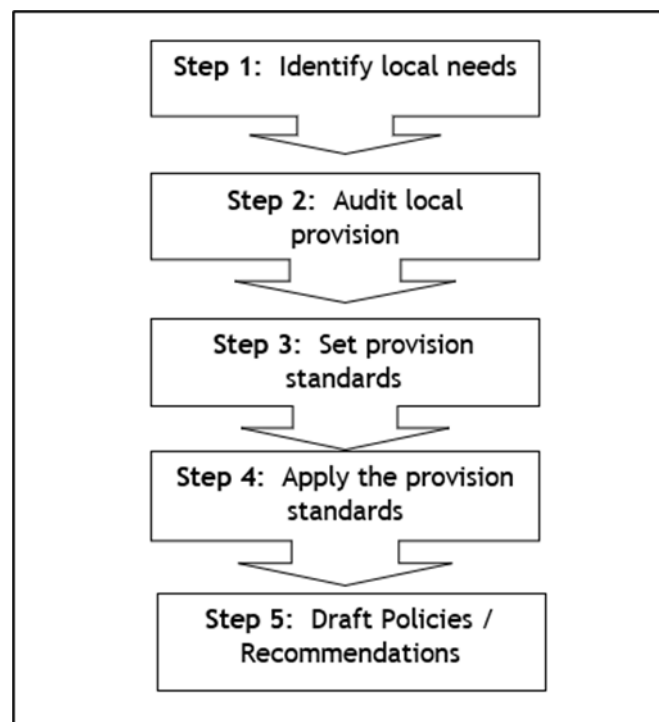

Figure 3 Summary of methodology

Within this overall approach the Companion Guide suggests a range of methods and techniques that might be adopted in helping the assessment process. Where appropriate, these methods and techniques have been employed within this study and are explained at the relevant point in the report. In addition, they are summarised in the paragraphs below.

2.2　Identifying Local Needs (Step 1)

The Community and Stakeholder Consultation Report (2015) (Appendix 3) examines local needs for various types of open space and outdoor recreation facilities. The report details the community consultation and the research process that was undertaken as part of the 2015 Open Space Study as well as the main findings. In order to supplement the extensive consultation carried out in 2015, additional consultation was completed during February to May 2020 (a householder survey update and parish council consultation (Appendix 2), along with a review of existing consultation data. A summary of the results from the 2015 and 2020 consultation is provided in Section 4 of this report.

2.3   Audit of Existing Open Space Assets (Step 2)

2.3.1   Defining the scope of the audit

In order to build up an accurate picture of the current open space and play provision in Wiltshire, Wiltshire Council carried out an audit of the open space asset during 2020, which included:

- A review of the existing open space mapping from the 2015 draft open space study;
- desktop mapping of open space from aerial photography;
- questionnaires to town and parish councils (to identify any new sites or changes to sites);

Following the completion of the draft open space study report (2015), this went out to public consultation during 2016. The main points raised from this consultation were:

- The parishes of Hilperton and Trowbridge being grouped and analysed together with a lack of justification for this.
- Some housing data, settlement boundaries and housing allocations being out of date.
- Some key open spaces were missing.
- Need to improve data visibility and clarity.

These points have been considered and addressed in this updated assessment as follows:

- Hilperton and Trowbridge parishes (urban analysis areas) have been analysed separately, acknowledging that these two areas will remain as two separate and distinct areas.
- No housing data by CAB for the new local plan period is available at the time of writing. An open space calculator has been provided to the Council to ensure that once these figures are available, open space requirements (using the standards and guidance within this report) can be easily assessed.
- Sites identified as missing in the 2016 consultation were mapped, and the parish council survey identified further sites which were also included.
- Use of up to date population data (ONS 2017 mid-year population estimates).
- Mapping presentation has been improved by using the latest version of ArcGIS Pro and OS Zoomstack base maps. Map layouts have been updated to improve the clarity of the data being presented.

It is also worth noting that the data updating, and consolidation part of this study was carried out before the outbreak of COVID-19. Public opinion has changed since then - where most people thought they had enough open space-opinions may have shifted.

In addition to the desktop mapping and review of open space, site visits and quality audits were undertaken by Ethos at 300 open spaces across the study area during February-March 2023. The quality audit drew on criteria set out in the 'Green Flag Award[5]' and were undertaken using a standardised methodology and consistent approach (explained in more detail in Section 7.4). A summary of the previous quality audits undertaken in 2015 as part of the draft open space study is also provided in this report. Audits of this nature can only ever be a snapshot in time and their main purpose is to provide a consistent and objective assessment of a site's existing quality rather than a full asset audit. Clearly, local communities may have aspirations which are not identified in the quality audit, but it is hoped that these can be explored further outside of this study through site management plans and neighbourhood plans as appropriate.

2.3.2   Approach to mapping

As part of the audit process, sites were mapped into their primary functions/typologies by Wiltshire Council, to provide an accurate assessment of the different types of open space. An example map is provided at Figure 4 below. The open space typologies used are detailed in Section 5 of this report. These typologies were defined and mapped within the 2015 draft open space study and were used as the basis for updating the mapping in 2020.

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[5] https://www.greenflagaward.org/how-it-works/judging-criteria/

Only open spaces within the Wiltshire Council area have been mapped i.e., although cross-border use of open space has been noted and considered, open spaces falling outside of the study area have not been mapped.

Where water falls within an open space e.g., ponds, rivers, lakes, then these features have been included within the open space polygon. Although Cotswold Water Park is a key Green and Blue Infrastructure asset, is has not been included within the mapping for this open space assessment update, as it is not freely accessible (although it is acknowledged that Public Rights of Way run through the area)[6]. Key Green and Blue Infrastructure such as the Cotswold Water Park, River Avon and Avon and Kennett Canal are covered within the Council's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (adopted in February 2022).

It should be noted that the typologies mapping is as accurate as possible (as of July 2020) following Wiltshire Council's updated desktop mapping and consultation with town/parish councils and town planning community area leads.
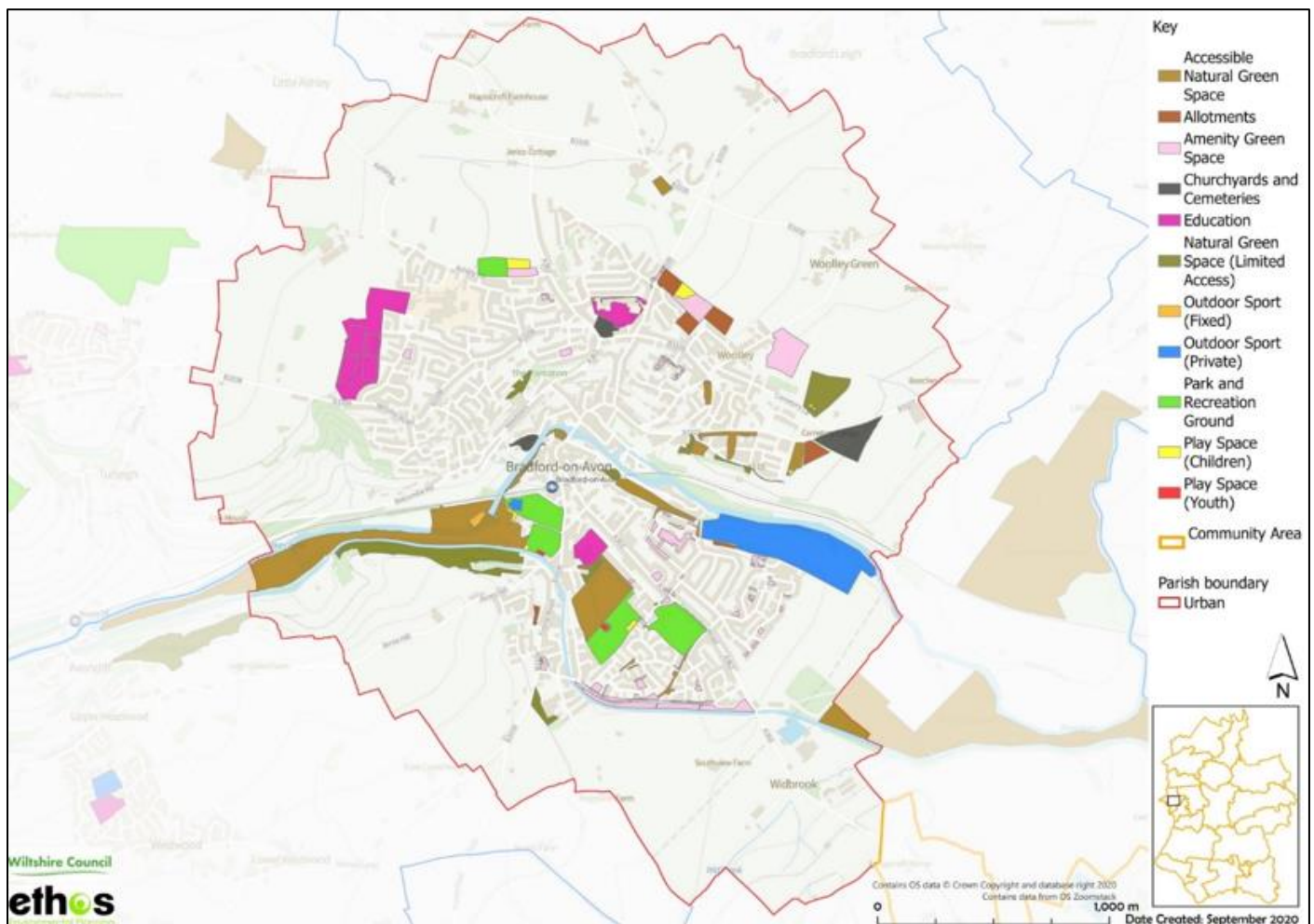

Figure 4 Example map - open space mapping by typology

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

Local provision standards have been set, with three components, embracing:

- quantity;
- accessibility;
- quality

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[6] The boundary of the Cotswold Water Park includes a large amount of non-accessible land, and it was agreed with the Council's project team to only include the area within the parish of Ashton Keynes (as this is accessible).

Quantity

The GIS database and mapping has been used to assess the existing provision of open space across the study area, within the urban and rural analysis areas (see Section 1.5.3). The existing levels of provision are considered alongside findings of previous studies, the local needs assessment and consideration of existing and national standards or benchmarks (considered in detail in Section 6). The key to developing robust local quantity standards is that they are locally derived, based on evidence and most importantly achievable. Typically, standards are expressed as hectares per 1000 people. The recommended standards are then used to assess the supply of each type of open space across the study area.

Access

Evidence from previous studies, the needs assessment and consideration of national benchmarks are used to develop access standards for open space (considered in detail in Section 6). Standards are expressed as walk time buffers, or straight line walk distances. Drive-time standards have not been proposed as these are normally only appropriate for strategic sites such as sports hub sites. Drive-time standards generally do not work well for analysing access to local facilities/open space, as they do not necessarily show where small problematic gaps affecting access occur, and; in addition, the consultation has shown that the majority of households access open spaces on foot.

A series of maps assessing access for different typologies are presented in this report, they are intended to be indicative, and more detailed maps by Community Area are provided in Part 2. The maps show the walk time buffers for each open space typology and are created using QGIS and the OSM Tools plugin which relies on the OpenStreetMap paths and street network to accurately map realistic potential walking routes, taking account of barriers to access e.g., rivers or railway lines. The buffers are based on a walk time of 5 kilometres/3.1 miles an hour[7]. Straight line walk distances are more appropriate for large sites such as accessible natural green space (in the absence of access point data). The straight line walking distances do not take into account roads or barriers to access, and so the actual route walked (the pedestrian route) is generally further i.e., straight line distances are around 60% of actual distances. The standard walk time and straight line/pedestrian route distances are shown in Table 3 below.

The access maps also show Census 2011 Output Areas (OAs). Each OA centroid is the lowest level of geography from the census which contains roughly 129 households. By using this point dataset, it is possible to clearly indicate those households that fall outside open space access buffers i.e., where the key gaps in access are.

Table 3 Standard walk times and distances

Walk time (minutes)	Pedestrian Route (metres)	Straight line (metres)
1	100	60
2	160	96
3	240	144
4	320	192
5	400	240
6	480	288
7	560	336
8	640	384
9	720	432
10	800	480
11	880	528
12	960	576
13	1040	624
14	1120	672
15	1200	720
16	1280	768

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[7] This is in line with the British Heart Foundation state as an average walking pace on country and forestry footpaths: https://www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/events/training-zone/walking-training-zone/walking-faqs

17	1360	816
18	1440	864
19	1520	912
20	1600	960

Quality

The quality standards have been developed drawing on previous studies, national benchmarks and good practice. Quality standards have been recommended to guide the provision of new open space through development in the future. A summary of the quality audit results undertaken during February/March 2023, and the quality audits from 2015 is provided. The quality audit methodology undertaken in 2023 updates the methodology used in 2015. The criteria are based on the Green Flag Award[8] and ensures that quality audits are standardised and repeatable.

2.5   Drafting Policy Recommendations (Step 5)

This section outlines higher level strategic options which may be applicable at town, parish, community area and study area wide level. The strategic options address six key areas:

1. Existing provision to be protected;
2. Existing provision to be enhanced;
3. Opportunities for re-location/re-designation of open space;
4. Identification of areas for new provision;
5. Facilities that may be surplus to requirement.
6. Developer contributions and recommended thresholds for on-site provision of open space.

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[8] https://www.greenflagaward.org/how-it-works/judging-criteria/

3.0   CONTEXT

3.1   Introduction

This section sets out a brief review of the most relevant national, regional and local policies related to the study, which have been considered in developing the methodology and findings of the study. Policies and strategies are subject to regular change, therefore the summary provided in this section was correct at the time of writing. Wiltshire Council reserves the right to change and update this section as policies change.

It also provides important contextual information regarding health and deprivation for the study area.

The policy overview includes analysis of the Wiltshire Council's existing strategies and policies. It also includes a review of other strategies of relevance at national, regional and local levels and assesses their implications for the provision of open space, sport and recreation opportunities.

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

3.2   Strategic Context

3.2.1   National Strategic Context

3.2.1.1   National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG).

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how they should be applied. The NPPF must be adhered to in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is a material consideration in planning decisions.

Within the NPPF, open space is defined as 'All open space of public value, including not just land, but also 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.'

The NPPF contains the following references that relate to green infrastructure and open spaces:

- **Para 7** - The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- **Para 98** - Access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.
- **Para 99** - Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

    a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
    b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or

c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

- **Para 100** - Planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails.

- **Para 126** - The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.

- **Para 153 -** Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure.

- **Para 174 -** Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment.

- **Para 175 –** Plans should take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.

This is supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) website, which includes guidance on key areas such as Design. The National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code and Guidance Notes for Design Codes illustrate how well-designed places that are beautiful, healthy, greener, enduring, and successful can be achieved in practice.

3.2.1.2   Green Infrastructure (GI)

The concept of GI is firmly embedded within the NPPF, which requires local planning authorities to set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure. It defines green infrastructure as 'A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity'.

The Study Area has a wide range of existing green infrastructure assets such as open spaces, allotments, woodlands, street trees, fields, hedgerows, treelines, lakes, ponds, waterways, meadows, grassland, playing fields, footpaths, and cycleways. Although the analysis of GI is not itself covered by the remit of this study, open space forms part of the GI network and the assessment is mindful of the linkages with the concept of GI which looks beyond existing designations, seeking opportunities to increase function and connectivity of assets to maximise the benefits for both people and wildlife.

GI takes many different forms and can be delivered at multiple scales. It provides multiple functions, which in turn provide significant environmental, social, and economic benefits (also known as ecosystem services). The key benefits provided by GI are set out in the table below.

Table 4 Benefits provided by GI

Environmental
• Supports and provides biodiversity (which underpins healthy and resilient ecosystems) and species movement/dispersal including through providing habitat, wildlife corridors and stepping-stones.
• Provides climate change mitigation and adaptation e.g., through providing flood and soil erosion protection, carbon sequestration and storage, and urban cooling.
• Improves air and water quality (pollution absorption and removal).
• Enables food production and supports pollination.
• Supports and creates attractive and sustainable places and landscapes i.e., quality placemaking and place keeping.
Social/health and wellbeing
• Provides opportunities for outdoor recreation, exercise, play and access to nature.
• Provides attractive and safe spaces for people to enjoy and improve social contacts – a key component of 'liveable' towns and cities where people want to live.
• Supports the development of skills and capabilities.
• Improves air and water quality, provides urban cooling and shade, reduces noise pollution.
• Provides green active travel routes.
Economic
• Provides attractive places to live and work, attracting inward investment and tourism.
• Increased land and property values.
• Supports sustainable homes and communities e.g., through providing local food and building materials, encouraging low carbon lifestyles e.g., through well connected and attractive walking and cycling routes.
• Provides health and wellbeing benefits that result in avoided healthcare costs.
• Provides local food, energy, and timber production.
• Climate change mitigation and adaption.

Nature-based Solutions

The terms green infrastructure and nature-based solutions are overlapping and are often used interchangeably, with GI falling under the umbrella of nature-based solutions.

Nature-based solutions are defined as 'actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits' [9]. They have huge potential to help cities and urban areas become more resilient to climate change, and benefit people's health and the economy.

Nature-based solutions tend to be focused on six key areas[10]:

- Urban trees – found in parks, gardens, and along streets, trees can help to regulate urban temperatures, reduce flood risk, and clean the air
- Parks and green spaces – natural or planted green spaces are used for recreation and exercise, as well as being rich habitats for wildlife
- Green buildings – walls and roofs covered with vegetation act like sound and heat insulation for buildings, and absorb rainwater, so reducing flood risk
- Riverbank vegetation – plants along riverbanks trap soil and sediment, improving water quality and reducing flood damage by slowing the flow of water
- Wetland and bioswales – natural wetlands and man-made bioswales (or 'rain gardens') help to purify water and reduce flooding
- Lakes and ponds – natural or artificial waterbodies in cities can hold water for irrigation or drinking and support a wide range of wildlife.

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[9] https://www.iucn.org/our-work/nature-based-solutions
[10] https://earthwatch.org.uk/working-with-business/climate-proof-cities

Green Infrastructure Standards

Natural England's **National Green Infrastructure Framework** will be fully available in autumn/winter 2022. It establishes national standards for GI in England and currently comprises the following:

- GI Principles – underpin the framework and cover why, what and how to do good GI.
- GI Mapping Database and Analysis (currently Beta version is available) – a freely available tool providing GI Mapping layers and analyses.

The GI Standards, GI Design Guide, Case Studies, and Process Journeys (to assist different audiences) are still to be published.

The Framework does not seek to duplicate existing standards such as Building with Nature, but rather to learn from best practice and reinforce key messages, such as that green infrastructure and natural capital needs to be considered and incorporated at the earliest stages of development and treated like other types of essential infrastructure.

Building with Nature is the UK's first benchmark for GI. It provides a framework of robust and evidence-based quality standards which define what good looks like at each stage of the development process, so that developments deliver for the natural world and healthy communities. It can be used to guide physical development and also strategic planning policy documents, and there are accreditation options available for both physical developments and policy documents.

3.2.1.3 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (2022)

The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (2022) provides a framework for levelling up to ensure all parts of the country share equally in the nation's success. This includes giving local communities control over what is built, where it is built, and what it looks like. Ensuring new development meets clear design standards which reflect community views (reflecting the recommendations in the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission[11]) is a key part of this, alongside a strengthened framework of environmental outcomes, and expanded protections for the places people value.

3.2.1.4 The 25 Year Environment Plan (2018)

This 25 Year Environment Plan (25 YEP) sets out government action to help the natural world regain and retain good health. It aims to deliver cleaner air and water in our cities and rural landscapes, protect threatened species and provide richer wildlife habitats. It calls for an approach to agriculture, forestry, land use and fishing that puts the environment first.
The 25-year goals are:

1. Clean air.
2. Clean and plentiful water.
3. Thriving plants and wildlife.
4. A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought.
5. Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently.
6. Enhanced beauty, heritage, and engagement with the natural environment.

Actions/policies are identified around six key areas: Using and managing land sustainably; Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes; Connecting people with the environment to improve health and wellbeing; Increasing resource efficiency, and reducing pollution and waste; Securing clean, productive, and biologically diverse seas and oceans; Protecting and improving the global environment.

The Nature Recovery Network (NRN) is a key policy commitment in the 25 YEP. The NRN will benefit people and wildlife by increasing, improving and joining-up wildlife-rich places across England. It will create or restore 500,000 hectares of wildlife habitat outside protected sites, more effectively linking existing protected sites and landscapes, as

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[11] https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/living-with-beauty-report-of-the-building-better-building-beautiful-commission

well as urban green infrastructure (such as trees, hedgerows, parks, fields, forests) and urban blue infrastructure (such as rainwater tanks, bioswales, rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, and floodplains). This landscape-scale approach to restoring nature was recently demonstrated by Natural England's recent designation of the Purbeck Heaths National Nature Reserve (NNR) in Dorset.

The **Environment Act (2021)** places the 25 Year Environment Plan on statutory footing. A key outcome from this includes a requirement for all areas in England to establish Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRSs). This will help bring a broad range of groups together – from farmers to businesses to local communities – to deliver priorities for nature recovery at a local and national level. Five local authorities (Cornwall, Buckinghamshire, Greater Manchester, Northumberland, and Cumbria) have been selected to set up LNRSs pilot studies to help map the most valuable sites and habitats for wildlife in their area and identify where nature can be restored. The pilots will also help kick-start the creation of over a million acres of habitats for wildlife.

The Environment Act (2021) will also require all development to achieve mandatory net gains in biodiversity. LPAs will be required to report on both biodiversity net gains and LNRSs, however the mechanism for this has not yet been published by Central Government.

Biodiversity Net Gain (biodiversity offsetting)

New developments often incur biodiversity loss within their design even good quality development. Biodiversity Net Gain is set to become a mandatory part of planning through the Environment Bill to compensate for loss of biodiversity through development.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is defined as 'a goal for a development project in which biodiversity losses are avoided, minimised, compensated and then exceeded by gains for biodiversity' (Business and Biodiversity Offset Programme, 2018). Subsequently, BNG is the achievement of measurable gains for biodiversity through new development and occurs when a development leaves biodiversity in a better state than before development.

Once enacted, this is likely to require any development under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (except Permitted Development and Householder Applications) to evidence a 10% increase in biodiversity value and 30 years of habitat management for biodiversity. Further to this, BNG is supported within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2019), which states that planning policies and decisions 'should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.'

To claim BNG and to generate long-term gains for nature, the 10 BNG Good Practice Principles for Development (CIRIA, CIEEM and IEMA, 2016) are followed. The principles provide the framework for high quality and meaningful BNG that should make a measurable and positive contribution to biodiversity.

There are opportunities for identifying council sites that could contribute towards biodiversity net gain offsetting. The types of predominant habitats and their condition should be assessed along with the potential for enhancement. Priority should be given to auditing sites within areas where housing development is planned.

3.2.1.5 The Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP) The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (2011)

The white paper[12] recognises that a healthy natural environment is the foundation of sustained economic growth, prospering communities and personal wellbeing. It sets out how the value of nature can be mainstreamed across our society by facilitating local action; strengthening the connections between people and nature; creating a green economy and showing leadership in the European Union and internationally. It responds to the 2010 independent

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[12] http://www.official-documents.gov.uk/document/cm80/8082/8082.pdf

review of England's wildlife sites and ecological network, chaired by Professor Sir John Lawton, which identifies the need for more, better and bigger joined spaces for nature.

Vision: To be the first Government ever to return the environment in a better condition that it inherited it, over the course of a generation.

3.2.1.6   Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services, (August 2011)

This biodiversity strategy for England built on the Natural Environment White Paper and set out the strategic direction for national biodiversity policy to implement international and EU commitments. The vision for England is: 'By 2050 our land and seas will be rich in wildlife, our biodiversity will be valued, conserved, restored, managed sustainably and be more resilient and able to adapt to climate change, providing essential services and delivering benefits for everyone'.

The mission of this strategy was to 'halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people'.

The majority of the 2020 outcomes and indicators were not met. The UN Biodiversity Conference (Convention on Biological Diversity COP15) is due to take place in Autumn 2022 and will see the adoption of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework.

3.2.1.7   Sport England Strategy – 'Uniting the movement: A 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity'

The Uniting the Movement Strategy by Sport England is a 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity. It sets out how the sector needs to change to give people opportunities now and, in the future, to allow people to live happier, healthier, and more fulfilled lives. This includes tackling inequalities seen in sport and physical activity and helping to remove barriers. The three objectives for the strategy are:

1. Advocating for movement, sport, and physical activity.
2. Joining forces on five big issues: recover and reinvent; connecting communities; positive experience for children and young people; connecting with health and wellbeing and active environments.
3. Creating the catalysts for change.

Yearly implementation plans will ensure that Sport England are investing most in those that need it the most with the right blend of national and local action and keeping the plan simple providing information and guidance to support colleagues and partners.

3.2.1.8   Revaluing Parks and Green Spaces – Measuring their economic and wellbeing value to individuals (2018)

This report provides a robust economic valuation of parks and green spaces in the UK as well as valuing improvements in health and wellbeing associated with their frequent use. This is the first research study on parks and green spaces to use welfare weighting methodology, allowing for more informed evidence-based policy decisions. The headline figures are:

- **The Total Economic Value to an individual is £30.24 per year** (£2.52 per month), and includes benefits gained from using their local park or green space and non-use benefits such as the preservation of parks for future generations. The value of parks and green spaces is higher for individuals from lower socio-economic groups and from black and minority ethnic backgrounds. The findings show that any loss of parks and green spaces will disproportionately impact disadvantaged and underrepresented communities, precisely those who value them the most.
- **The Wellbeing Value associated with the frequent use of local parks and green spaces is worth £34.2 billion per year** to the entire UK adult population.

- **Parks and green spaces are estimated to save the NHS around £111 million per year** based solely on a reduction in GP visits and excluding any additional savings from prescribing or referrals.

3.2.1.9 Making Parks Count (The Parks Alliance (TPA), 2020)

The report makes the business case for parks, why they matter, and why they are a 'smart investment'.

The report illustrates how parks in England deliver over £6.6bn of health, climate change and environmental benefits each year including £2.2bn in avoided health costs alone and worth £140 per year for each urban resident. For every £1 spent on parks in England an estimated £7 in additional value for health and wellbeing and the environment is generated. Some of the other key figures referenced in the report are:

- Urban green spaces raise house prices by an average of £2,500;
- London's parks alone help avoid an estimated £370m of mental health related costs each year;
- Parks are among the most species rich types of urban green spaces, and over 1,500 species of UK's pollinators deliver an estimated £680m in value to the economy;
- The benefits of air pollutant removal by trees in public parks in England is estimated at £60m per year;
- The value of carbon sequestration by trees in public parks in England is estimated at £9m per year;
- Parks in England provide an urban cooling benefit of £4.8m per year.

3.2.1.10 Covid 19 and the impact on open spaces and green infrastructure

The value of green infrastructure has also been keenly recognised during the COVID 19 pandemic where access to green space has played a key role in people's well-being; alongside a wider appreciation of nature.

From 2009 to 2019, Natural England ran the Monitor of Engagement of the Natural Environment (MENE) survey. It collected data about outdoor recreation, pro-environmental behaviours, attitudes towards and engagement with the natural environment. It was estimated there were 4 billion visits to the natural environment in 2019, up from 2.9 billion over 10 years. The survey highlights the importance of access to nature for our health and wellbeing, but also clear inequalities between different age, ethnic and socio-economic groups, and those with different states of health, in how they use and experience the natural environment.

Figure 5 Headline findings from Natural England's MENE survey (2009-2019)

MENE concluded in 2019 and has been superseded by The People and Nature Survey for England. This has also helped understand how adults and children in England have engaged with nature since the coronavirus pandemic.

The findings continue to demonstrate the importance of spending time in nature for people's wellbeing. During April 2020 (during lockdown restrictions) the survey polled 2000 people and key findings included:

- The survey also revealed that a smaller proportion of adults spent time outside in April 2020 than their reported average over 12 months, which suggests that lockdown restrictions impacted people using green spaces.
- The most regular visits to green spaces were to urban green spaces such as parks and playing fields (41%), followed by fields, farmland, and countryside (25%), woodland and forests (24%) and rivers, lakes, and canals (21%).
- 86% of adults with access to a private garden of allotment felt that these spaces are important to them.
- 89% of adults agreed or strongly agreed that green and natural spaces should be good places for mental health and wellbeing.
- 87% of adults agreed that 'being in nature makes me happy'.

3.2.1.11   The nature and climate emergency

Climate change represents an urgent and potentially irreversible threat to human societies and the planet. In recognition of this, the overwhelming majority of countries around the world adopted the Paris Agreement in December 2015, the central aim of which includes pursuing efforts to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C. The **Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Global Warming Report (2018)** provides the scientific evidence that global warming in excess of 1.5C above pre-industrial levels will undermine life support systems for humanity. It found that global net human-caused emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2) would need to fall by about 45% from 2010 levels by 2030, reaching 'net zero' around 2050.

The State of Nature Report (Oct 2019) and **The Global Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Report (May 2019)** show the degradation and deterioration of natural environments and ecosystems which all life depends, the loss of biodiversity and a knock-on impact on human existence. Climate change, agricultural management, hydrological change, urbanisation, pollution, woodland management, and invasive non-native species as among the most significant of pressures on our wildlife.

The climate and nature emergency are inextricably linked. Biodiversity underpins healthy ecosystems that are able to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change, however climate change is driving declines in biodiversity, and the degradation of our ecosystems, which means we are less able to adapt to change.

The **UK government declaration of an environment and climate emergency** in May 2019 has put climate and the environment at the centre of government policy. The government has since made a legally binding commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 (through the Climate Change Act 2008, as amended in 2019), and has committed to planting 30,000 hectares of trees annually by 2025 (through the England Tree Strategy), helping to form part of the green recovery from Covid-19 and support the transition to net zero. In September 2020, the Prime Minister signed the Leaders Pledge for Nature, committing to protect 30% of the UK's land by 2030, to protect nature and boost biodiversity, as well as committing to prioritise a green recovery following the coronavirus pandemic.

The UK hosted the 26th **UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26)** in October-November 2021, where Nations adopted the Glasgow Climate Pact, aiming to turn the 2020s into a decade of climate action and support, with the aim of accelerating **action** towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. **The UN Biodiversity Conference (Convention on Biological Diversity COP15)** is due to take place in December 2022. It will see the adoption of the post-2020 global biodiversity framework, which provides a strategic vision and a global roadmap for the conservation, protection, restoration and sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystems for the next decade.

3.2.2   Local and Regional Context

3.2.2.1   Wiltshire Council Business Plan (2022-2032)

The plan represents Wiltshire Council's ten-year ambition for the county. It sets out the council's mission, how they will measure achievement of it, and the key themes that guide their work. Their mission is to ensure:

- The people of Wiltshire are empowered to live full, healthy and enriched lives.
- Our communities continue to be beautiful and exciting places to live.
- Our local economy thrives and is supported by a skilled workforce.
- We lead the way in how councils and counties mitigate the climate challenges ahead.

The guiding themes are Prevention and early intervention; Improving social mobility and tackling inequalities; Understanding communities; and Working together.

Access to high quality open space and green infrastructure is key in helping to achieve this mission.

3.2.2.2   Previous Open Space Studies

The current local plan policies set different standards for open space provision across the four former districts of Wiltshire (before Wiltshire became a unitary authority in 2009) and are based on open space studies which are now out of date. The studies are as follows:

- North Wiltshire Open Space Study (2004)
- South Wiltshire OS Audit (2007) – Salisbury and surrounding catchment
- West Wiltshire Leisure and Recreational Needs Assessment (2007)
- Kennet District Council Community benefits from Planning (2005)

The table below taken from Topic Paper 11: Green Infrastructure (produced as part of the evidence base supporting the Wiltshire Core Strategy) gives a comparison of standards used across the four districts of Kennet, Salisbury, West Wiltshire and North Wiltshire.

Table 5 Comparison of Standards for Green Space in Kennet, Salisbury, West Wiltshire and North Wiltshire

Open space type	Kennet District Council	West Wiltshire District Council	North Wiltshire District Council	Salisbury District Council
Children's equipped play	**Policy HC34** - (20 or more dwellings) Equipped Play Space - 0.31 Ha per 1000 population. **Policy HC35** – (5-19 dwellings) Children's recreation – 0.72 Ha per 1000 population.	**Policy YP1** – Children's Play Areas. **Standard** Equipped Play - 0.5m² per person. **Policy YP2** – Provision for Teenagers. **Standard** Teenage Facilities – 0.25m² per person.	**Policy CF3** Play Areas – 3m² per person.	**Policy R2** Recreational open space (comprising facilities for communal outdoor sport and children's play) - 2.43 Ha per 1000 population. **Standard** Children – 0.1 Ha per 1000 population. **Standard** Young People – 0.2 Ha per 1000 population.
General recreation area of natural green space	**Policy HC34** - (20 or more dwellings) Casual Play Space – 0.41 Ha per 1000 population. **Policy HC35** – (5-19 dwellings) Children's recreation – 0.72 Ha per 1000 population.	**Policy LP4** – Recreation Facilities. **Standard** Multi-functional greenspaces – 12m² per person. **Policy CR2** – Country Parks. **Standard** Urban Parks – 1.3m² per person. **Policy CR3** – Greenspace Network.	**Policy CF3** Local Parks – 15m² per person.	**Policy R2** Recreational open space (comprising facilities for communal outdoor sport and children's play) - 2.43 Ha per 1000 population. **Policy R3** (accommodation for the elderly) 0.8 Ha per 1000 population. **Standard** Amenity Greenspace – 1.05 Ha per 1000 population.

Open space type	Kennet District Council	West Wiltshire District Council	North Wiltshire District Council	Salisbury District Council
Outdoor sports	**Policy HC34** - (20 or more dwellings) 1.71 Ha per 1000 population.	**Policy OS1** – New artificial turf pitch provision. **Policy OS2** – New grass pitch provision. **Standard** Sports Pitches and Courts – 10m² per person. **Standard** Bowling Green's – 0.2m² per person.		**Policy R2** Recreational open space (comprising facilities for communal outdoor sport and children's play) - 2.43 Ha per 1000 population. **Standard** Outdoor Sports Facilities Urban – 4.9 Ha per 1000 population. Rural – 2.4 Ha per 1000 population.
Allotments		**Standard** 1.5m² per person		**Standard** Urban – 0.55 Ha per 1000 population. Rural – 0.38 Ha per 1000 population.

The four previous local open space audits which underpinned the studies outlined above were carried out using slightly different methodologies, therefore in 2010 the Council commissioned a piece of work to consolidate the datasets, bringing them together into a single GIS data layer. Further to these audits, the Council continued to gather data on the quantity and quality of individual assets, however given the size of the county it was not considered feasible to reach a position where a comprehensive and up to date audit could be reached with the resources available in house. Local community groups also gathered and submitted data on their own local open spaces, which supplemented the data gathered by the Council although the quality, age and coverage of that data is variable, and most of it was not digitised.

Ethos consolidated this data as part of the production of the draft Open Space Study in 2015, through a comprehensive mapping and audit process. The GIS mapping has been updated further by Wiltshire Council in 2020, through a review of the mapping and consultation with parish councils (see Section 2.3).

3.2.2.3　　　Saved policies

The local plans for the four former council areas of Kennet, Salisbury, North Wiltshire and West Wiltshire contain a number of "saved policies" which are relevant to green infrastructure. The local plans form part of the current Development Plan for Wiltshire and provide a local policy framework to guide development.

The table below shows an overview of the most relevant policies related to open space which are referenced in Appendix D of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) 2015 and are either replaced by the policies of the Core Strategy or continue to be saved to sit alongside the policies of the Core Strategy.

Table 6 Overview of relevant replaced and saved policies from former council areas

Existing Policy	To be replaced by WCS or continue to save?
Kennet District Local Plan - Adopted April 2004	
HC34 Recreation provision on large housing sites	Continue to save
HC35 Recreation provision on small housing sites	Continue to save
TR17 Existing Outdoor Sport & Recreation Facilities	Continue to save
TR20 Protection of allotments	Continue to save
North Wiltshire Local Plan 2011-Adopted June 2006	
HE3 Historic Parks and Gardens	Replaced by CP58 (Ensuring conservation of the historic environment)
T4 Cycling, Walking and Public Transport	Replaced by CP61 (Transport and development)
CF2 Leisure facilities and open space	Continue to save.
CF3 Provisions of open space	Continue to save.
West Wiltshire District Plan 1st Alteration- Adopted June 2004	
C10 Local Nature Reserves	Replaced by CP50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) and CP52 (Green Infrastructure).
R7 Trowbridge Cricket Ground	Continue to save.
R10 Poulton Field Bradford On Avon	Continue to save.
R12 Allotments	Continue to save.
T12 Footpaths and Bridleways	Replaced by CP60 (Sustainable transport), CP61 (Transport and development) and CP63 (Transport strategies).
West Wiltshire Leisure and Recreation DPD- Adopted February 2009	
LP1 Protection and enhancement of existing open space or sport and recreation provision	Continue to save.
LP2 Proposals that involve the loss of open space or sport and recreation provision	Continue to save.
LP3 Review of low value sites	Continue to save.
LP4 Providing recreation facilities in new developments	Continue to save.
LP5 New sport and recreation facilities	Continue to save.
OS1 New artificial turf pitch provision	Continue to save.
OS2 New grass pitch provision	Continue to save.
CR1 Footpaths and rights of way	Continue to save.
CR2 Country Parks	Continue to save.

CR3 Greenspace Network	Continue to save.
GM1 Maintenance of existing open space	Continue to save.
GM2 Management and maintenance of new or enhanced open space	Continue to save.
GM3 Future management partnerships	Continue to save.
YP1 Children's play areas	Continue to save.
YP2 Provision for teenagers	Continue to save.
Salisbury District Local Plan 2011- Adopted June 2003	
H17 Important Open Spaces within Housing Policy Boundaries	Continue to save.
H18 Amenity open space within Housing Policy Boundaries	Continue to save.
CN18 Historic Parks and Gardens	Replaced by CP58 (Ensuring conservation of the historic environment).
CN19 Environmental Enhancement	Replaced by CP52 (Green infrastructure), CP57 (Ensuring high quality design and place shaping) and CP58 (Ensuring the conservation of the historic environment).
C16 Local Nature Reserves	Replaced by CP50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity).
R1A Sports and Leisure	Continue to save.
R1C Outdoor Recreation	Continue to save.
R2 Open Space Provision	Continue to save.
R3 Open Space Provision	Continue to save.
R5 Protection of Outdoor Facilities	Continue to save.
R6 Urban Parks	Continue to save.
R17 Public Rights of Way (Existing network)	Replaced by CP52 (Green infrastructure).
R18 Public rights of way (increased access	Replaced by CP52 (Green infrastructure).
R20 Allotments	Continue to save.

3.2.2.4　Wiltshire Core Strategy (2015)

Wiltshire Core Strategy (WCS) was adopted in January 2015 and provides an overarching planning policy framework for Wiltshire up to 2026. The CS aims to deliver new jobs and homes, whilst at the same time providing high quality design, infrastructure, environmental and community benefits. It highlights protecting and planning for the enhancement of the natural environment including maintaining, enhancing and expanding the green infrastructure as a key principle.

The key policy of relevance to this study is Core Policy 52.

Core Policy 52: Green infrastructure

Development shall make provision for the retention and enhancement of Wiltshire's green infrastructure network and shall ensure that suitable links to the network are provided and maintained. Where development is permitted developers will be required to:

i.   *retain and enhance existing on site green infrastructure*
ii.   *make provision for accessible open spaces in accordance with the requirements of the adopted Wiltshire Open Space Standards*
iii.   *put measures in place to ensure appropriate long-term management of any green infrastructure directly related to the development*
iv.   *provide appropriate contributions towards the delivery of the Wiltshire Green Infrastructure Strategy*
v.   *identify and provide opportunities to enhance and improve linkages between the natural and historic landscapes of Wiltshire.*

If damage or loss of existing green infrastructure is unavoidable, the creation of new or replacement green infrastructure equal to or above its current value and quality, that maintains the integrity and functionality of the green infrastructure network, will be required.
Proposals for major development should be accompanied by an audit of the existing green infrastructure within and around the site and a statement demonstrating how this will be retained and enhanced through the development process.

Development will not adversely affect the integrity and value of the green infrastructure network, prejudice the delivery of the Wiltshire Green Infrastructure Strategy, or provide inadequate green infrastructure mitigation.

Green infrastructure projects and initiatives that contribute to the delivery of a high quality and highly valued multi-functional green infrastructure network in accordance with the Wiltshire Green Infrastructure Strategy will be supported. Contributions (financial or other) to support such projects and initiatives will be required where appropriate from developers.

Core Policy 52 identifies those areas that are characterised as part of green infrastructure, this includes: Parks and gardens, Amenity green space, Urban green spaces, Woodland, Downland and meadows, Wetlands, Open and running water, Quarries, Green corridors, Allotments, Cemeteries, and Churchyards.

The policy highlights that the maintenance and enhancement of this network is important that growth set out by the Core Strategy can be delivered sustainability. It is vital that new developments within principle settlements and market towns focus on creating and improving green infrastructure which can also offer enhance new links between the towns and the countryside. This may also include long term management of green infrastructure and developers will be required to contribute to this through measures including financial contributions, management schemes and management plans. Several areas are identified where green infrastructure can be enhanced in Wiltshire:

- Delivery of green infrastructure within the Cricklade Country Way.
- Continued restorations and enhancement of the canal network.
- Delivery of green infrastructure in the Cotswold Water Park.
- Delivery of green infrastructure of the Great Western Community Forest Plan.
- Maintenance and enhancement of existing country parks and the provision of new country parks in strategic locations.
- Improvement to the rights of way network.
- Development and improvement of sub-regional green corridors including rivers.
- The use of SuDS should be encouraged wherever possible

3.2.2.5   Wiltshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan (3) (2011 - 2026) – December 2016

The Wiltshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) supports the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the Wiltshire Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Schedule. The plan identifies the infrastructure that is needed by new housing and employment development planned in the Core Strategy. In addition, the IDP set out the Community Area-specific infrastructure along with providing a strategic wide plan.

The IDP classifies sources for infrastructure including Section 106 agreements and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). It explains the existence of a funding gap between the total cost of infrastructure and available funding sources. The

funding gap justifies the need to introduce CIL in Wiltshire to help offset the costs of delivering wider forms of infrastructure requirements.

The IDP identifies that open space, green infrastructure and the environment are important to housing, economic growth and the regeneration of urban areas. Any development should support and enhance existing assets and create new ones. To determine this, major development will be required to audit current provision and complete a statement demonstrating how this will be retained and enhanced. Funding and delivery of this will be determined in accordance with Core Policy 3, the IDP, the Open Space Assessment and the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy with the cost depending on the nature, size and location of the infrastructure.

3.2.2.6　　Wiltshire Core Strategy Topic Paper 11: Green Infrastructure

This Green Infrastructure Topic Paper is part of the Wiltshire Core Strategy and summarises evidence to support the development of policies relating to Green Infrastructure. GI policies are key to be able to meet the core strategy objective of "To protect and enhance the environment". This paper identifies potential threats and opportunities to the development of the Wiltshire GI strategy which has informed the GI policy options.

Policy options to address GI issues and maximise enhancement through the planning process have been explored. The most sustainable solution identified was a "green infrastructure" policy which supports projects and initiatives that contribute to the delivery of GI and ensures that proposals for new development support the emerging GI strategy alongside open space standards.

The paper also identifies existing GI networks which could be enhanced, this includes the protection and reinstatement of the Wilts & Berks and Thames and Severn canals, the protection of the Melksham link canal and the Cotswold Water Park. These specific areas were identified as concerns through the consultation process.

3.2.2.7　　A Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Wiltshire (2022)

This is the first Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy for Wiltshire and has been shaped through engagement with a wide range of internal stakeholders and external partners. The Strategy sets out a long-term vision, strategic goals and principles for delivering green and blue infrastructure across Wiltshire by a range of partners and stakeholders, working together at a variety of scales. Together with the new Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Wiltshire, the Strategy has a significant role to play in delivering nature-based solutions to support the Council's Climate Strategy and new Local Plan.

The Vision for Wiltshire's Green & Blue Infrastructure:

Wiltshire's multi-functional network of high quality, biodiverse and accessible green and blue infrastructure is widely valued by our communities, businesses and visitors.
Managed sustainably through strong leadership and partnerships, the green and blue infrastructure network provides a range of well-being benefits for people, places and nature across Wiltshire.
As a result of working with natural processes to support delivery of multi-functional ecosystem services, Wiltshire is better able to adapt to a changing climate and biodiversity loss has been reversed.
Networks of green and blue spaces and corridors in the countryside and our towns support access to nature and healthy lifestyles and provide high quality landscapes and beautiful places for people to live, work and visit.

The Strategy identifies some immediate priorities:

- Creating more and better green spaces in our towns
- Planting the right trees in the right places
- Supporting access to nature
- Encouraging environmentally sensitive farming
- Supporting a green economic recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic
- Embedding green and blue infrastructure into development and placemaking

3.2.2.8   Wiltshire Climate Strategy (2022)

The Climate Strategy sets out the next five years of the council's journey to becoming a carbon neutral county by 2030, in response to Council's acknowledgement of a climate emergency in 2019, and pledge to become carbon neutral by 2030. The strategy covers seven delivery themes: transport; built environment; waste; green economy; energy generation, storage and distribution; natural environment, food and farming; and carbon neutral council.

Key objectives of relevance to this assessment include creating the infrastructure for increased walking and cycling; protect and extend our network of green spaces and land and water habitats and make best use of this network of green and blue spaces for biodiversity, active travel, recreation, cooling, shade and absorbing carbon; and absorbing carbon, by plants and well-managed soils.

3.2.2.9   Wiltshire and Swindon Nature Recovery Strategy

Local Nature Recovery Strategies are required under the Environment Act 2021. The emerging Wiltshire and Swindon Nature Recovery Strategy will set out the framework for achieving 'bigger, better, more joined up' environmental outcomes. Wiltshire Wildlife Trust are leading on the strategy and are bringing together local organisations including Wiltshire Council to start the process.

3.2.2.10   Wiltshire Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2015 - 2025

The Wiltshire Countryside Access Improvement Plan (CAIP) sets out proposals for managing and improving access to the countryside over a 10 year period (2015 - 2025). The CAIP sets out 18 objectives to achieve which includes improving sustainable access to opportunities across Wiltshire and providing sustainable access to the countryside. As a country, Wiltshire has 6,047km of public rights of way which includes access through a number of council owned countryside sites, nature reserves and parks. The CAIP outlines a number of issues identified through research and consultation and opportunities for improvement, these are summarised below.

Table 7 Issues and Opportunities identified within Wiltshire CAIP 2015-2025

Key Issues	Opportunities
1. Public awareness – people might not use the network fully due to lack of knowledge or legal rights.	**1.** Promote greater use of the network bringing benefits for health, the rural economy and appreciation of the countryside.
2. Ease of use – the network could be easier to use.	**2.** Create a more coherent network and provide new and better access routes avoiding busy roads.
3. Improving effectiveness – Wiltshire has a large countryside network, so the allocation of limited funding has to bring the most benefit to the most number of people.	**3.** Increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the management of the network and the benefit of users and landowners.
4. Definitive mapping – the network is constantly changing therefore there are many inconsistencies in the recorded network.	**4.** Prioritise changes to the definitive map which work towards a more coherent network.
5. Development – construction of new infrastructure impacts the countryside network.	**5.** New developments should retain or create links within the countryside network.
6. Partnerships – increasingly important to work in partnership with organisations and volunteers to maintain and enhance the network.	**6.** Increase involvement of external organisations and volunteers.

3.2.2.11   Wiltshire Playing Pitch Strategy (2017)

The Playing Pitch Strategy covers the major 'pitch sports': Association Football; Cricket; Hockey; and Rugby. It sets out an overarching strategy for the future provision and protection of pitch sport opportunities within Wiltshire. It includes

an action plan and 18 area profiles which translate the action plan into specific recommendations. The strategy is based on a technical needs assessment, which examines overall supply and demand for pitch sports, and associated consultation.

The vision and key aims for this strategy are:

'To achieve the best possible quality, quantity, and type of playing pitch provision to meet the varying needs of Wiltshire's residents, throughout the local authority area.'

1. Provide an evidence base that underpins the statutory land-use planning process in respect of its forward planning and development control functions.
2. Underpin the development of a range of council policies and strategies, including the development plan framework, leisure strategies, public health strategies and community infrastructure plans.
3. Support the overall management, protection, improvement and conservation of the playing pitch stock to the best advantage of the residents of Wiltshire.
4. To create an environment for sport and healthy physical activity which helps to improve the health and well-being of the population, increase participation levels and reduce inactivity and inequalities.
5. Inform the Council in its negotiation and securing of Section 106 agreements, and other developer contributions.

3.2.2.12   Revised Wiltshire Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (October 2016)

Ensuring that the necessary infrastructure is put in place to support new development requires developer contributions, using the following mechanisms:

- Planning conditions
- Section 278 agreements to deliver highways works
- Planning obligations (S106)
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

This SPD identifies the planning obligations that will be sought by the Council for development that generates a need for new infrastructure, to mitigate the site-specific impact of development and deliver affordable housing. The SPD refers to the existing adopted open space standards. Updates to this SPD should be informed by this assessment.

3.2.2.13   Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

CIL is a fixed, non-negotiable charge on new development. The amount is based upon the size of a development and is charged in pounds per square metre. It varies according to the type of development (e.g., residential, retail or employment uses) and in which area of Wiltshire the development takes place. The Wiltshire CIL Charging Schedule sets out the CIL rates that apply to different types of development in different parts of the county.

The intention behind CIL is that it will contribute towards the funding of infrastructure (on the Wiltshire Regulation 123 List, taken from the Wiltshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan) to support the cumulative impact of development across the county. Planning obligations (S106) will be used to mitigate the site-specific impact of development and deliver affordable housing.

3.2.2.14   Draft Open Space Assessment (2015)

The study (completed by Ethos Environmental Planning) was undertaken in accordance with the NPPF and followed the guidance for open space assessment set out within PPG 17. It was underpinned by extensive consultation (which also helped inform the standards in the 2020 update), desktop mapping and quality audits. The full report is provided at Appendix 2.

The study recommended the following standards for open space provision:

Table 8 Urban analysis areas - standards from 2015 study

Typology	Quantity standards (ha/1000 population)	Access standard
Allotments	0.20	480 metres or 10 minutes' walk time
Amenity green space	1.50	480 metres or 10 minutes' walk time
Parks, Sport and Recreation Grounds	1.20 to include both public and private grounds (excluding education sites)	600 metres or 12-13 minutes' walk time
Play Space (Children)	0.05	480 metres or 10 minutes' walk time
Play Space (Youth)	0.02	600 metres or 12-13 minutes' walk time

Table 9 Rural analysis areas - standards from 2015 study

Typology	Quantity standards (ha/1000 population)	Access standard
Allotments	0.25 (for new provision)	480 metres or 10 minutes' walk time
Recreation Space	3.00 to include both public and private grounds (excluding education sites)	600 metres or 12-13 minutes' walk time
Play Space (Children and Youth)	0.07	600 metres or 12-13 minutes' walk time

Table 10 Natural green space analysis - standards from 2015 study

Typology	Quantity standards (ha/1000 population)		Access standard
	For assessing current and future provision	Requirement from new development	
Natural Green Space	ANGSt	1.50 to be provided within the amenity green space standard	ANGSt

3.2.2.7   Site Based Plans

There are a number of site based local level plans which are worth noting:

Cranborne Chase Partnership Plan 2019 – 2024

This partnership plan sets out the management for the Cranborne Chase Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The plan sets out the special qualities and features of the AONB and defines what actions are required to ensure their conservation and enhancement. The vision by 2030 is for the AONB to become an inspirational example of sustainable management in action. By the end of the plan period, there are five priorities which are to be achieved:

1. The profile of the AONB will be significantly raised, through signage, community events and enhanced communications.
2. Dark night skies of AONB will be conserved and enhanced.
3. Extensive collaboration with stakeholders and the local communities to enhance the natural and historic environment of the AONB.
4. Multiple opportunities for volunteers to help conserve and enhance the landscapes of the AONB.

5. A suite of projects within the Cranborne Chase and Chalke Valley Landscape Partnership Scheme bid to enhance the natural, historic, and cultural environments of the AONB.

North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019 – 2024

This is the statutory management plan for the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The North Wessex Downs spans across five council areas with 39% of the AONB falling under Wiltshire. The plan sets out

a vision and long-term ambitions for the AONB along with looking in more detail into the qualities of the landscapes with the issues, objectives and actions going forward to achieve the overall vision.

Cotswolds AONB Management Plan 2018 - 2023

The Cotswolds AONB management plan sets out the vision, outcomes and policies for the management of the AONB till 2023. The two main purposes of the main is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the AONB and increase the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities it has. Despite this plan period running until 2023 the vision is;

"By 2043 the Cotswold AONB will be a distinctive, unique, accessible living landscape treasured for its diversity which is recognised by all for its wide open views, dry stone walls, intimate valets, flower rich grasslands, ancient woodlands, dark skies, tranquillity, archaeology, historic and cultural heritage and distinctive Cotswold stone architecture".

The plan identifies several issues including the erosion of the natural beauty of the AONB, a lack of a consistent approach to management across the whole of the AONB and a lack of understanding of the benefits of the designation. It is hoped that these can be overcome through specific outcomes working with key stakeholders and communities to be able to achieve four identified ambitions to help achieve the overall vision. These ambitions are;

1. To promote the Cotswold AONB as the Walking and Exploring Capital of England.
2. To secure the local design and delivery of a Cotswolds AONB package of agricultural payments for public goods and services and rural development support.
3. To ensure that communities and businesses within and around the Cotswolds AONB identify and celebrate being part of a nationally recognised landscape.
4. To promote the case for the Cotswolds being designated as England's next National Park.

It must be highlighted that the Cotswold AONB spans a large area and only 7% of this AONB falls within Wiltshire.

New Forest Partnership Plan (Re:New Forest) 2022 – 2027

The Partnership Plan was produced jointly by all the main organisations with interests and responsibilities in the National Park, which includes Wiltshire Council. It is an overarching strategic document for the National Park and sets the framework for more detailed plans and strategies, including the annual business plans prepared by the National Park Authority and partner organisations.

The vision for the New Forest is to be a national beacon for a sustainable future, where nature and people flourish. In order to deliver the proposed vision, the plan focuses on five theme-based 'agendas for action': climate, nature, people, place and partnership.

Avebury and Stonehenge Management Plans

This is the first joint management plan by Avebury and Stonehenge completed in 2015 despite being located 40km apart. The plan sets out the overall strategy for achieving the correct balance between conservation, access, the interest of the local community and the sustainable use of the site. The most significant issues affecting the world heritages sites are sustaining the outstanding universal value for the present and future generations and providing adequate protection through the planning system.

Cotswold Water Park Strategic Review and Implementation Plan (2008)

This plan provides a 20-year vision to guide the future development of the area of Cotswold Water Park (CWP). Green Infrastructure is recognised as a key component for sustainable development within the strategy, with one of the objectives in the strategy as being; "*To devise a Green Infrastructure Network that compliments and integrates the values of the core components of the Vision (namely providing sustainable links throughout the CWP, encouraging local access to the countryside, and providing access to leisure routes between key assets) and reduces car borne movements on local roads".* Open spaces are also identified as a core priority within the countryside, communities and settlements,

with one objective to *"establish actual links between the countryside and settlements of the CWP using strong landscape features; the establishment of key settlements as CWP centres of activity; securing the provision of open public spaces close to settlements; and the development of an integrated leisure infrastructure network".*

The strategy also refers to the Thames and Severn and North Wilts Canals within the vision for the CWP in 2028 identifying it as a hub for leisure activity and an aspiration for a water-taxi system along the canal along with protecting the corridor of the canal as an important nature reserve.

A Restoration Strategy for the Completion and Future Development of the Wilts and Berks Canal (Wilts & Berks Canal Partnership) (2019)

The restoration of the Wilts & Berks canal strategy aims to deliver a community asset and green infrastructure linking Wiltshire, Swindon and Oxfordshire and is supported by the Canal Partnership. It will be delivered over several years with it to be completed in the period 2025 – 2031. The strategy is the base to inform the production of a Masterplan for the canal in which a full business plan will be produced. The business plan will identify economic, ecological and social benefits along with opportunities and funding sources. Sustainability will also be built into the plan to ensure long term maintenance of operational waterway. There are two sections of the waterway within Wiltshire that have been identified for early restoration and flagship projects, these are Melksham – Pewsham and Royal Wootton Bassett to Swindon.

3.3   Health and Deprivation Context

3.3.1   Public Health England Summary

Public Health England have published the 2019 Health Profile for Wiltshire[13]. In summary the health of people in Wiltshire is better than the England average. In terms of life expectancy, the overall average lifespans are above the national average for both men and women. Child health is also significantly better than the national average. The prevalence of child obesity for Wiltshire is 14.8% compared to 20.2% England average, and 14% of children live in low income families (under 16) compared to 17% England average. Adult health is also considerably better than the England average with 71% of adults physically active compared to an average of 67% across England.

3.3.2   Wiltshire health and wellbeing strategy (2019 – 2022)

The vision for Wiltshire:" People in Wiltshire live in thriving communities that empower and enable them to live longer, fulfilling healthier lives."

Although the health of those in Wiltshire is generally very good compared to the national average, inequalities within the county do exist. Evidence from the Wiltshire Health and Wellbeing Joint Strategic Needs Assessment has highlighted that the most deprived 20% of areas within Wiltshire have repeatedly poorer outcomes than the least deprived 20%.

One of the key themes of the strategy is tacking inequalities, and it highlights that the environment can be pivotal to people's health and wellbeing including litter, air quality, parks and open spaces. Prevention is also a key area, which includes supporting more active lifestyles.

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[13] The source for this information was Public Health England's data analysis tool 'Fingertips'.

3.3.3   Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) Analysis

The Indices of Deprivation 2019 provide a set of relative measure of deprivation for small areas (Lower-layer Super Output Areas) across England, based on seven different domains of deprivation which are appropriately weighted:

- Income (22.5%)
- Employment (22.5%)
- Health Deprivation and Disability (13.5%)
- Education, Skills Training (13.5%)
- Crime (9.3%)
- Barriers to Housing and Services (9.3%)
- Living Environment (9.3%)

Each of these domains is based on a basket of indicators. As far as is possible, each indicator is based on data from the most recent time point available; in practice most indicators in the Indices of Deprivation 2019 relate to the tax year 2015/16.

The Index of Multiple Deprivation combines information from the seven domains to produce an overall relative measure of deprivation.

Figure 6 shows the IMD decile for each LSOA within the District, where 1 is the most deprived and 10 is least deprived. As can be seen, deprivation is low across the majority of the study area. There are some small pockets of deprivation with a few urban areas including Chippenham, Melksham, Trowbridge, Devizes and Salisbury. There is also a large portion of the Royal Wootton Bassett CAB that has a high level of deprivation.

Improving access to quality green space has the potential to improve health outcomes for the whole population. However, this is particularly true for disadvantaged communities, who appear to accrue an even greater health benefit from living in a greener environment. This means that green space also can be an important tool in the ambition to increase healthy life expectancy and narrow the gap between the life chances of the richest and poorest in society[14].

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[14] Public Health England Report - Improving access to greenspace: a new review for 2020
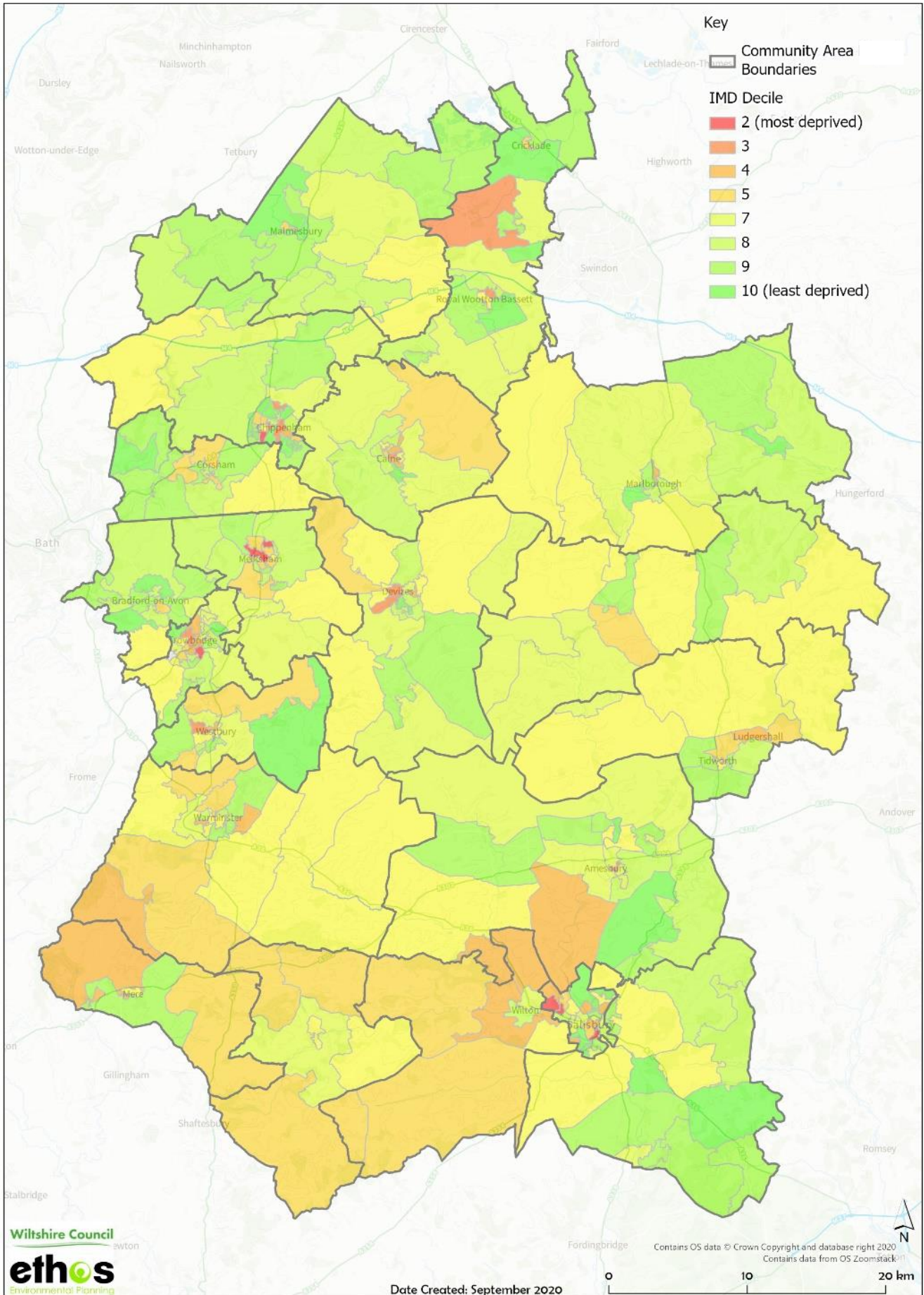
Figure 6 IMD deciles in Wiltshire

4.0   LOCAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT (STEP 1)

4.1   Introduction

Following the extensive consultation completed as part of the 2015 open space study, it was agreed by the project team that a smaller 'update' consultation would be undertaken as part of this update open space assessment. The consultation work was undertaken from February to May 2020, and consisted of:

- A general household survey (2020 Householder Survey update) – online with 244 surveys completed[15]
- A survey of town and parish councils

The results of this consultation, the previous 2015 consultation and other analyses have helped amongst other considerations to inform the content of the recommended local standards (Section 7 of this report). A summary of the results from the 2015 and 2020 consultations are provided below.

4.2   2015 Community and Stakeholder Consultation – Key findings

As part of the 2015 open space study, an extensive community and stakeholder consultation was undertaken (provided at Appendix 3). Consultation was conducted with the local community, town and parish councils, local groups and organisations, council officers and stakeholders. The extent of the consultation undertaken reflected the breadth and diversity of the study with a need to engage with as wide a cross section of the community and stakeholders as possible. A summary of the findings by consultee is detailed below.

4.2.1   General Community (householder postal survey)

Postal surveys were distributed to 3,500 households (randomly selected) and 562 completed surveys were received (16%). The key findings were as follows:

- Wiltshire's rights of way and its countryside, country parks and woodlands that are most commonly used by households at least monthly (over 76%).
- Over 64% of households also use parks, recreation grounds and informal open spaces at least monthly.
- Other than for facilities for teenagers, a majority of households reported that there were currently enough of all of the various kinds of open space and recreational facilities.
- The most commonly identified shortfall was for provision of teenage facilities where 59% thought there was insufficient provision currently.
- 52% or more of households thought there was a need for more rights of way; and wildlife areas/nature reserves.
- All facilities are rated average or better by a majority of households other than facilities for teenagers. 50% of households highlighted the quality of facilities for teenagers as being either poor or very poor.
- The high quality of parks and recreation grounds stands out notably, being viewed by around 60% of respondents as very good or good.
- Where households make use of the opportunities identified, 50% or more of users are prepared to travel more than 20 minutes to use some facilities such as wildlife areas/nature reserves; country parks and woodlands; and astro-turf pitches.
- In contrast, for significant numbers of residents, facilities need to be much more locally accessible before they will be used (for example, allotments, rights of way, play areas, and informal green spaces).
- Residents are more likely than not to drive to many kinds of open space including wildlife areas/nature reserves; artificial turf pitches; country parks, countryside; and tennis courts/bowling greens.

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[15] Although the level of responses received as part of the 2020 householder survey update were less than half that of the 2015 survey, and respondents were not randomly selected due to it being an online survey only, the results have helped to reinforce the findings of the extensive 2015 consultation.

- However, walking and cycling are the norm for other facilities in particular play areas; parks/recreation grounds; informal green spaces; water recreation; outdoor teenage facilities; allotments; playing fields; and foot/cycle paths and bridleways.
- The category clearly highlighted by the largest number of households as a high priority for potential improvement/new provision was for improvements to the footpath, bridleway and cycle path network.
- Following this the most commonly identified high priority categories were country parks and accessible woodlands/countryside; and parks and recreation grounds.
- The issues and concerns of the rural areas of Wiltshire are sometimes quite different from those of the main towns and service centres. This will need to be addressed when considering the development of local standards.
- Some sectors of the community face particular barriers to access such as disabled people; children and young people; households in the more isolated rural areas and those in the more deprived urban wards of the study area.

4.2.2 Town and Parish Councils

- Consultation highlighted that individual towns and parishes vary in relation to size, demographics, geography, needs and demands/aspirations.
- 77% of the town and parish councils who responded were directly responsible for the management of various local spaces and facilities.
- 80% reported that there was a need for additional or improved open space, play and recreation facilities within their town or parish.
- The sector of the community most commonly identified as being poorly served in relation to their needs were young people.
- The rural nature of a large proportion of the study area and related transport difficulties means that as much as possible needs to be provided locally or that opportunities are made available to access city and town facilities more readily.

4.2.3 Stakeholders: Parks, Green Spaces, Countryside and Rights of Way

- Many stakeholders highlighted the extent to which access to and the use of green spaces is of importance to the public health agenda and in relation to community development.
- There is a widespread appreciation of the value of green spaces in relation to encouraging biodiversity through sympathetic management regimes; and the potential for developing more multi-functional green spaces. There is an understanding of the need for a careful balance between developing recreation and conservation.
- There are a wide range of active and enthusiastic owners and managers of publicly accessible green spaces in Wiltshire and a recognition of the value and importance of partnership working.
- Stakeholders pointed out the importance of ensuring ongoing maintenance of Wiltshire's green spaces and the potential for greater involvement by local individuals, groups and organisations for taking on greater ownership and responsibility.

4.3 Householder Survey Update 2020 – Key Findings

The full report is provided at Appendix 1, and the key findings are summarised below.

4.3.1 Demographic Profile

A total of 244 responses were received, and respondents were asked to provide a view on behalf of their household rather than individuals which meant a total 640 were represented.

20% of households who responded had children (representing household views on behalf of 148 children and young people) with ages well spread across the age range.
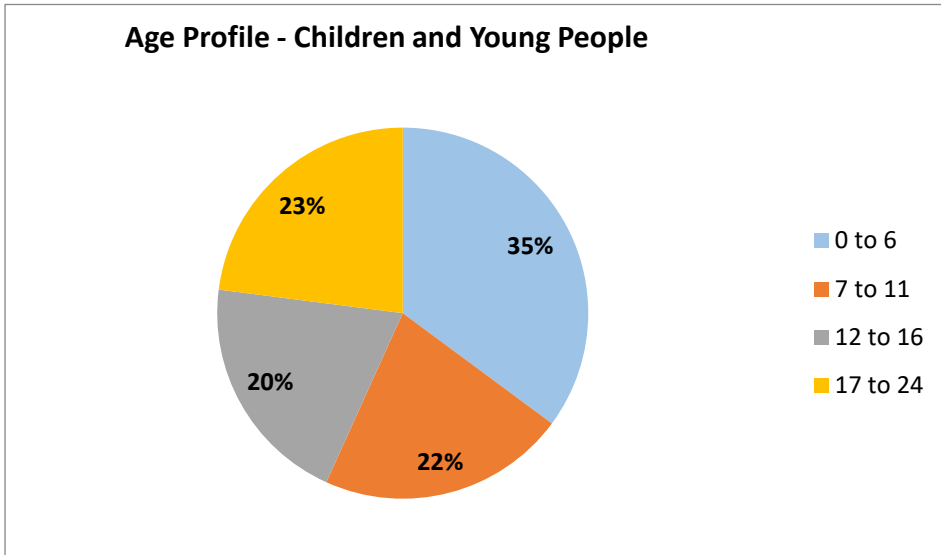
Figure 7 Age profile of children and young people in 2020 householder survey update

To determine the geographical distribution of respondents, the survey asked participants to provide the first part of their postcode. As can be seen from the figure below, a large proportion of respondents were from the BA15 postcode area. This must be taken into consideration as a limitation to the survey results with some postcode districts having no responses.
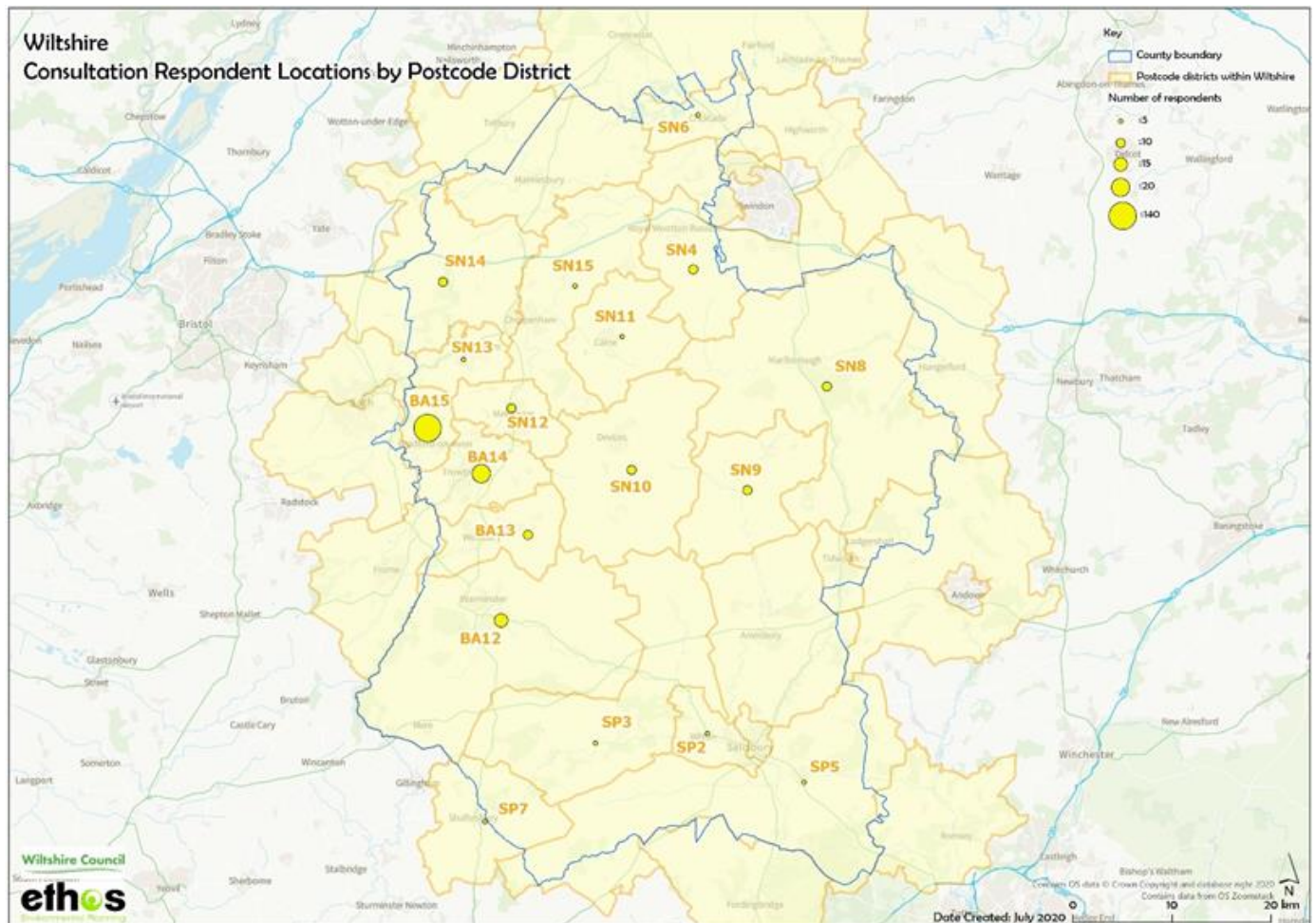
Figure 8 Householder survey 2020 update respondents by postcode district

4.3.2   Uses of Open Space

- Wiltshire's footpath, bridleways, cycle paths, disused railways are the most commonly used by households at least monthly (95%), following by county parks/countryside (92%) and parks and recreation grounds and informal open spaces (both 80%).
- Footpaths, bridleways, cycle paths, disused railways (69%) and country parks/countryside (54%) are also the most frequently used on a daily basis.
- Parks and recreation grounds (32%) and informal open spaces (31%) are the most frequently used on a weekly basis.

4.3.3   Quantity

- The respondents suggested that there was a need for more facilities for teenagers; footpaths, bridleways, cycle paths; woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves and allotments.
- The most identified shortfall was facilities for teenagers where 83% thought there was insufficient provision.
- 75% of respondents thought there was a need for more woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves, 63% of respondents thought there was a shortfall in footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths and 62% thought there was a need for more allotments.
- For most other kinds of open spaces, the view tended to be that the quantity of provision is sufficient. A large majority thought that the supply of churchyards and cemeteries was sufficient (81%), playing fields (70%) and children's play areas (64%).

4.3.4   Quality

- For the most types of open spaces, the majority of households suggested that in general they were of "good" or "adequate". The exception to this was facilities for teenagers in which 77% of households rated them as "poor" or "very poor".
- Only two types of open spaces were rated relatively highly in terms of quality. These were parks and recreation grounds (71% rated as very good or good) and country parks/countryside (67% similarly).

4.3.5   Access

- Overall, the majority of households said that they would not normally travel more than 15 minutes to visit the different types of open space, but there is significant variation between the typologies.
- There were a few typologies where households would be prepared to travel over 15 minutes to visit, these include woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves (62%), water recreation (56%), artificial turf pitches (52%) and country parks/countryside (51%).
- In contrast, there are a couple of types of open space where households wouldn't be willing to travel more than 10 minutes. These include allotments (57%) and footpaths, bridleways, cycle paths (54%).
- The preferred mode of travel to access open spaces is walking for all types of open space. Cycling was also the preferred mode of transport compared to the car to access facilities for teenagers, courts and greens and footpaths, bridleways and cycleways.

- 88% of households confirmed that they would be prepared to walk/cycle further if the quality of the route were improved. 92% also said that if the quality of the route was improved, they would make the journey more often.

4.3.6   Priorities for Improvement

- The categories highlighted by the largest number of households as a high priority for improvement were footpaths, bridleways, cycle ways (74%); woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves (67%) and country park/countryside (61%).

- In terms of the type of improvement required, the majority of the households thought that most types of open spaces required an improvement in quality. Facilities for teenagers and woodland, wildlife areas and nature reserves were the two exceptions where it was thought that there should be more provision.

4.3.7 Salisbury Neighbourhood Development Plan Consultation

Salisbury City Council undertook an online community survey in May 2020 to gather evidence to inform the Salisbury Neighbourhood Development Plan. As part of this, our household survey was circulated alongside as supplementary survey. A total of 497 responses were received, with 421 completed responses and 76 partial responses. A summary of responses from Salisbury City are as follows:

Uses

- Salisbury's footpath, bridleways, cycle paths, disused railways are the most commonly used by households at least monthly (92%), following by county parks/countryside and parks and recreation grounds (both 85%).
- 53% of households use footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths almost every day, and a further 37% use parks and recreations daily.
- 38% of households indicated that they never visit open spaces.

Quantity

- Overall, the majority of respondents from Salisbury thought that enough types of open spaces. However, 76% of respondents thought there was a need for more footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths, also 68% thought there was a need for more wildlife and area and nature reserves and finally 59% of respondents thought there was a need for more facilities for teenagers.
- 34% felt that there should be open spaces locally.

Quality

- 33% of respondents rated the quality of open spaces as good or very good.
- Whereas 15% said that the quality of open spaces was poor or very poor.
- Parks and recreation grounds were rated highly with 72% rating them good or very good. Similarly, country parks/countryside were rated well with 55% rating them good or very good.
- Facilities for teenagers were regarded as poor or very by 42% of respondents.

Access

- 39% of respondents would be prepared to up to 15 minutes to access open spaces, 27% would be prepared to travel longer than 15 minutes, and 34% of respondents said they do not visit open spaces.
- 41% of respondents said they would travel more than 20 minutes to visit wildlife areas and nature reserves. 38% would also travel more than 20 minutes to access country parks/countryside.
- 32% of respondents said they would be prepared to travel 6 – 10 minutes to parks and recreation grounds.
- Nearly half of respondents (49%) said they most frequently visited open spaces on foot, with 26% using a car.
- 80% of respondents accessed parks and recreation grounds on foot.
- Respondents were more likely to drive to country park/countryside (58%) and wildlife areas and nature reserves (55%).

Priorities for Improvement

- Open spaces that were identified as a high priority for improvement by the majority of respondents were footpaths, bridleways and cycle paths (79%) and wildlife areas and nature reserves (69%).
- On average, 47% of respondents said they would like to see improvements to existing open spaces, 34% would like to see additional facilities and 19% would like better access.

4.4   Town/Parish Councils Survey 2020 – Key Findings

144 of the 261 of the town and parish councils responded to the surveys during the consultation period. The main aim of this survey was to determine if there were any changes or new open spaces within each parish since the last open space assessment in 2015. All the councils that responded suggested changes to the previous mapping - either new sites, amended sites or the removal of sites. These changes were made to the GIS mapping database by Wiltshire Council.

Town and parish councils were also asked about the amount of provision of open spaces. Overall, the majority of parish councils thought there was enough of most types of open spaces apart from facilities for teenagers where 67 of 144 town/ parish councils thought there was a need for more.

5.0   EXISTING PROVISION OF OPEN SPACE

5.1   Typologies

This section sets out the open space typologies which will have standards developed or have been included within the quantitative or access analysis. The typologies set out in Table 11 have been agreed with the project team. The sections below provide a description of each typology.

Table 11 Open space typologies

Typologies with standards	Typologies mapped but no standards[16]
• Allotments • Amenity Green Space (above 0.2ha in size) * • Park and Recreation Grounds*: - *Parks and recreation grounds* - *Outdoor Sports Space (Fixed)* • Play Space (Children) • Play Space (Youth) • Accessible Natural Green Space	• Churchyards and Cemeteries • Education sites • Outdoor Sports Space (Private) • Natural Green Space (Limited Access) • Amenity Green Space (below 0.2ha in size)

*For the rural analysis areas, a standard for 'Recreation Space' has been set. This standard is a combination of the Parks and Recreation Grounds and Amenity Green Space standard and can be met by either type of provision.

5.1.1   Allotments

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

The Allotment Act of 1922[17] defines the term 'allotment garden' as:

"an allotment not exceeding 40 poles[18] in extent which is wholly or mainly cultivated by the occupier for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for consumption by himself or his family"

The Allotments Act of 1925[19] gives protection to land acquired specifically for use as allotments, so called Statutory Allotment Sites, by the requirement for the need for the approval of Secretary of State in event of sale or disposal. Some allotment sites may not specifically have been acquired for this purpose. Such allotment sites are known as "temporary" (even if they have been in use for decades) and are not protected by the 1925 legislation.

5.1.2   Amenity Green Space

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

• Unlikely to be physically demarcated by walls or fences.
• Predominantly lain down to (mown) grass.

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[16] An explanation for not developing standards for these typologies is outlined in the following sections
[17] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo5/12-13/51/section/22/enacted?view=plain
[18] 40 Poles equals 1,210 square yards or 1,012 square metres. A Pole can also be known as a Rod or Perch.
[19] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo5/15-16/61

- Unlikely to have identifiable entrance points (unlike parks).
- They may have shrub and tree planting, and occasionally formal planted flower beds.
- They may occasionally have other recreational facilities and fixtures (such as play equipment or ball courts).

Examples might include both small and larger informal grassed areas in housing estates and general recreation spaces. They can serve a variety of functions dependent on their size, shape, location and topography. Some may be used for informal recreation activities, whilst others by themselves, or else collectively, contribute to the overall visual amenity of an area.

It should be noted that any amenity green spaces smaller than 0.20 ha are not included within the analysis for this typology, as it is considered that these sites will have limited recreation function and therefore should not count towards open space provision (although it is acknowledged they may have other functions such as visual amenity, biodiversity or green infrastructure value, and therefore should still be afforded protection – see Section 8). This is in accordance with the methodology within the 2015 draft open space study, and is a standard approach used to ensure that these studies focus on those key open spaces with recreation function. Some amenity spaces smaller than 0.2ha have been mapped (but not included in the quantity and access analysis), if identified in the consultation undertaken with parish councils.

5.1.3 Parks and Recreation Grounds

This typology brings together the function of Parks and Recreation Grounds and Outdoor Sports Space as identified in the former PPG17 typology. The distinction between the two typologies in the study area is blurred, with very few formal gardens and many parks and/or outdoor sports space having multi-functions used for both informal and formal recreation. The consultation undertaken indicated that people refer to their local park or rec, and communities do not make a distinction between outdoor sports space and parks and recreation grounds. Therefore, for the study an overarching typology for Parks and Recreation Grounds has been used.

This typology comprises the general open space surrounding play areas and sports facilities etc. used for general recreation and includes those areas laid out as pitches which are accessible i.e., they can be walked over/used informally (pitches have not been mapped separately). The quantity analysis for Parks and Recreation Grounds also includes **outdoor sports (fixed)** (comprising all other non-pitch based provision including tennis courts outdoor gyms and bowls).

Outdoor sports space which are privately managed and may or may not allow permissive access on their grounds (e.g., for dog walking) have been mapped as Outdoor Sport (Private).

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

- Play space of many kinds
- Provision for a range of formal pitch and fixed sports
- Informal recreation and sport
- Providing attractive walks and cycle routes to work
- Offering landscape and amenity features
- Areas of formal planting
- Providing areas for 'events'
- Providing habitats for wildlife
- Dog walking

5.1.4 Play Space (Children and Youth)

It is important to establish the scope of the study in terms of this kind of space. Children and young people will play/'hang out' in almost all publicly accessible "space" ranging from the street, town centres and squares, parks, playing fields, "amenity" grassed areas etc. as well as the more recognisable play and youth facility areas such as

equipped playgrounds, youth shelters, BMX and skateboard parks, Multi-use Games Areas etc. Clearly many of the other types of open space covered by this study will therefore provide informal play opportunities.

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

The study has recorded the following:

- **Play Space (Children) –** Areas of play that cater for the needs of children up to and around 12 years. Play Areas are an essential way of creating safe but adventurous places for children of varying ages to play and learn. The emphasis in play area management is shifting away from straightforward and formal equipment such as slides and swings towards creating areas where imagination and natural learning can flourish through the use of landscaping and natural building materials and the creation of areas that need exploring.

- **Play Space (Youth) -** informal recreation opportunities for, broadly, the 13 to 16/17 age group, and which might include facilities like skateboard parks, basketball courts and 'free access' Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs). In practice, there will always be some blurring around the edges in terms of younger children using equipment aimed for youths and vice versa. Teenagers should not be ignored; it is important to create areas for 'hanging out' such as shelters and providing them with things to do such as bike ramps. Currently recognisable provision for teenagers is few and far between.

5.1.5   Accessible Natural Green Space

For the purpose of this study, accessible natural green space covers a variety of partly or wholly accessible spaces including meadows, woodland and copses all of which share a trait of having natural characteristics and wildlife value, but which are also open to public use and enjoyment.

There are large tracts of open countryside within the study area, much of this is private land used for farming, however, there is access to the countryside provided through the public rights of way network. The assessment does not map these areas and analyse these areas (they are not included within the development of standards) but focuses on sites where there are definitive boundaries or areas of natural green space which have some form of public access. In some cases, access may not be fully clear, however there is evidence of some level of informal use and access.

Some sites may provide access in different ways, for example, rivers or lakes are often used for water recreation (e.g., canoeing, fishing, sailing). Whilst access may not be available fully across all areas of these sites (e.g., the middle of a lake or dense scrub in a woodland), the whole site has been included within the assessment.

Some natural spaces were found to have no access at all, and whilst they cannot be formally used by the general community, they can be appreciated from a distance, and contribute to visual amenity, green infrastructure and biodiversity. Whilst every effort was made to exclude these spaces from this typology, as already identified, in certain sites access was not always clear. Although such spaces are not the subject of standards developed by this study, their value is recognised.

The local consultation and strategy review, and research elsewhere (e.g., Natural England[20]) have identified the value attached to natural spaces for recreation and emotional well-being. A sense of 'closeness to nature' with its attendant benefits for people is something that is all too easily lost in urban areas. Natural green spaces can make important contributions towards local Biodiversity Action Plan targets and can also raise awareness of biodiversity values and issues.

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[20] Natural England have published a variety of health and the natural environment publications at
http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/127020

The **natural green space (limited access)** typology includes natural green spaces that were mapped as part of the 2015 draft open space study. These spaces are not generally accessible (other than perhaps via public rights of way), however their importance in terms of green infrastructure, biodiversity and visual amenity is recognised, and it has been agreed with the project team that these remain in the mapping and quantity tables but are excluded from the development of standards. This data will also feed into the Council's emerging Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy.

5.1.6   Outdoor Sport (Private)

Outdoor sports space with limited public access (e.g., private sports grounds), have also been recorded and mapped where known. Private sport space makes up an important part of outdoor sports provision across the study area and forms an important part of the community facilities. The private sports spaces have been mapped separately to publicly accessible sites, to determine exact provision of the different types of provision.

5.1.7   Churchyards and Cemeteries

The study area has many churches and cemeteries, and these provide significant aesthetic value and space for informal recreation such as walking and relaxing. Many are also important in terms of biodiversity. Their importance for informal recreation, aesthetic value and contribution towards biodiversity must be acknowledged, and as such, investment in their upkeep, maintenance and quality is an important factor. Churchyards and Cemeteries have been identified and mapped where known, however, no quantity or access standard for provision have been set, as it is outside the scope of this study to make recommendations related to requirements for new provision.

5.1.8   Education

Many schools and colleges have open space and sports facilities within their grounds. This may range from a small playground to large playing fields with several sports pitches. More often than not, public access to these spaces is restricted and, in many cases, forbidden. Nevertheless, many of the sports facilities are used by local people on both an informal and formal basis.

Sports clubs may have local informal arrangements with a school to use their pitches, and in some cases more formal 'dual use' agreements may be in place. School grounds can also contribute towards the green infrastructure and biodiversity of an area.

Quantity and access standards have not been proposed for education sites. This is because they are not openly accessible to the public and whilst important to the local community, there is less opportunity for the Council to influence their provision and management. However, their existence is still an important factor of local provision, and as such they will be subject to the same policy considerations as publicly accessible space.

5.2   Existing provision of open space

5.2.1   Overview

This section of the report sets out the quantity of open space (ha and ha/1000) within the rural and urban analysis areas and compares this to the study area wide level of provision, and provision within different parish population sizes.

The GIS mapping of open space is based primarily on the data gathered in 2015, which was updated by Wiltshire Council during an informal data gathering exercise in 2020, prior to and extending into the COVID-19 outbreak.

A summary of the open space provision across the study area by urban analysis areas, rural analysis areas county wide is provided in the table below.

Table 12 Summary of open space provision (ha and ha/1000) across the study area

Typology	Urban Analysis Areas		Rural Analysis Areas		Wiltshire total	
	ha	ha/1000	ha	ha/1000	ha	ha/1000
Allotments	65.20	0.19	29.79	0.2	94.99	0.19
Amenity Green Space	382.54	1.09	137.49	0.92	520.03	1.04
Parks and Recreation Grounds (combined)*	362.66	1.04	189.3	1.26	551.96	1.1
Parks and Recreation Grounds	*343.33*	*0.98*	*183.15*	*1.22*	526.48	*1.05*
Outdoor sport (fixed)	*19.34*	*0.06*	*6.15*	*0.04*	25.49	*0.05*
Play Space (Children)	20.57	0.06	8.05	0.05	28.62	0.06
Play Space (Youth)	5.75	0.02	2.08	0.01	7.83	0.02
Accessible natural green space	995.60	2.84	4212.10	28.12	5207.70	10.41
Outdoor sport (private)	236.34	0.67	109.25	0.73	345.59	0.69
Natural green space (limited access)	373.32	1.07	323.99	2.16	697.31	1.39
Churchyards and cemeteries	93.36	0.27	80.06	0.53	173.42	0.35
Education	384.39	1.1	164.30	1.1	548.69	1.1

*The figures for parks and recreation grounds (combined) include parks and recreation grounds and outdoor sport (fixed).

As can be seen, the highest levels of provision across the study area are accessible natural green space.

The breakdown by parish and community areas for the urban and rural analysis areas is provided in the tables below.

5.2.2   Existing provision in urban analysis areas

The GIS mapping of open space has been used to assess the existing quantity of open space within the urban analysis areas. A summary of existing provision (ha and ha/1000 population) is shown in Tables 13 and 14.

The figures for park and recreation (combined) includes:

- Park and recreation ground; and
- Outdoor sport (fixed).

Table 13 Existing provision of open space **(ha)** in urban analysis areas

Parish	Allotments	Amenity Green Space	Park and Recreation Ground (Combined)	*Park and Recreation Ground*	*Outdoor Sport (Fixed)*	Outdoor Sport (Private)	Play Space (Children)	Play Space (Youth)	Accessible Natural Green Space	Natural Green Space (Limited Access)	Churchyards and Cemeteries	Education
Amesbury	0.80	10.67	14.34	*12.19*	*2.15*	0.00	0.52	0.30	25.65	0.00	2.55	13.29
Box	0.56	3.45	13.99	*13.99*	*0.00*	0.00	0.08	0.08	1.99	7.20	1.76	1.40
Bradford-on-Avon	2.98	6.70	10.98	*10.75*	*0.23*	11.38	1.10	0.15	22.31	9.00	3.49	9.81
Bulford	0.00	0.00	2.16	*2.16*	*0.00*	0.00	0.07	0.05	3.37	0.00	0.00	2.46
Calne	0.46	14.35	6.09	*5.85*	*0.24*	1.36	0.94	0.26	21.99	0.33	3.26	25.24
Chippenham	4.80	54.08	20.02	*18.64*	*1.38*	11.70	0.86	0.61	81.74	2.55	4.25	43.91
Corsham	2.23	14.25	7.23	*6.94*	*0.29*	9.35	1.22	0.26	19.37	11.81	3.55	13.98
Cricklade	0.24	6.38	3.00	*2.76*	*0.24*	2.39	0.18	0.04	109.20	46.51	1.37	7.14
Devizes & Roundway	3.69	27.19	6.98	*6.52*	*0.45*	10.46	1.05	0.44	26.05	1.27	7.96	16.94
Downton	1.88	2.93	0.19	*0.00*	*0.19*	0.95	0.62	0.00	14.60	0.00	2.47	4.40
Durrington	0.25	8.11	2.54	*2.26*	*0.28*	0.00	0.20	0.39	0.00	0.00	1.09	8.60
Hilperton	1.11	0.87	8.64	*8.64*	*0.00*	8.39	0.45	0.06	2.48	0.00	0.69	2.50
Laverstock	0.97	23.83	25.31	*24.14*	*1.17*	0.89	0.50	0.07	1.61	28.83	0.72	14.77
Lyneham and Bradenstoke	0.46	7.58	1.93	*1.93*	*0.00*	0.00	0.17	0.00	2.01	1.90	1.29	1.43
Malmesbury	0.44	2.16	1.44	*1.13*	*0.31*	3.00	0.75	0.00	9.18	1.42	1.93	2.99
Marlborough	0.96	29.97	9.74	*7.39*	*2.36*	47.58	0.40	0.03	21.13	0.00	2.49	40.42
Melksham & Melksham Without	3.97	21.18	27.20	*26.14*	*1.07*	16.99	1.53	0.75	27.84	0.00	3.11	22.82
Mere	3.06	1.31	7.11	*6.47*	*0.64*	0.00	0.23	0.00	3.14	9.68	2.98	0.17
Pewsey	1.20	1.16	7.53	*7.18*	*0.35*	0.95	0.39	0.05	13.69	0.00	1.24	8.32
Purton	3.59	0.34	1.74	*1.41*	*0.33*	2.97	0.07	0.05	31.83	0.52	1.28	5.73
Redlynch	0.22	0.00	3.91	*3.78*	*0.13*	0.06	0.18	0.05	127.57	0.00	0.43	0.73
Royal Wootton Bassett	2.68	6.40	11.35	*11.22*	*0.13*	0.00	0.67	0.46	55.97	1.54	1.83	9.37
Salisbury	17.68	36.59	86.17	*84.93*	*1.23*	22.52	1.85	0.40	118.07	57.69	22.56	41.49
Tidworth & Ludgershall	1.95	23.10	28.28	*24.99*	*3.29*	27.54	1.33	0.19	24.15	0.00	2.68	15.25

Tisbury	1.49	0.00	2.86	*2.32*	*0.54*	0.09	0.27	0.13	3.05	0.60	1.91	1.85
Trowbridge	3.58	18.84	14.03	*13.52*	*0.51*	2.49	1.06	0.59	21.87	11.62	7.99	34.79
Warminster	3.06	33.97	27.29	*26.83*	*0.46*	37.72	1.97	0.21	55.47	31.82	2.87	21.79
Westbury	0.00	23.13	6.90	*5.82*	*1.09*	17.57	0.98	0.15	27.06	1.27	3.98	8.74
Wilton	0.89	3.98	3.68	*3.43*	*0.25*	0.00	0.94	0.00	119.92	147.76	1.62	4.06
Total	**65.20**	**382.54**	**362.67**	***343.33***	***19.34***	**236.34**	**20.58**	**5.75**	**992.31**	**373.32**	**93.36**	**384.39**

*Table 14 Existing provision of open space **(ha/1000)** in urban analysis areas*

Parish	Allotments	Amenity Green Space	Park and Recreation Ground (Combined)	*Park and Recreation Ground*	*Outdoor Sport (Fixed)*	Outdoor Sport (Private)	Play Space (Children)	Play Space (Youth)	Accessible Natural Green Space	Natural Green Space (Limited Access)	Churchyards and Cemeteries	Education
Amesbury	0.07	0.91	1.22	1.04	0.18	0	0.04	0.03	2.18	0	0.22	1.13
Box	0.16	0.97	3.91	3.91	0	0	0.02	0.02	0.56	2.01	0.49	0.39
Bradford-on-Avon	0.3	0.68	1.11	1.09	0.02	1.15	0.11	0.01	2.26	0.91	0.35	0.99
Bulford	0	0	0.43	0.43	0	0	0.01	0.01	0.66	0	0	0.48
Calne	0.03	0.79	0.34	0.32	0.01	0.08	0.05	0.01	1.22	0.02	0.18	1.4
Chippenham	0.13	1.51	0.56	0.52	0.04	0.33	0.02	0.02	2.28	0.07	0.12	1.22
Corsham	0.17	1.06	0.54	0.52	0.02	0.7	0.09	0.02	1.44	0.88	0.26	1.04
Cricklade	0.06	1.53	0.72	0.66	0.06	0.57	0.04	0.01	26.21	11.16	0.33	1.71
Devizes & Roundway	0.21	1.57	0.4	0.38	0.03	0.6	0.06	0.03	1.5	0.07	0.46	0.98
Downton	0.6	0.93	0.06	0	0.06	0.3	0.2	0	4.65	0	0.79	1.4
Durrington	0.03	1.05	0.33	0.29	0.04	0	0.03	0.05	0	0	0.14	1.11
Hilperton	0.2	0.16	1.55	1.55	0	1.5	0.08	0.01	0.44	0	0.12	0.45
Laverstock	0.12	2.9	3.08	2.94	0.14	0.11	0.06	0.01	0.2	3.51	0.09	1.8
Lyneham and Bradenstoke	0.08	1.37	0.35	0.35	0	0	0.03	0	0.36	0.34	0.23	0.26
Malmesbury	0.08	0.38	0.25	0.2	0.05	0.52	0.13	0	1.6	0.25	0.34	0.52
Marlborough	0.11	3.49	1.13	0.86	0.27	5.53	0.05	0	2.46	0	0.29	4.7
Melksham & Melksham Without	0.17	0.89	1.14	1.1	0.04	0.71	0.06	0.03	1.17	0	0.13	0.96
Mere	0.98	0.42	2.28	2.07	0.2	0	0.07	0	1	3.1	0.95	0.05
Pewsey	0.31	0.3	1.95	1.86	0.09	0.25	0.1	0.01	3.54	0	0.32	2.15
Purton	0.66	0.06	0.32	0.26	0.06	0.55	0.01	0.01	5.87	0.1	0.24	1.06
Redlynch	0.06	0	1.09	1.05	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.01	35.58	0	0.12	0.2

Royal Wootton Bassett	0.21	0.49	0.87	0.86	0.01	0	0.05	0.04	4.31	0.12	0.14	0.72
Salisbury	0.43	0.9	2.11	2.08	0.03	0.55	0.05	0.01	2.89	1.41	0.55	1.02
Tidworth & Ludgershall	0.11	1.31	1.61	1.42	0.19	1.57	0.08	0.01	1.37	0	0.15	0.87
Tisbury	0.61	0	1.18	0.95	0.22	0.04	0.11	0.05	1.25	0.25	0.78	0.76
Trowbridge	0.1	0.53	0.39	0.38	0.01	0.07	0.03	0.02	0.62	0.33	0.22	0.98
Warminster	0.17	1.91	1.53	1.51	0.03	2.12	0.11	0.01	3.11	1.79	0.16	1.22
Westbury	0	1.49	0.44	0.37	0.07	1.13	0.06	0.01	1.74	0.08	0.26	0.56
Wilton	0.22	0.99	0.92	0.85	0.06	0	0.23	0	29.91	36.86	0.41	1.01
Total	**0.19**	**1.09**	**1.04**	**0.98**	**0.06**	**0.67**	**0.06**	**0.02**	**2.83**	**1.07**	**0.27**	**1.1**

5.2 Existing provision of open space in rural analysis areas

The GIS mapping of open space has been used to assess the existing quantity of open space within the rural areas. A summary of existing provision is shown in Tables 15 and 16.

The figures for Recreation Space include:

- Park and recreation ground;
- Outdoor sport (fixed); and
- Amenity green space.

Table 15 Existing provision of open space (ha) in rural analysis areas

Community Area	Allotments	Recreation Space	Park & Recreation Grounds	Outdoor Sport (Fixed)	Amenity greenspace	Play Space (Children)	Play Space (Youth)	Outdoor Sport (Private)	Education	Churchyards and Cemeteries	Accessible Natural Green Space	Natural Green Space (Limited Access)
Amesbury	2.06	16.57	6.95	0.18	9.43	0.70	0.13	7.64	15.86	4.90	450.39	16.84
Bradford on Avon	0.38	28.68	22.56	0.09	6.03	0.32	0.03	1.80	4.41	1.34	71.37	4.94
Calne	1.83	27.39	18.86	0.28	8.25	0.36	0.23	10.69	2.55	3.90	168.90	1.65
Chippenham	2.26	22.36	13.02	0.13	9.21	0.62	0.26	16.74	5.42	6.64	92.84	17.17
Corsham	3.90	20.28	3.37	0.13	16.78	0.22	0.21	3.28	7.04	1.86	1.95	0.00
Devizes	4.74	26.68	13.26	0.11	13.30	0.57	0.29	15.40	50.13	7.88	89.37	2.10
Malmesbury	4.35	27.92	22.78	0.28	4.86	0.77	0.06	6.86	27.48	9.16	242.72	4.08
Marlborough	0.12	19.59	14.04	0.17	5.38	0.61	0.11	7.13	3.27	7.33	690.83	14.06
Melksham	0.42	8.99	6.62	1.02	1.35	0.53	0.06	0.31	21.30	3.52	19.07	39.37
Mere	0.31	4.89	0.57	0.00	4.33	0.22	0.04	3.07	0.91	1.56	0.02	37.61
Pewsey	1.68	21.18	9.96	0.11	11.12	0.81	0.11	8.93	4.62	8.56	160.61	4.08
Southern Wiltshire	0.36	20.36	10.32	0.40	9.64	0.17	0.17	1.88	4.20	3.38	268.19	0.89
Tidworth	0.78	9.58	6.64	0.08	2.86	0.15	0.07	0.00	1.20	3.18	504.20	11.27
Tisbury	1.17	11.03	3.80	0.00	7.23	0.28	0.15	15.40	1.03	2.14	0.00	0.00
Trowbridge	2.47	4.86	3.59	0.00	1.27	0.36	0.03	3.01	1.71	0.94	103.37	18.58
Warminster	0.71	24.00	7.03	0.40	16.57	0.45	0.03	0.62	5.06	3.91	113.95	108.83
Westbury	0.64	5.38	3.97	0.00	1.41	0.23	0.05	0.00	4.63	1.89	56.91	41.72
Wilton	1.48	21.26	12.92	2.77	5.57	0.22	0.08	0.11	1.65	5.74	974.51	0.00
Wootton Bassett	0.15	5.79	2.89	0.00	2.91	0.47	0.00	6.39	1.82	2.22	202.90	0.80
Total	**29.79**	**326.79**	**183.15**	**6.15**	**137.49**	**8.05**	**2.08**	**109.25**	**164.30**	**80.06**	**4212.10**	**323.99**

Table 16 Existing provision of open space (ha/1000) in rural analysis areas

Community Area	Allotments	Recreation Space	*Park & Recreation Grounds*	*Outdoor Sport (Fixed)*	*Amenity greenspace*	Play Space (Children)	Play Space (Youth)	Outdoor Sport (Private)	Education	Churchyards and Cemeteries	Accessible Natural Green Space	Natural Green Space (Limited Access)
Amesbury	0.19	1.54	0.65	0.02	0.88	0.07	0.01	0.71	1.48	0.46	41.93	1.57
Bradford on Avon	0.05	3.36	2.64	0.01	0.71	0.04	0.00	0.21	0.52	0.16	8.35	0.58
Calne	0.31	4.59	3.16	0.05	1.38	0.06	0.04	1.79	0.43	0.65	28.31	0.28
Chippenham	0.22	2.22	1.29	0.01	0.92	0.06	0.03	1.66	0.54	0.66	9.22	1.71
Corsham	0.94	4.91	0.82	0.03	4.06	0.05	0.05	0.79	1.71	0.45	0.47	0.00
Devizes	0.31	1.72	0.85	0.01	0.86	0.04	0.02	0.99	3.23	0.51	5.75	0.14
Malmesbury	0.30	1.90	1.55	0.02	0.33	0.05	0.00	0.47	1.87	0.62	16.55	0.28
Marlborough	0.01	1.93	1.39	0.02	0.53	0.06	0.01	0.70	0.32	0.72	68.18	1.39
Melksham	0.06	1.27	0.93	0.14	0.19	0.07	0.01	0.04	3.00	0.50	2.68	5.54
Mere	0.12	1.86	0.21	0.00	1.64	0.08	0.01	1.16	0.34	0.59	0.01	14.26
Pewsey	0.15	1.90	0.89	0.01	1.00	0.07	0.01	0.80	0.42	0.77	14.42	0.37
Southern Wiltshire	0.03	1.79	0.90	0.04	0.85	0.01	0.01	0.16	0.37	0.30	23.52	0.08
Tidworth	0.17	2.08	1.44	0.02	0.62	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.26	0.69	109.49	2.45
Tisbury	0.21	1.96	0.68	0.00	1.28	0.05	0.03	2.73	0.18	0.38	0.00	0.00
Trowbridge	0.54	1.05	0.78	0.00	0.27	0.08	0.01	0.65	0.37	0.20	22.41	4.03
Warminster	0.09	3.08	0.90	0.05	2.12	0.06	0.00	0.08	0.65	0.50	14.60	13.95
Westbury	0.13	1.11	0.82	0.00	0.29	0.05	0.01	0.00	0.96	0.39	11.74	8.60
Wilton	0.25	3.51	2.13	0.46	0.92	0.04	0.01	0.02	0.27	0.95	160.92	0.00
Wootton Bassett	0.03	1.39	0.69	0.00	0.70	0.11	0.00	1.53	0.44	0.53	48.59	0.19
Total	**0.2**	**2.18**	**1.22**	**0.04**	**0.92**	**0.05**	**0.01**	**0.73**	**1.1**	**0.53**	**28.12**	**2.16**

5.3 Existing provision of open space in parishes grouped by population size

The table below shows the average levels of provision (ha/1000) for each typology by parish population size (0-1000, 1000-2000, 2000-3000, 3000-4000 4000-5000, 5000+), alongside the study level area of provision, and urban and rural analysis areas.

Table 17 Existing provision of open space (ha/1000) by parish population size, study area and urban and rural areas

Parish Population	Allotments	Amenity Green Space	Park and Recreation Ground (Combined)	*Park and Recreation Ground*	*Outdoor Sport (Fixed)*	Outdoor Sport (Private)	Play Space (Children)	Play Space (Youth)	Accessible Natural Green Space	Natural Green Space (Limited Access)	Churchyards and Cemeteries	Education
0 to 1000	0.19	1.11	0.97	*0.9*	*0.06*	0.83	0.07	0.01	42.54	2.65	0.68	0.64
1000 to 2000	0.18	0.71	1.65	*1.64*	*0.01*	0.74	0.04	0.02	16.52	2.15	0.43	1.8
2000 to 3000	0.27	0.64	1.49	*1.44*	*0.04*	0.25	0.05	0.02	6.09	0.64	0.3	1.15
3000 to 4000	0.4	0.56	1.69	*1.62*	*0.07*	0.26	0.08	0.02	8	0.83	0.49	0.79
4000 to 5000	0.14	1.27	0.82	*0.76*	*0.06*	0.29	0.14	0	28.02	23.76	0.37	1.37
Over 5000	0.17	1.13	0.99	*0.94*	*0.05*	0.72	0.05	0.02	1.86	0.5	0.25	1.11
Total (Study area)	**0.19**	**1.04**	**1.1**	***1.05***	***0.05***	**0.69**	**0.06**	**0.02**	**10.41**	**1.39**	**0.35**	**1.1**
Rural Analysis Areas	0.2	0.92	1.26	*1.22*	*0.04*	0.73	0.05	0.01	28.12	2.16	0.53	1.1
Urban Analysis Areas	0.19	1.09	1.04	*0.98*	*0.06*	0.67	0.06	0.02	2.83	1.07	0.27	1.1

6.0   THE DEVELOPMENT OF STANDARDS

6.1   Introduction

Following the completion of the assessment of local needs (2015 Community and Stakeholder consultation, and 2020 update) and the audit of provision (the first two steps of this study), new standards of provision for open space are proposed below. This section explains how the standards for Wiltshire have been developed and provides specific information and justification for each of the typologies where standards have been proposed.

The standards for open space have been developed in-line with the NPPF. Standards comprise the following components:

Quantity standards: These are determined by the analysis of existing quantity, consideration of existing local and national standards and benchmarks and evidence gathered from the local needs assessment. The key to developing robust local quantity standards is that they are locally derived, based on evidence and most importantly achievable.

Typically, standards are expressed as hectares per 1000 people. The recommended standards are then used to assess the supply of each type of open space across the urban and rural analysis areas.

Accessibility standards: These reflect the needs of potential users. Spaces likely to be used on a frequent and regular basis need to be within easy walking distance and to have safe access. Other facilities where visits are longer but perhaps less frequent, for example country parks, can be further away. Consideration is also given to existing local or national standards and benchmarks, and evidence gathered from the local needs assessment.

Quality standards: The standards for each form of provision are derived from the quality audit, existing good practice and from the views of the community and those that use the spaces. Again, quality standards should be achievable and reflect the priorities that emerge through consultation.

The standards that have been proposed are for <u>minimum guidance levels of provision.</u> So, just because geographical areas may benefit from levels of provision exceeding minimum standards this does not mean there is a surplus, as all such provision may be well used.

6.2   Summary of open space standards

The tables below provide a summary of the open space standards that have been developed as part of this Study. Further information and justification for these standards in provided in the sections below.

6.2.1   Urban Area Standards (Quantity and Access)

Table 18 Summary of Urban Area Standards

Typology	Quantity standard (ha/1000 population) Existing Provision	Quantity standard (ha/1000) New provision	Access standard
Allotments	0.25	0.25	480 metres straight line or 10 minutes' walk time
Amenity Green Space	0.9	0.9	480 metres straight line or 10 minutes' walk time
Parks and Recreation Grounds	1.1	1.1	600 metres straight line or 12-13 minutes' walk time
Play Space (Children)	0.25	0.25	480 metres straight line or 10 minutes' walk time

Play Space (Youth)	0.30	0.30	600 metres straight line or 12-13 minutes' walk time
Natural Green Space	N/A – use access standards to identify key gaps.	1.8 (including SUDs)	720 metres straight line or 15 minutes' walk time (for sites above 0.2ha) Natural England ANGSt
Total Multi-functional Open Space		**4.6**	

6.2.2 Rural Area Standards (Quantity and Access)

Table 19 Summary of Rural Area Standards

Typology	Quantity standard (ha/1000 population) For analysing existing Provision	Recommended Parish size threshold for analysing existing provision	Quantity standard (ha/1000) New provision	Access standard
Allotments	0.25	1000	0.25	480 metres straight line or 10 minutes' walk time
Recreation Space*	2.0	300	2.0	600 metres straight line or 12-13 minutes' walk time
Play Space (Children)	0.25	500	0.55 (combined standard for children and youth play space).	480 metres straight line or 10 minutes' walk time
Play Space (Youth)	0.30	1000	See combined standard above for new provision.	600 metres straight line or 12-13 minutes' walk time
Natural Green Space	N/A – use access standards to identify key gaps.	N/A	1.8 (including SuDs)	720 metres straight line or 15 minutes' walk time (for sites above 0.2ha) Natural England ANGSt
Total Multi-functional Open Space			**4.6**	

*Can either be met by park and recreation grounds and/or amenity green space.

6.2.3 Quality Standards (urban and rural areas)

Quality standards have been recommended for each open space typology in the sections below. However, as a general principle (and in accordance with the Building with Nature themes and standards[21]), all open space should be designed to:

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[21] https://www.buildingwithnature.org.uk/about

- provide a multifunctional network which responds to local context and policy, and is climate resilient and future proof;
- is accessible, inclusive, can be enjoyed all year, is locally relevant, socially sustainable and distinctive;
- manages water quantity and quality, maximising opportunities for amenity and biodiversity, is innovative, resilient, and locally distinctive;
- provides bigger, better, more joined up spaces that are locally relevant, nature rich and provide ecological networks.

6.3   Allotments

6.3.1   Summary of quantity and access standard (urban and rural areas)

Table 20 Summary of quantity and access standards for allotments

Quantity Standard	Access Standard
0.25 ha/1000 population	10 minutes' walk time (480m straight line distance)

6.3.2   Existing national or local standards

National standards for allotments and other such open spaces are difficult to find. The closest thing to such standards appears to be those set out by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG). These are as follows:

- Standard Plot Size = 330 sq. yards (250sqm*)
- Paths = 1.4m wide for disabled access
- Haulage ways = 3m wide
- Plot holders shed = 12sqm
- Greenhouse = 15sqm
- Polytunnel = 30sqm

Wiltshire Council has a local standard plot size of 100sqm (Standard Specification for Allotments, February 2014).

The draft 2015 Open Space Study recommended a quantity standard of 0.20ha/1000 population and an access standard of 480m straight line distance (10 minutes' walk time) for urban and rural analysis areas.

The standards for allotments in Topic Paper 11: Green Infrastructure, vary from no standards to 0.15ha/1000 in West Wiltshire and 0.55ha/1000 (urban) and 0.38ha/1000 (rural) in Salisbury.

6.3.3   Quantity standard for allotments

- 82% of all respondents from the 2015 household survey 'never' use allotments, meaning this is the least used type of open space;
- The existing average level of provision in urban areas is 0.19 ha/1000, and in rural areas is 0.20 ha/1000;
- The 2015 household survey identified 42% of people felt there should be more allotments, however, 53% felt there are enough;
- Other consultation in 2015 (for example with Town and Parish Councils) identified several areas where there are long waiting lists and an unmet demand for allotments;
- Consultation with Town and Parish Councils in 2020 also identified a number of parishes where there is a need for more allotments and the 2020 Householder Survey update identified that 62% of respondents thought there was a need for more allotments;
- Allotments contribute towards the Council's priority of promoting healthy communities, through providing opportunities for outdoor recreation/physical activity and community cohesion (and the associated benefits for health and wellbeing) and to produce healthy locally grown food, which can help improve the diet of residents.

- The propensity for higher density new housing with smaller gardens is likely to increase demand.
- Considering the above, it is recommended that there should be an increase in the provision of allotments against the average level of provision;
- Therefore, a minimum standard of 0.25 ha/1000 is proposed for analysing existing provision and for new provision in both rural and urban areas.
- It is acknowledged that within the study area, the majority of parishes with less than 1000 population have no allotment provision), and therefore the application of standards will show shortfalls across these areas which may (or may not) need to be addressed. New allotment provision in these areas is unlikely to be a priority (unless through new development), although local demand will need to be considered, as there may indeed be an unmet need within rural areas.
- However, when assessing the requirements for new provision e.g., from housing development, the quantity standard will be applied to all Parishes irrespective of their size (although the need for on-site provision would be determined based on the size of the development, and the existing provision of allotments within the vicinity, as set out in Section 8 of this report).

6.3.4 Access standard for allotments

- The 2015 household survey found that just under 60% of people want allotments close to home (up to 10 mins). Of those respondents who use allotments, just under 65% of them walk there;
- The 2020 householder survey update also found that 57% of respondents wouldn't be willing to travel more than 10 minutes to access an allotment, and the preferred mode of travel to access open spaces is walking for all types of open space.
- There is demand for facilities nearby. Therefore, a standard of no more than 10 minutes' walk time (480 metres straight line walk) is proposed.

6.3.5 Quality standards for allotments

Few comments were received in relation to the quality of allotments in the 2015 consultation. Furthermore, the information gathered in relation to allotments is more difficult to assess in comparison to other types of open space. The reason for this is twofold: Firstly, the number of people who actually use allotments is very low compared to the numbers who use other types of open space and, therefore specific comments related to the quality of allotments are less frequent; Secondly, the majority of allotments sites are locked, and the quality audit only allows for assessment against key criteria such as the level of cultivation and general maintenance, which is less comprehensive than the assessments of other open space.

For allotments, a number of general recommendations are made in relation to quality, which should include the following:

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

6.4   Amenity Green Space (and Recreation Space in rural areas)

6.4.1   Summary of quantity and access standard for amenity green space (urban areas only)

Table 21 Summary of quantity and access standards for amenity green space (Urban areas)

Quantity Standard	Access Standard
0.9 ha/1000 population	10 minutes' walk time (480m straight line distance) in urban areas

6.4.2   Summary of quantity and access standard for 'Recreation Space' i.e., parks and recreation grounds and/or amenity green space (rural areas only)

Table 22 Summary of quantity and access standards for Recreation Space (Rural areas)

Quantity Standard	Access Standard
2.0 ha/1000 population	12-13 minutes' walk time (600m straight line)

6.4.3   Existing national or local standards

The Fields in Trust (FIT) (Previously known as the National Play Fields Association) Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play report 'Beyond the Six Acre Standard' proposes a benchmark guideline of 0.6ha/1000 population of amenity green space, and a walking distance guideline of 480m. FIT recommend that the quantity guidelines are adjusted to take account of local circumstances.

The draft 2015 Open Space Study recommended a quantity standard of 1.5ha/1000 population (for sites >0.2ha, and this also included new provision of accessible natural green space) and an access standard of 480m straight line distance (10 minutes' walk time) for urban analysis areas. In rural analysis areas a standard of 3.0ha/1000 population of 'recreation space' was recommend, which could be met by either parks and recreation grounds and/or amenity green space. The access standard for recreation space was recommended as 600m straight line (12-13 minutes' walk time).

Topic Paper 11: Green Infrastructure did not set specific standards for amenity green space, except for Salisbury, which set a standard of 1.05ha/1000.

6.4.4   Quantity standard for Amenity green space

- Existing average level of provision in urban areas is 1.09 ha/1000 population, and in rural areas is 0.92 ha/1000 population;
- The 2015 household survey did not ask specific questions in relation to amenity green space, however, 46% of people identified they were satisfied with current levels of provision of 'other open space', and 52% of people felt there was enough;
- Provision varies greatly with some areas having no provision or falling well below the average, and others far exceeding it;
- There is no strong need or justification for significantly increasing current levels of provision, therefore a minimum standard of 0.9 ha/1000 population is proposed;
- This is much higher than the FIT guidelines, but lower than the recommendation in 2015 (which also incorporated accessible natural green space), reflecting the existing quantity of amenity green space and the variation in provision across both rural and urban areas (a number of urban parishes having very large amenity green spaces). A standard of 0.9 ha/1000 in line with the average level of provision in the rural areas is considered to be deliverable and achievable.
- Within rural areas, the combined standard for amenity green space and parks and recreation grounds ('Recreation Space') (2.0 ha/1000) can be met by either a park and recreation ground or an amenity green space. It is acknowledged that in very rural areas e.g., below 300 people, there is unlikely to be provision of recreation space, and new provision is unlikely to be a priority (unless through new development).

- When delivering new provision, consideration should be given to combining this with the accessible natural green space standard (i.e., a combined standard of 2.7 ha/1000 in urban areas), in order to provide bigger, more biodiverse spaces.
- Where a development would result in less than 0.2ha of amenity green space, it should be provided as a single space. This will avoid a proliferation of small amenity spaces which have no real recreation function.

6.4.5 Access standard for amenity green space

- The 2015 household survey identified that residents want these spaces close to home with 40% of users expecting amenity green spaces to be within a 10 minute walk time, and that they access these spaces by foot;
- Therefore, in urban areas a standard of no more than 10 minutes' walk time (480 metres straight line walk) is considered appropriate;
- In rural areas, a standard of 12-13 minutes' walk time (600m straight line walk) is considered appropriate, as the standard can be met by an amenity green space or park and recreation ground (see Section 6.4 below).

6.4.6 Quality standards for amenity green space

The audit of provision as well as the consultation and policy review has identified the importance attached by local people to open space close to home. The value of 'amenity green space' must be recognised especially within housing areas, where it can provide important local opportunities for play, exercise and visual amenity that are almost immediately accessible. On the other hand, open space can be expensive to maintain, and it is very important to strike the correct balance between having sufficient space to meet the needs of the community for accessible and attractive space and having too much which would be impossible to manage properly and therefore a potential liability and source of nuisance. It is important that amenity green space should be capable of use for at least some forms of public recreation activity.

It is therefore recommended that in addition to the minimum size threshold identified above, that all amenity green space should be subject to landscape design, ensuring the following quality principles:

- Include level surfaces capable of supporting informal recreation such as a kickabout, space for dog walking or space to sit and relax;
- Include well-kept grass areas with regular maintenance;
- Include a high quality and variety of planting such as trees and/or shrubs to create landscape structure and biodiversity value;
- Be designed to maximise the natural capital value/multifunctionality of a site, retaining and improving existing green assets wherever possible e.g., trees, hedgerows, wildflower areas;
- Include paths along main desire lines (lit where appropriate);
- Be designed to ensure easy maintenance;
- Be clean and litter free;
- Include litter and dog bins (where appropriate);
- Include seating (where appropriate); and
- Be designed with good levels of natural surveillance and sight lines/security and safety.

The principles above will help ensure that amenity green spaces are 'playable'[22] spaces, so although they may not contain formal equipped play provision, they will provide opportunities for play and informal recreation.

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[22] Play England define 'playable space' as any public space or facility that children and young people might legitimately use for play and informal recreation.

6.5   Parks and Recreation Grounds (and Recreation Space in rural areas)

6.5.1 Summary of quantity and access standard for parks and recreation grounds (urban areas only)

Table 23 Summary of quantity and access standard for parks and recreation grounds (urban areas)

Quantity Standard	Access Standard
1.1 ha/1000 population	12-13 minutes' walk time (600m straight line)

6.5.2   Summary of quantity and access standard for 'Recreation Space' i.e., parks and recreation grounds and/or amenity green space (rural areas only)

Table 22 above provides a summary of the quantity and access standards for recreation space.

6.5.3   Existing national or local standards

The Fields in Trust (FIT) Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play report 'Beyond the Six Acre Standard'[23] proposes a benchmark guideline of 0.80ha/1000 population for parks and gardens, with a walking distance guideline of 710m. In addition to this they also recommend the following standards:

- Playing pitches: 1.20ha/1000 population with a walking distance of 1,200m
- All outdoor sports: 1.6ha/1000 population with a walking distance of 1,200m
- Equipped/designated play areas: 0.25ha/1000 population, with a walking distance of 100m for Local Areas for Play (LAPs), 400m for Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) and 1000m for Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs).
- Other outdoor provision (MUGAs and skateboard parks): 0.30ha/1000 population and a walking distance of 700m.

The draft 2015 Open Space Study recommended a quantity standard of 1.2ha/1000 population and an access standard of 600m straight line distance (12-13 minutes' walk time) for urban analysis areas. In rural analysis areas a standard of 3.0ha/1000 population of 'recreation space' was recommend, which included provision of parks and recreation grounds and amenity green space. The access standard for recreation space was recommended as 600m straight line (12-13 minutes' walk time).

Topic Paper 11: Green Infrastructure set out a standard of 1.5ha/1000 ($15m^2$ per person) for local parks in North Wiltshire; 0.13ha/1000 ($1.3m^2$ per person) for urban parks and 1.2ha/1000 ($12m^2$ per person) for multifunctional greenspace in West Wiltshire, and 2.43ha/1000 for recreational open space (which also comprises outdoor sports facilities and children's play in Salisbury.

6.5.4   Quantity of parks, sport and recreation grounds

- The existing average level of provision in urban areas is 1.04 ha/1000, and in rural areas is 1.26 ha/1000;
- The 2015 household survey identified the following in relation to this typology:
  - 35% of people felt there should be more local recreation grounds or parks, however, 64% felt there was enough;
  - Similarly, 73% of people felt there are enough playing fields;
  - In terms of more formal provision such as 'courts and green', 65% of people felt there is enough;
- The 2020 householder survey update supported the general view from the 2015 survey that there are enough parks and recreation grounds - 57% felt there are enough (compared to 42% who felt there were a need for more).

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[23] http://www.fieldsintrust.org/guidance

- The research undertaken as part of this assessment has highlighted the importance of open space, including parks and recreation grounds in helping to meet the council's priorities around the nature and climate emergency and health and wellbeing.
- A standard of 1.1 ha/1000 population is proposed, which is in accordance with the average level of provision across the study area. There is no justification for significantly increasing current average levels of provision, and it is considered that this standard is appropriate for assessing current levels of provision and as a requirement through new development.
- Within rural areas, the combined standard for amenity green space and parks and recreation grounds ('Recreation Space' - 2.0 ha/1000) can be met by either a park and recreation ground or an amenity green space. It is acknowledged that in very rural areas e.g., below 300 people, there is unlikely to be provision of recreation space, and new provision is unlikely to be a priority (unless through new development).
- There is an additional 0.67 ha/1000 in urban areas and 0.73 ha/1000 in rural areas of private sports space which includes a variety of uses (including golf clubs). Although these facilities generally have limited access (and have therefore not been included within the standard for parks), they provide important community facilities. These spaces are covered within the Wiltshire Playing Pitch Strategy (2017) and require suitable protection/due consideration in the planning process.

6.5.5 Access standard for parks, sport and recreation grounds

- The 2015 household survey found that 14% of people want facilities within 5 minutes of home, 30% within 10 minutes and 28% up to 15 minutes, the rest are willing to travel up to 20 minutes or more. For playing fields and tennis, bowls etc., a similar figure is found. Over 70% of people walk to these facilities;
- The 2020 householder survey update also supported this, with 61% of households not willing to travel more than 15 minutes, with walking as the preferred mode of travel;
- The survey findings indicate that people are willing to travel slightly further to these types of facilities, therefore, a standard of 12-13 minutes' walk time (600m straight line) is justified.

6.5.6 Quality standards for parks and recreation grounds

In the 2015 household survey, satisfaction levels with the quality of facilities such as recreation grounds were high, with 60% of people considering them as good or very good. For grass playing fields, this was slightly lower with 48% identifying them as good/very good and 40% as average. Similar figures were returned for facilities such as bowling greens and tennis courts. The quality of parks and recreation grounds were also rated highly in the 2020 householder survey update, with 71% of respondents rating them as good or very good.

National guidance relevant to this typology is provided in the 'Green Flag' quality standard for parks which sets out benchmark criteria for quality open spaces[24]. New and emerging guidance is also available from Building with Nature and the Natural England Green Infrastructure Standards Framework.

For outdoor sports space, Sport England have produced a wealth of useful documents outlining the quality standards for facilities such as playing pitches, changing rooms, MUGAS and tennis courts plus associated ancillary facilities. The Rugby Football Union have provided guidance on the quality and standard of provision of facilities for rugby, and the England and Wales Cricket Board have provided guidance for cricket facilities. It is recommended that the guidance provided in these documents is adopted by the council, and that all new and improved provision seeks to meet these guidelines.

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[24] http://www.greenflagaward.org.uk/how-it-works/judging-criteria/

6.6   Play Space (children and youth)

6.6.1   Summary of quantity and access standard for play space (children and youth) (urban and rural areas)

Table 24 Summary of quantity and access standards for play space (children and youth) (urban and rural areas)

Typology	Quantity Standard	Access Standard
Play Space (Children)	0.25* ha/1000 population	480m straight line (10 minutes' walk time)
Play Space (Youth)	0.30* ha/1000 population	600m straight line (12-13 minutes' walk time)

*When delivering new provision in rural areas, the standard for children and youth play can be combined (0.55ha/1000) to provide flexibility in the type of provision delivered.

6.6.2   Existing National and Local Policies

The FIT guidance 'Beyond the Six Acre Standard' recommends provision of 0.25ha/1000 population of equipped/designated play areas, with a walking distance of 100m for Local Areas for Play (LAPs), 400m for Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) and 1000m for Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs). They also recommend 0.30ha/1000 for MUGAs and skateboard parks, with a walking distance guideline of 700m.

The draft 2015 Open Space Study recommended a quantity standard of 0.05ha/1000 population for children's play space and an access standard of 480m straight line distance (10 minutes' walk time) for urban analysis areas. For youth play space a quantity standard of 0.02ha/1000 and an access standard of 600m straight line distance (12-13 minutes' walk time) was recommended. In rural analysis areas, a combined 'play space' standard of 0.07ha/1000 population was recommended, which could be met by either a children's play space and/or youth provision. The access standard for play space was recommended as 600m straight line (12-13 minutes' walk time).

Topic Paper 11: Green Infrastructure sets out standards for children's play provision which range from 0.05ha/1000 (0.5m² per person) in West Wiltshire, to 0.72ha/1000 (for 5-19 dwellings) and 0.31ha/1000 (for 20+ dwellings) in Kennet.

6.6.3   Quantity standards for play

- Current average levels of provision of children's play space is 0.06ha/1000 in urban areas and 0.05ha/1000 in rural areas. For youth play space it is 0.02 ha/1000 population in urban areas, and 0.01ha/1000 population in rural areas;
- The provision of play and youth facilities across the study area is very varied;
- The 2015 household survey found that 40% of people felt there were insufficient children's play areas, where as nearly 60% of people felt there was a need for more facilities for teenagers;
- The 2020 householder survey update also found that 80% of respondents felt there is insufficient youth provision. For children's play space 64% felt that the quantity of children's play space is sufficient. The parish council survey undertaken in 2020 also identified that 67 of 144 town/ parish councils thought there was a need for more facilities for teenagers.
- Council officers have highlighted the need for standards that are in line with national guidance (FIT), as these have been found to be deliverable across different parts of Wiltshire (for example in North Wiltshire the standard for children's play is 0.3ha/1000, and in Kennet it is 0.31ha/1000 for 20 plus dwellings, and 0.72ha/1000 for 5 – 19 dwellings). A play standard that exceeds existing levels of provision will help achieve the councils' priorities of improving health and wellbeing and reducing inequalities.
- Considering the above factors, it is recommended that the standards for children's and youth provision are set, which are in accordance with the FIT standards. Therefore, the proposed standard for children's play areas

is 0.25ha/1000, and the proposed standard for youth play space is 0.3ha/1000. These standards should be applied to both urban and rural areas. When considering the requirements for new provision in rural areas, the standard can be combined for children and youth provision (0.55ha/1000) to provide flexibility and help meet local needs.

- It is recommended that when assessing the existing provision of children's play space in rural areas, that this standard is only applied to Parishes with over 500 population. This does not mean that Parishes with populations less than 500 should not have children's play space (as several do), but that the above standard is used to identify existing gaps and to prioritise where new provision may be required. The same also applies to youth play space, which should be applied to parishes with over 1000 people.

6.6.4   Access standards for play

- The 2015 household survey found that for children's play space around 54% of people want facilities within 10 minutes. For teenage facilities this figure was less with just under 30% of people stating 10 minutes, with a further 30% willing to travel up to 15 minutes. Nearly 80% of people walk to children's facilities, whereas the figure for walking is 40% for teenage facilities with 28% of people also cycling.
- The 2020 householder survey update also supported this, with 57% of households not willing to travel more than 15 minutes to children's play space, with walking as the preferred mode of travel; for facilities for teenagers this figure was less again with only 20% willing to travel up to 10 minutes and 66% willing to travel between 11 and 20 minutes. The preferred mode of transport to teenage facilities was still walking (52%) but with 12% also preferring to cycle.
- In light of these findings, the following access standards are recommended for both urban and rural areas:
    - Children's provision – 480m straight line (10 minutes' walk time)
    - Youth Provision – 600m straight line (12-13 minutes' walk time)

6.6.5 Quality standards for play

Wiltshire Council has a Standard Specification for Equipped Play Space (January 2021) which sets out the quality for on-site provision required from new development. This will be the principle document to be used within the planning system to inform the design of new play facilities.

In the 2015 household survey, 50% of households highlighted the quality of facilities for teenagers as being either poor or very poor. In the 2020 householder survey update, 77% of households rated facilities for teenagers as "poor" or "very poor". In both surveys the general view of children's play space was good to average: the 2015 survey showed 73% of households thought children's play spaces were good to average and the 2020 householder survey update showed similar results, with 71% of respondents suggested they were good to average.

It is expected that the design of play would take a landscape design approach (designed to fit its surroundings and enhance the local environment), incorporating play into the overall landscape masterplan for new development, and could include natural play e.g., grassy mounds, planting, logs, and boulders can all help to make a more attractive and playable setting for equipment, and planting can also help attract birds and other wildlife to literally bring the play space alive. In densely populated urban areas with little or no natural or green space, this more natural approach can help 'soften' an urban landscape.

The challenge for play providers is to create play spaces which will attract children, capture their imagination and give them scope to play in new, more exciting, and more creative ways e.g., moving away from fencing play areas (where it is safe to do so), so that the equipment is integrated with its setting, making it feel more inviting to explore and so people are free to use the space without feeling restricted.

Play England is keen to see a range of play spaces in all urban environments:

A Door-step spaces close to home - these may simply be small areas of public 'playable' open space rather than designated equipped play areas
B Local play spaces – larger areas within easy walking distance
C Neighbourhood spaces for play – larger spaces within walking distance

D Destination/family sites – accessible by bicycle, public transport and with car parking.

Moving forward, Play England would like their new Design Guide; '*Design for Play*' to be referenced and added as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in standard configuration. Play England have also developed a '*Quality Assessment Tool*' which can be used to judge the quality of individual play spaces. It has been recommended that the Council considers adopting this as a means of assessing the quality of play spaces in their District. Play England also highlight a potential need for standards for smaller settlements and rural areas where the doorstep, local, neighbourhood, and destination hierarchy is unlikely to be appropriate.

Disability access is also an important issue for Play England, and they would like local authorities to adopt the KIDS[25] publication; '*Inclusion by Design*' as an SPD. Their most recent guidance document, '*Better Places to Play through Planning*' gives detailed guidance on setting local standards for access, quantity and quality of playable space and is considered as a background context for the standards suggested in this study.

6.7   Accessible Natural Green Space

6.7.1   Summary of quantity and access standard for accessible natural green space (urban and rural areas)

Table 25 Summary of quantity and access standards for accessible natural green space

Quantity Standard	Access Standard
1.8ha/1000 population (New provision only, including SuDs)	720m straight line (15 minutes' walk time), for sites >0.2ha Natural England's ANGSt

6.7.2   Existing National and Local standards

Natural England Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGSt):

ANGSt recommends that everyone, wherever they live should have accessible natural greenspace:

- Of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 meters (5 minutes' walk) from home;
- at least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres of home;
- one accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home; and
- one accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home; plus
- a minimum of 1 hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population.

The FIT guidance 'Beyond the Six Acre Standard' recommends provision of 1.8 ha/1000 population of natural and semi-natural open space, with a walking guideline of 720m.

The Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy SPD (February 2020) recommends a standard of 8.0ha/1000 for 'green open space'. **It is understood that this includes all green infrastructure, not only public open space, as this level of open space provision would not be reasonable or achievable from new development.**

The draft 2015 Open Space Study recommended a quantity standard for new provision only (with assessment of existing provision/access using the Natural England ANGSt), of 1.5ha/1000 population, to be provided within the amenity green space standard.

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[25] KIDS, is a charity which in its 40 years, has pioneered a number of approaches and programmes for disabled children and young people. KIDS was established in 1970 and in 2003, KIDS merged with KIDSACTIVE, previously known as the Handicapped Adventure Play Association.

6.7.3   Quantity standards for accessible natural green space

- The existing level of provision varies hugely between urban and rural areas. In urban areas it is 2.84 ha/1000, and in rural areas it is 28.12 ha/1000. The average level of provision across the study area is 10.41 ha/1000. Setting a standard for new provision in line with any of these existing levels of provision is not considered to be achievable or deliverable (there are a number of parishes with very large quantities of accessible natural green space, especially with the rural areas, which skews the figures);
- However, the importance of natural green space is recognised not only in their contribution to recreation and health and wellbeing, but also importantly in terms of Green Infrastructure and nature conservation/biodiversity.
- The 2015 survey highlighted that 52% of households thought there was a need for more woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves and the 2020 householder survey update found that 75% of respondents thought there was a need for more woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves;
- It is therefore recommended that a standard of 1.8 ha/1000 population is applied for new provision through development in both urban and rural areas. This is based on the FIT standard, and incorporates SuDs where required.
- This is considered to be realistic and achievable in terms of new provision and will ensure that accessible natural green space is provided in areas of most need.
- As already mentioned under the quantity standard for amenity green space, when delivering new provision, consideration should be given to combining this with the amenity green space standard (i.e., a combined standard of 2.70 ha/1000) in order to provide bigger, more biodiverse spaces.
- The existing provision of accessible natural green space should be assessed using the Natural England ANGSt standards for sites above 20ha, and the locally derived standard of 720m straight line/15 minutes' walk time. The ANGSt standard 'that everyone should have an accessible natural green space of at least 2ha in size, no more than 300m/5 minutes' walk from home is not considered to be deliverable or achievable in terms of existing or new provision.

6.7.4   Access standards for natural green space

- The 2015 household survey identified that 52% of respondents are prepared to travel to woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves with driving being the preferred mode of transport (61% of households).
- The 2020 householder survey update identified that 62% of households are prepared to travel more than 15 minutes to visit woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves. Similar to the 2015 survey, 57% of households would prefer to drive to woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves.
- This indicates that people are generally willing to travel further to access this type of open space compared to other typologies, and therefore a standard of 720m (15 minutes straight line walk time is proposed).

6.7.5   Quality standards for natural green space

The 2015 household survey found that satisfaction levels with the quality of natural green space are above average, with over 60% of people in the household sample survey rating their quality as good or very good. The 2020 survey also found that households thought the quality of natural green space was above average, with 56% rating them as very good or good.

Consultation results also highlight the value attached to certain attributes of open space, in particular:

- Good maintenance and cleanliness
- Ease of access
- Lack of antisocial behaviour, noise etc.

This suggests that the provision of new or improved open space cannot be considered in isolation from the means of maintaining such space, perceptions of antisocial behaviour, and ease of access from within the surrounding environment.

The shape and size of space provided should allow for meaningful and safe recreation. Provision might be expected to include (as appropriate) elements of woodland, wetland, heathland and meadow, and could also be made for informal public access through recreation corridors. For larger areas, where car borne visits might be anticipated, some parking provision will be required. The larger the area the more valuable sites will tend to be in terms of their potential for enhancing local conservation interest and biodiversity. Wherever possible these sites should be linked to help improve wildlife value as part of a network. In areas where it may be impossible or inappropriate to provide additional natural green space consistent with the standard, other approaches should be pursued which could include (for example):

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

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

7.0   APPLYING LOCAL STANDARDS

7.1   Introduction

This part of the report uses the recommended standards to analyse provision across the study area. This section provides an overview of provision across the study area within the urban and rural analysis areas. Further detail is provided in the area profiles for each CAB in part 2 of this report. This section includes:

Quantity analysis: The quantity of provision is assessed using the recommended quantity standards for each of the typologies where a quantity standard has been developed. Recommended standards are expressed as hectares of open space per 1000 people.

The quantity assessment looks at the existing levels of provision, then uses the recommended standard to assess the required level of provision. From this a calculation is made of the supply, which will either be sufficient or insufficient. Within this section, levels of provision are provided by parish or urban settlement area.

Access analysis: This section of the report provides analysis of the recommended access standards for each typology across the study area. The maps and analysis in this section are intended to be indicative, providing an overall picture of provision and highlighting any key gaps in access across the study area.

However, the key to access analysis, is understanding the picture at a more localised level, therefore, maps showing local accessibility by CAB are provided in part 2 of this report.

Quality analysis: This section of the report makes analysis of each typology across the Study Area – it highlights any common themes or issues that have arisen from the consultation and provides a summary of the 2015 quality audit results at the Study Area level. The 2015 quality audit spreadsheet has been provided to the Council.

The principles behind applying the standards

The standards are explained and justified in Section 6 above. The efficacy of standards will depend heavily on the way that they are applied. Here are some important and interrelated principles:

- The standards that have been set are for **minimum guidance levels of provision.** So, just because geographical areas may have levels of open space provision exceeding the minimum standards, does not mean there is a surplus, as other factors need to be taken into consideration, such as the quality of provision and access to open space i.e. The quantity, accessibility and quality standards need to be considered together – they should not be considered in isolation.
- **The council require flexibility over what type of open space is required** on site based on the assessment of need - quantity, quality and access standards and analysis within this study. For example, the requirement for open space may be assessed against the total requirement/standard for new provision (4.6 ha/1000), and the form of the open space provision would depend on the existing quantity, quality, and access analysis in the local area.
- An inability to provide sufficient quantity might be at least partly compensated for through better quality. Investment in the quality and robustness of open space can also often improve the 'carrying capacity' of open spaces and therefore offset some shortcomings in quantitative provision. However, some benefits such as reducing the urban heat island effect, carbon sequestration and increasing biodiversity will also require new open spaces.
- New and improved open space should be designed to optimise multi-functionality to benefit both people and nature/the wider environment e.g., offering wildlife habitats, flood management opportunities, providing recreation opportunities etc. Wherever possible it should heighten residents' overall appreciation, understanding of, and respect for that environment so it becomes an important and valued local resource. Good practice guidance for the design of high quality green space should draw on the Green Flag Award

guidance, and new/emerging guidance such as the Building with Nature Benchmark and Natural England's Green Infrastructure Standards Framework.

- Standards will need to be applied to a variety of circumstances, and flexibility of interpretation is the key to success. A pragmatic approach will be essential given the range of circumstances in which they will be used.

7.2 Application of quantity standards

7.2.1 Current open space supply against the quantity standards

The tables below show the existing supply (in hectares) of open space in the urban and rural analysis areas. The supply is calculated using the population figures for each analysis area (using ONS mid 2017 estimates), and the quantity of open space compared to what the requirements for open space are against the proposed standards.

Positive figures show where the Parish/CA meets the quantity standard for the open space typology, and negative figures show where there is a shortfall in supply against the quantity standard.

These figures highlight where there are shortfalls in supply and therefore where new provision should be sought. The figures can help inform decisions about the form of new open spaces (i.e., required typologies) and improvements to existing open spaces, rather than it being imperative that every Parish/CAB must achieve a '+' number. E.g., as can be seen, there are large shortfalls in youth play space across both rural and urban areas, and therefore a priority is new provision of youth play space (as well as qualitative improvements to existing facilities if needed).

It is important that the supply figures are not considered in isolation – they need to be considered alongside the access and quality analysis e.g., there could be sufficient supply of amenity green space in a particular area, but it may be poor quality, or there may be poor access to this type of open space. Access to accessible natural green space may also help mitigate or compensate for the shortfalls in some types of open space, such as amenity green space or parks and recreation grounds.

Just because a typology is in sufficient supply, this does not mean it is 'surplus' to requirements, as the access and quantity standards also need to be considered alongside the quantity standards. There may also be other factors such as a sites nature conservation, historic or cultural value, or its contribution to the Green Infrastructure network (not considered as part of this assessment) which mean it should be protected.

Urban analysis areas summary

Table 26 Summary of open space provision across urban analysis areas

Typology	Existing (ha)	Existing (ha/1000)	Required provision (ha)	Standard/ Required provision (ha/1000)	Supply (ha)	Supply (ha/1000)
Allotments	65.20	0.19	87.57	0.25	-22.37	-0.06
Amenity Green Space	382.54	1.09	315.27	0.9	67.27	0.19
Park and Recreation Grounds (Combined)	362.66	1.04	385.33	1.1	-22.67	-0.06
Play Space (Children)	20.57	0.06	87.57	0.25	-66.99	-0.19
Play Space (Youth)	5.75	0.02	105.09	0.3	-99.34	-0.28

As can be seen from the table above, overall, across the urban analysis area there are shortfalls in all types of open space with the exception of amenity green space.

Rural analysis areas summary

Table 27 Summary of open space provision across rural analysis areas

Typology	Existing (ha)	Existing (ha/1000)	Required provision (ha)	Standard/ Required provision (ha/1000)	Supply (ha)	Supply (ha/1000)
Allotments	29.79	0.20	37.45	0.25	-7.66	-0.05
Recreational Space	326.79	2.18	299.61	2	27.18	0.18
Play (Children)	8.05	0.05	37.45	0.25	-29.40	-0.20
Play (Youth)	2.08	0.01	44.94	0.3	-42.86	-0.29

As can be seen from the table above, overall, across the rural analysis area there are shortfalls in all types of open space with the exception of recreation space.

Open space supply (ha) in urban analysis areas (by parish)

Table 28 Open space supply (ha) in urban analysis areas (by parish)

Parish	Allotments	Amenity Green Space	Park and Recreation Ground (Combined)	Play Space (Children)	Play Space (Youth)
Amesbury	-2.14	0.09	1.41	-2.42	-3.23
Box	-0.33	0.23	10.06	-0.81	-0.99
Bradford-on-Avon	0.51	-2.20	0.10	-1.37	-2.82
Bulford	-1.27	-4.57	-3.43	-1.20	-1.47
Calne	-4.06	-1.93	-13.81	-3.58	-5.17
Chippenham	-4.18	21.75	-19.49	-8.12	-10.17
Corsham	-1.13	2.15	-7.55	-2.14	-3.77
Cricklade	-0.80	2.63	-1.58	-0.86	-1.21
Devizes & Roundway	-0.64	11.60	-12.08	-3.28	-4.76
Downton	1.09	0.10	-3.26	-0.17	-0.94
Durrington	-1.68	1.15	-5.96	-1.73	-1.93
Hilperton	-0.28	-4.15	2.50	-0.94	-1.61
Laverstock	-1.08	16.44	16.28	-1.55	-2.39
Lyneham and Bradenstoke	-0.92	2.60	-4.16	-1.21	-1.66
Malmesbury	-0.99	-3.00	-4.86	-0.68	-1.72
Marlborough	-1.19	22.23	0.28	-1.75	-2.55
Melksham & Melksham Without	-1.99	-0.27	0.99	-4.43	-6.40
Mere	2.28	-1.50	3.67	-0.55	-0.94

Pewsey	0.23	-2.32	3.28	-0.58	-1.11
Purton	2.23	-4.54	-4.22	-1.29	-1.58
Redlynch	-0.68	-3.23	-0.03	-0.72	-1.03
Royal Wootton Bassett	-0.56	-5.28	-2.93	-2.57	-3.43
Salisbury	7.48	-0.12	41.31	-8.35	-11.84
Tidworth & Ludgershall	-2.45	7.27	8.94	-3.07	-5.09
Tisbury	0.88	-2.19	0.18	-0.34	-0.60
Trowbridge	-5.31	-13.16	-25.08	-7.83	-10.08
Warminster	-1.39	17.94	7.69	-2.48	-5.13
Westbury	-3.89	9.13	-10.21	-2.91	-4.52
Wilton	-0.11	0.37	-0.73	-0.06	-1.20

As can be seen from the table above, the supply (ha) of open space against the standards varies considerably by urban parish and by open space typology. There are shortfalls in at least three types of open space within all urban parishes, and every urban parish has a shortfall in children's and youth play space.

Open space supply (ha) in rural analysis areas (by CA)

Table 29 Open space supply (ha) in rural analysis areas (by CA)

CA	Allotments	Recreational Space	*Play Space (Child)*	*Play Space (Youth)*
Amesbury	-0.63	-4.91	-1.99	-3.09
Bradford on Avon	-1.76	11.59	-1.82	-2.53
Calne	0.34	15.46	-1.13	-1.56
Chippenham	-0.26	2.23	-1.90	-2.76
Corsham	2.87	12.02	-0.81	-1.03
Devizes	0.85	-4.40	-3.32	-4.37
Malmesbury	0.68	-1.42	-2.90	-4.34
Marlborough	-2.41	-0.68	-1.92	-2.93
Melksham	-1.36	-5.22	-1.25	-2.07
Mere	-0.35	-0.38	-0.44	-0.75
Pewsey	-1.10	-1.09	-1.97	-3.23
Southern Wiltshire	-2.49	-2.44	-2.68	-3.25
Tidworth	-0.37	0.37	-1.00	-1.31
Tisbury	-0.24	-0.24	-1.13	-1.54
Trowbridge	1.32	-4.37	-0.79	-1.35
Warminster	-1.24	8.39	-1.50	-2.31
Westbury	-0.57	-4.32	-0.98	-1.40
Wilton	-0.03	9.15	-1.29	-1.74
Wootton Bassett	-0.89	-2.56	-0.57	-1.25

As can be seen from the table above, there are shortfalls in open space across the majority of the rural CAs, again with shortfalls in at least two types of open space in each rural CA, and all CAs having a shortfall in children and youth provision.

7.3   Application of access standards

This section provides an overview of access to different types of open space typologies across the study area, using the access standards summarised in Tables 18 and 19. The maps are intended to provide an overview and are for illustrative purposes only. More detailed maps by CA are provided in part 2 of this report.

The maps show the walk-time buffers for each open space typology and are created using QGIS and the OSM Tools plugin which relies on the OpenStreetMap paths and street network to accurately map realistic potential walking routes. The buffers are based on a walk-time of 5 kilometres/3.1 miles an hour[26].

Table 3 (Section 2.4 of this report) shows how walk-time relates to straight-line distances and pedestrian route distances. The straight-line walking distances do not take into account roads or barriers to access and so the actual route walked (the pedestrian route) is generally further i.e., straight-line distances are around 60% of actual distances. The more basic straight-line buffer access analysis approach has been used for the ANGSt standards, as this approach is more appropriate for larger sites.

The access maps also show Census 2011 Output Areas (OAs). Each OA centroid is the lowest level of geography from the census which contains roughly 129 households. By using this point dataset, it is possible to clearly indicate those households that fall outside open space access buffers i.e., where the key gaps in access are.

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[26] This is in line with the British Heart Foundation state as an average walking pace on country and forestry footpaths: https://www.bhf.org.uk/how-you-can-help/events/training-zone/walking-training-zone/walking-faqs

7.3.1   Access to open space across the study area
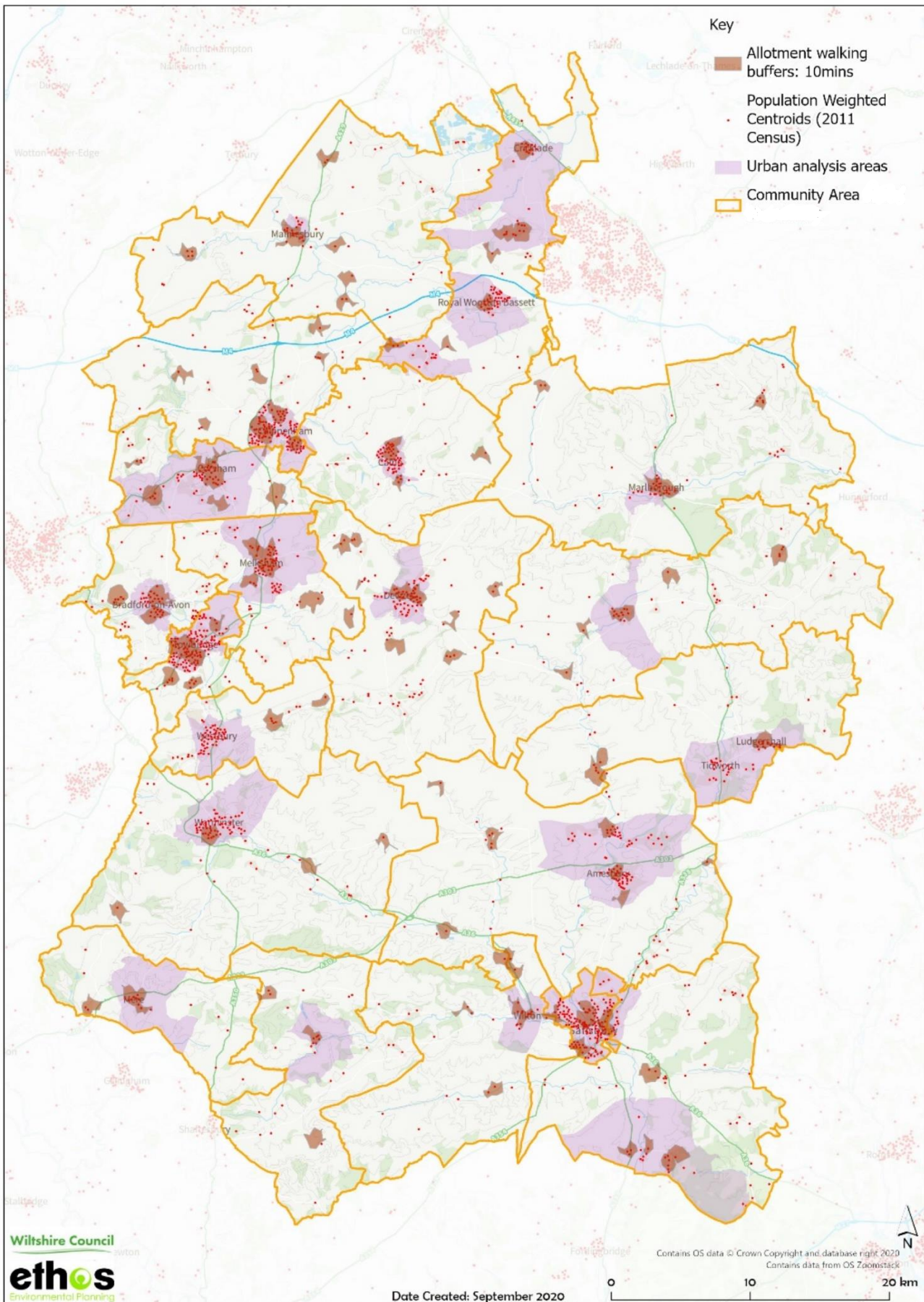
Figure 9 Access to allotments (both urban and rural analysis areas) (10 minutes' walk time)
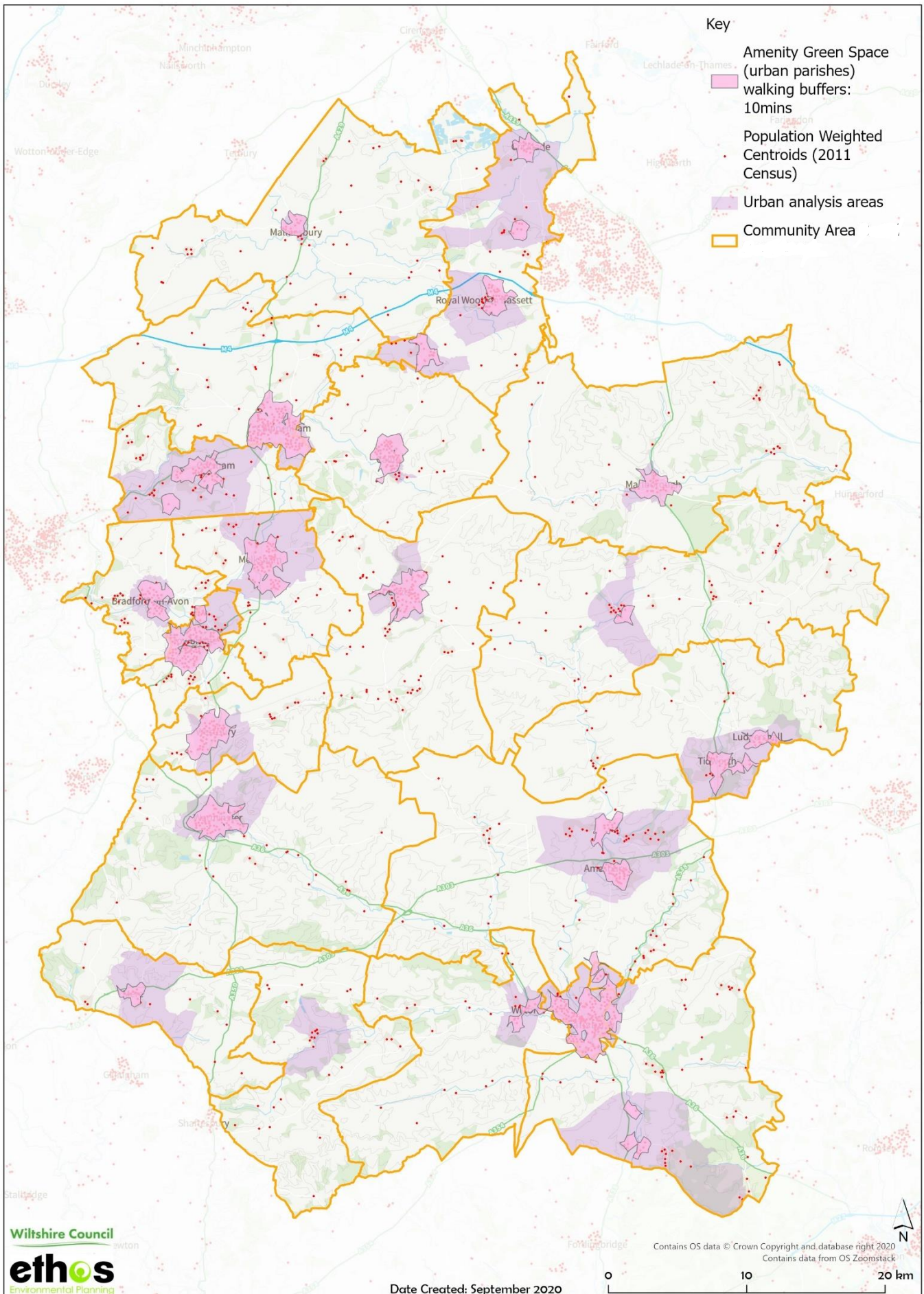
Figure 10 Access to amenity green space (urban analysis areas only) (10 minutes' walk time)
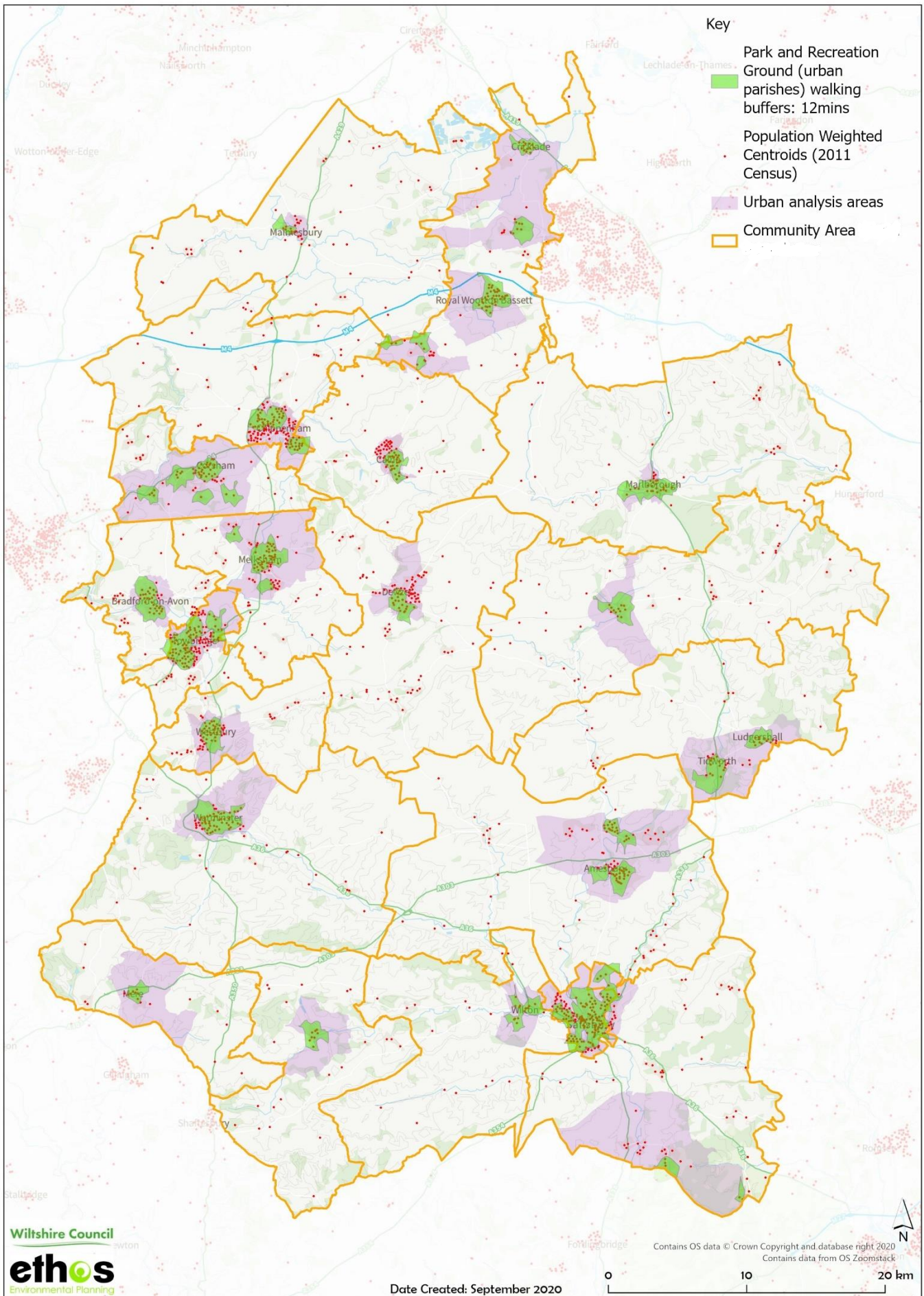
Figure 11 Access to parks and recreation grounds (urban analysis areas only) (12-13 minutes' walk time)
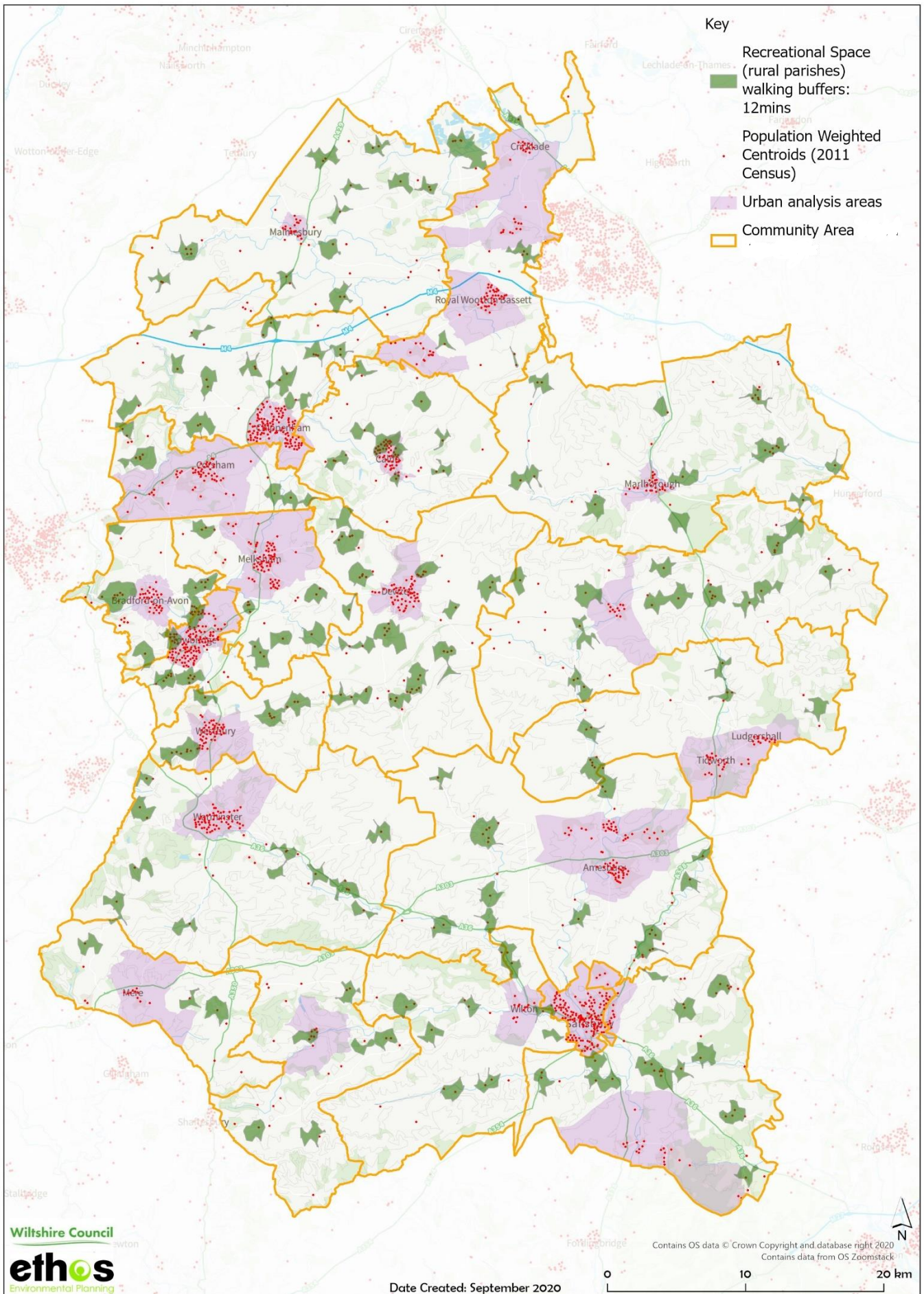
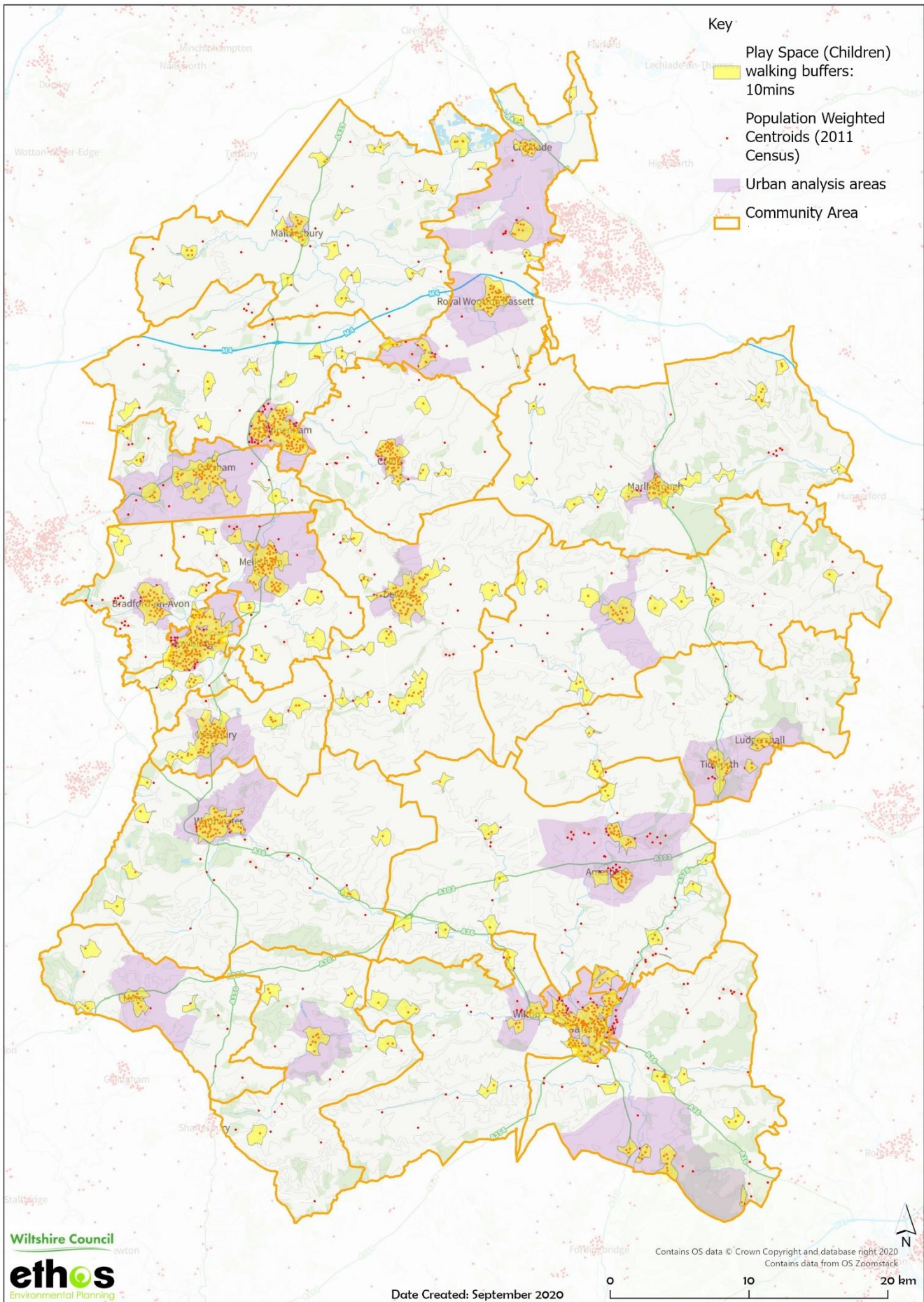*Figure 12 Access to recreation space (rural analysis areas only) (12-13 minutes' walk time)*

Figure 13 Access to children's play space (both urban and rural analysis areas) 10 minutes' walk time)

Figure 13   Access to youth play space (both urban and rural analysis areas) (12-13 minutes' walk time)
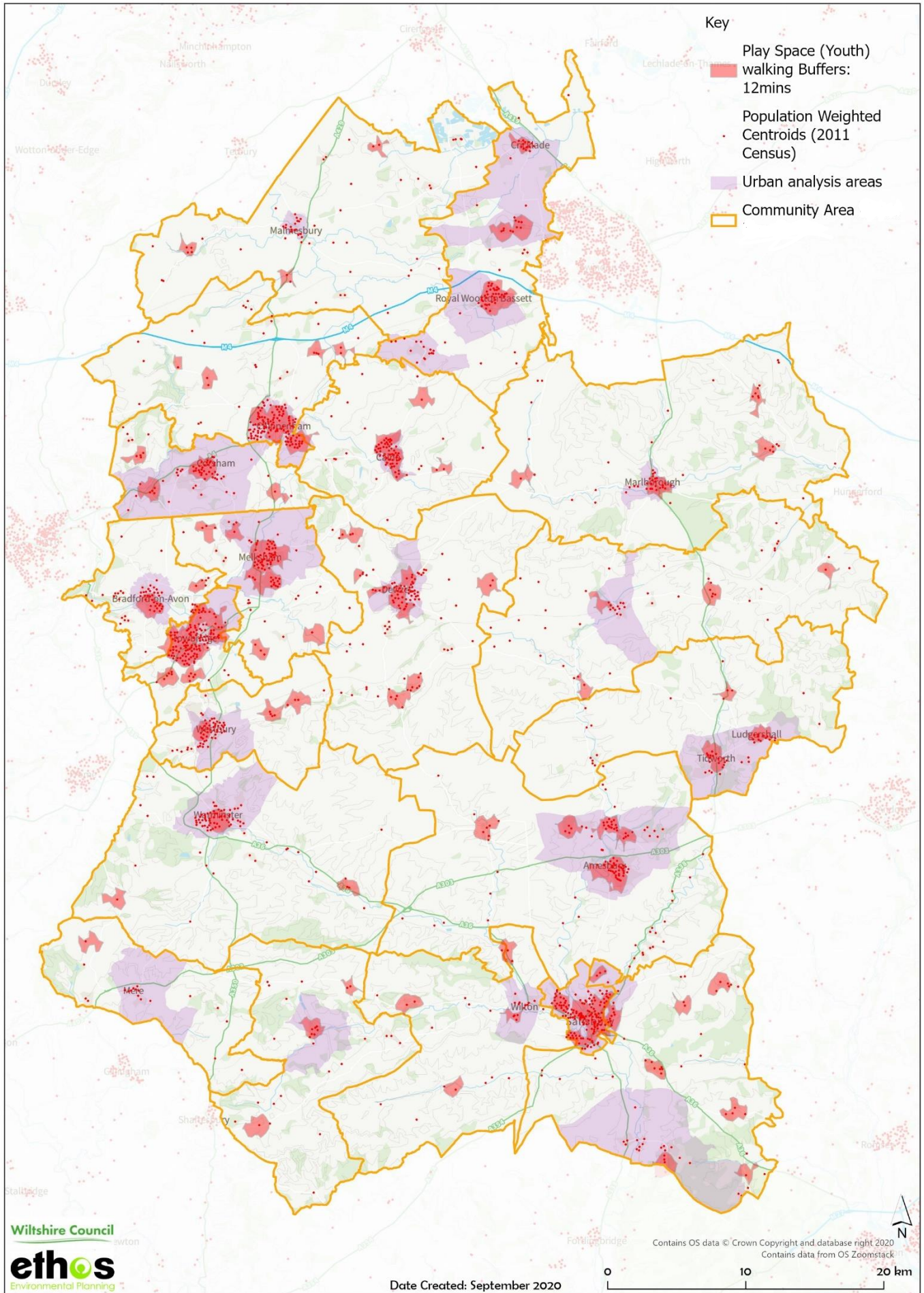
Figure 14 Access to youth play space (both urban and rural analysis areas) (12-13 minutes' walk time)

Table 30 Summary of access issues for allotments, parks and recreation grounds, play space (children and youth) and recreation space

Typology	Key Access Issues
Allotments (urban and rural areas)	All urban analysis areas have access to allotments, although there are some large gaps in access in these areas. Trowbridge, Malmesbury and Salisbury have a good access compared to other urban areas. Rural access to allotments is more sporadic, due to the dispersed nature of settlements.
Amenity Green Space (urban areas only)	Generally good access to amenity green space across urban areas, with the exception of Tisbury which has no provision.
Parks and Recreation Grounds (urban areas only)	Generally good access to parks and recreation grounds across urban areas, although there are some relatively large gaps in access in highly populated areas including Chippenham, Trowbridge, Devises and Calne.
Play Space (Children) (urban and rural areas)	There is a good level of access to children's play space across both urban analysis areas and across the rural areas with clusters of population centroids. Across the urban analysis areas, Salisbury, Trowbridge, Chippenham and Malmesbury have a fairly good access with only small gaps in access.
Play Space (Youth) (urban and rural areas)	Access to youth play space is limited. Most urban analysis areas have some access to youth play spaces except for Mere and Lyneham and Bradenstoke with Trowbridge, Chippenham and Salisbury having good access. There is access to some youth play spaces across rural areas, but this is sporadic.
Recreation space (parks and amenity green space) (Rural Areas only)	There is generally good access to recreation space across the rural analysis areas.

7.3.2 Access to accessible natural green space across the study area

This section looks at access to accessible natural/semi-natural green space within the study area (across both urban and rural areas) including through the application of the locally derived access standard (see Figure 15), and the ANGSt standards, in order to identify the main gaps in access. As already mentioned under Section 5.1.5, this typology only includes those natural green spaces which have a definitive boundary and public access e.g., Local Nature Reserves, and not the open countryside where the only access is via the Public Right of Way network.

This section also shows the public rights of way network, which forms an important part of access to open space and the wider countryside.

Natural England Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGSt)

ANGSt recommends that everyone, wherever they live should have accessible natural greenspace:

- Of at least 2 hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (5 minutes' walk) from home;

- at least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres of home;
- one accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home; and
- one accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home; plus
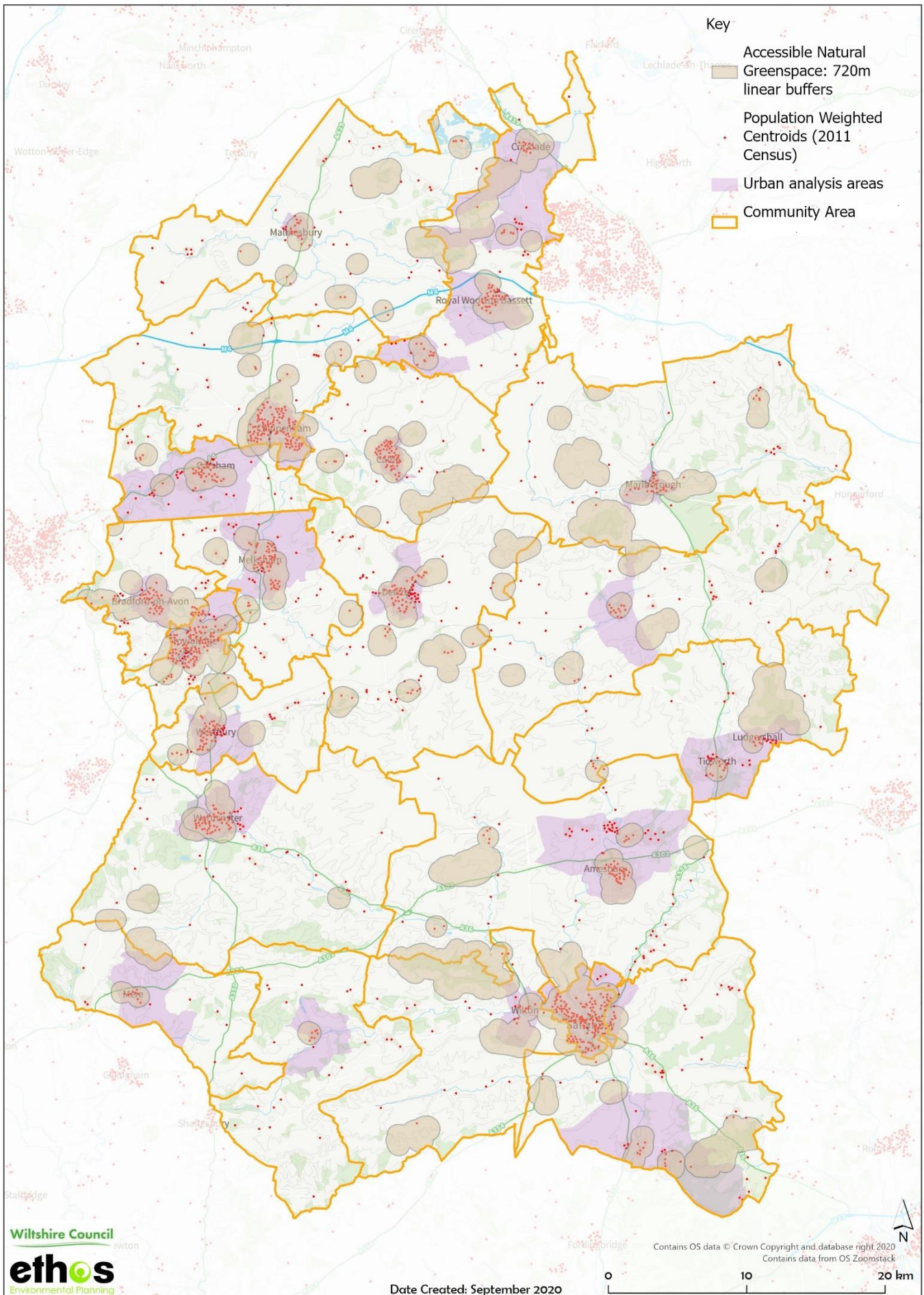- a minimum of 1 hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population.

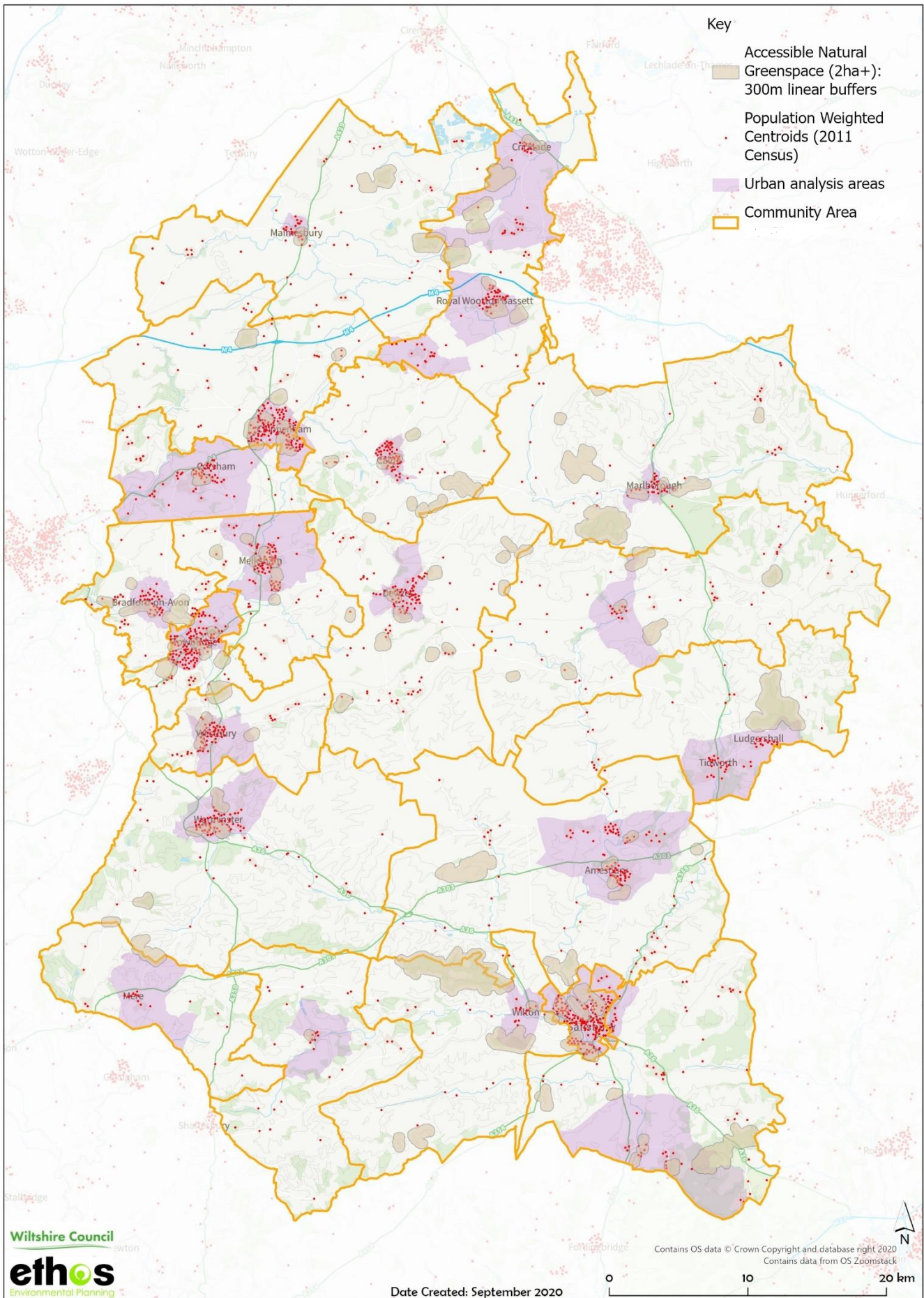*Figure 15 Access to accessible natural green space (720m buffer)*
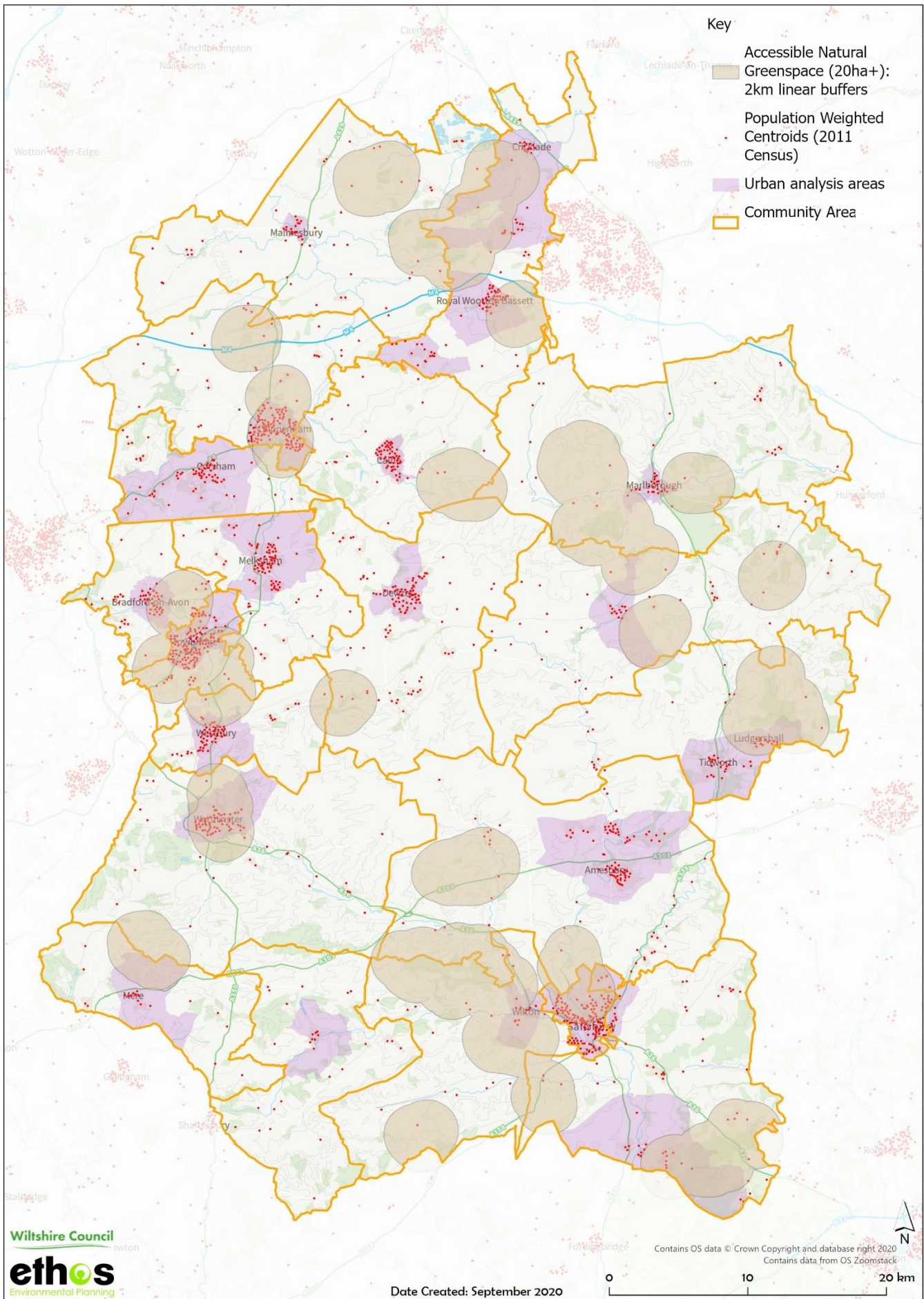
Figure 16 ANGSt: Access to 2ha+ sites within 300m
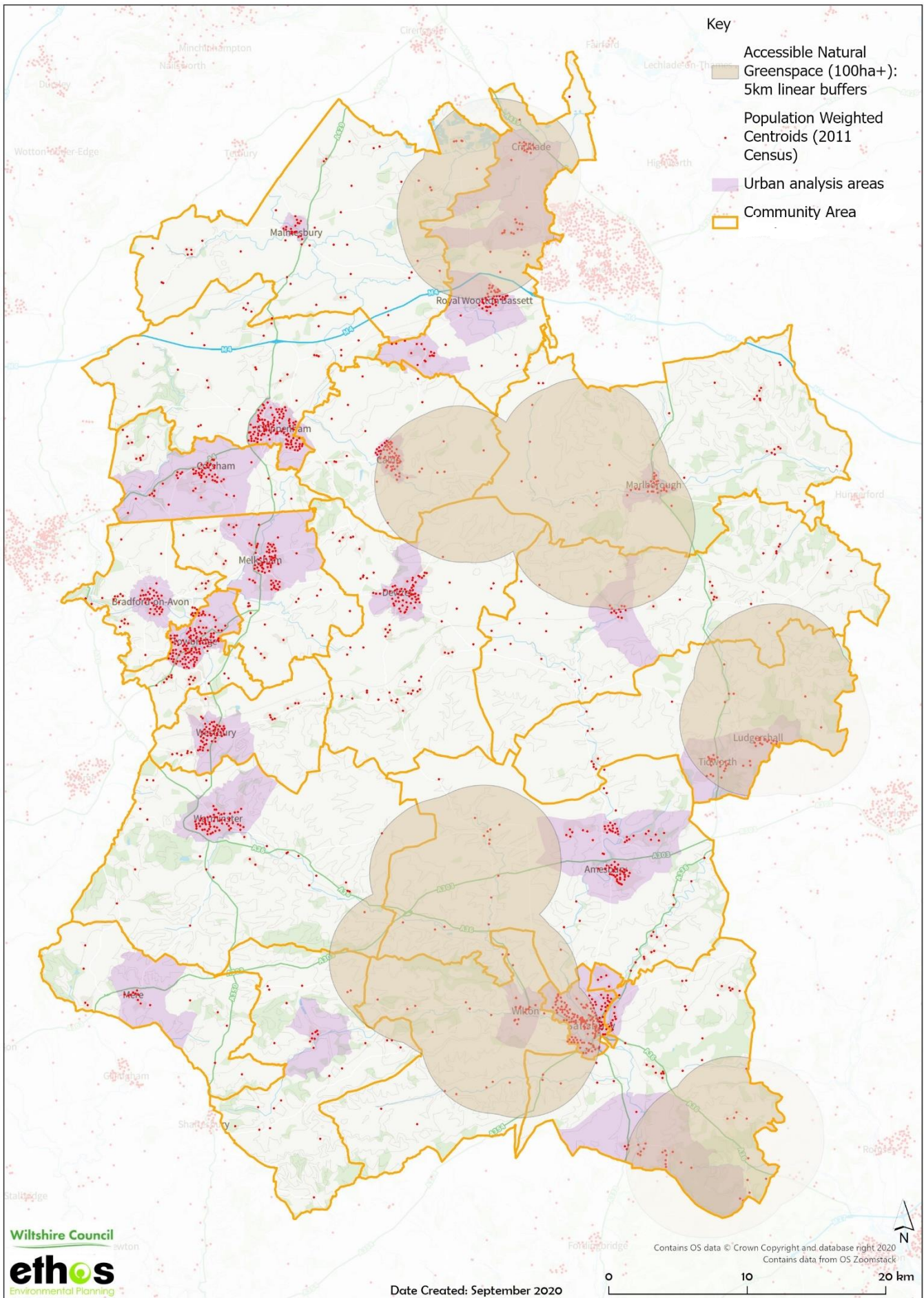
Figure 17 ANGSt: Access to 20ha+ sites within 2km

Figure 18 ANGSt: Access to 100ha+ site within 5km
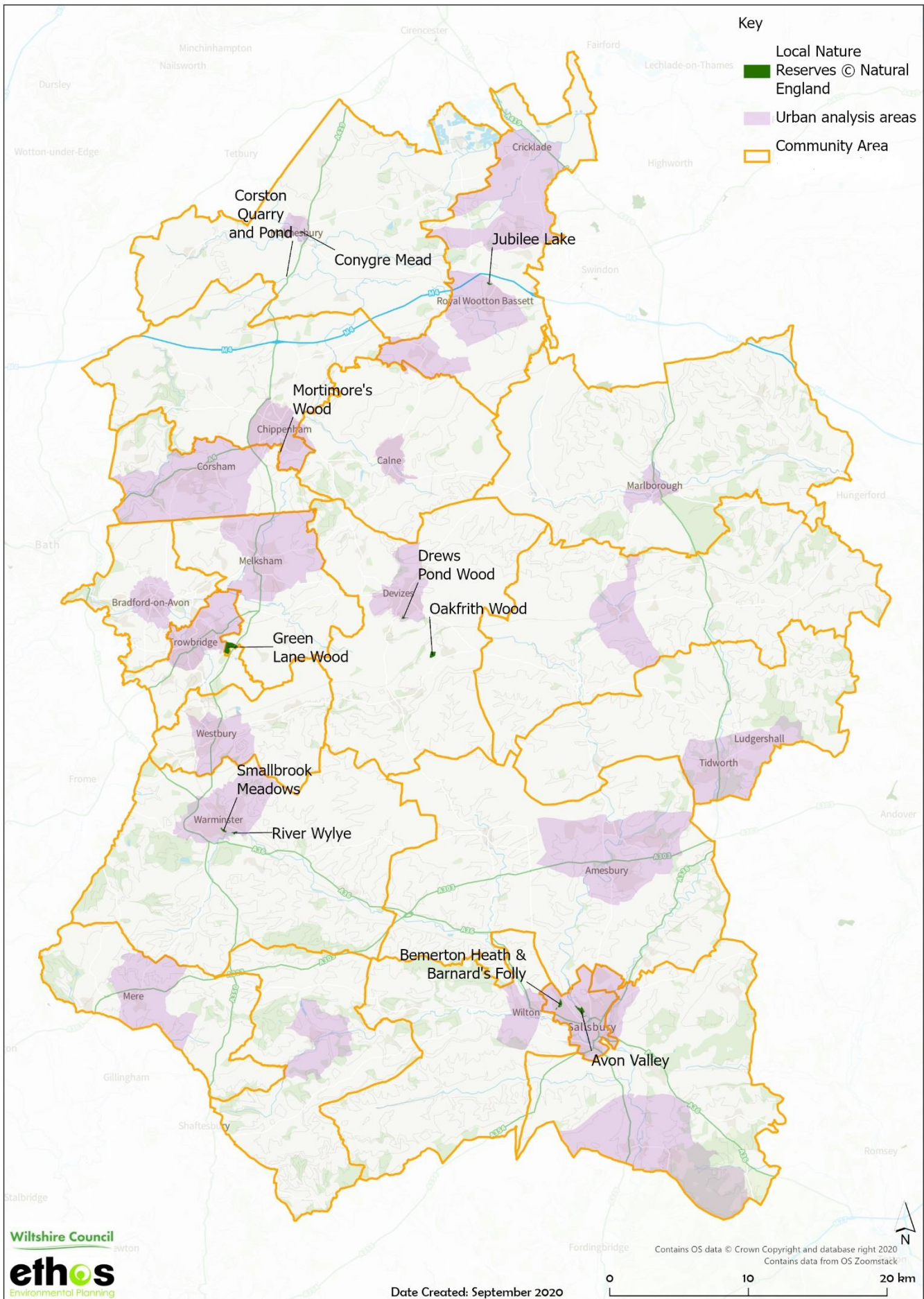
Figure 19 Local Nature Reserves

Figure 20 The Public Rights of Way Network (2015 data)

Table 31 Summary of access issues for accessible natural green space

Standard	Key access Issues
Access to accessible natural green space - 720m buffer	Generally good access across the study area, the main gaps being in very rural areas. It is noted that there is an extensive PROW network providing access to the countryside and within and between settlements.
ANGSt Standard: Accessible green space of at least 2ha in size, no more than 300m (5 minutes' walk) from home.	When applying this ANGSt standard, it shows large gaps in access across much of the Study Area, especially in urban analysis areas. It is considered that this access standard is not very realistic or achievable and is therefore not very helpful in identifying where the key gaps in access are, as much of the Study Area does not meet this standard. Therefore, it is considered that the locally derived standard (720m or 15 minutes' walk-time applied to all Accessible Natural Green Space above 0.2ha) is more meaningful in identifying the key gaps in access.
ANGSt Standard: At least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres of home	Large gaps in access across urban parishes including Corsham, Melksham, Westbury, Devizes, Amesbury, Salisbury and Calne. However, there is access to the countryside via the PROW network.
ANGSt Standard: One accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home	Large gaps in access across the Study Area. Although it is noted that there are extensive areas of countryside accessed via the PROW network across much of the Study Area.
ANGSt Standard: One accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home	There are no sites of 500ha or above mapped within the Study Area.
A minimum of one hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population	There are 11 Local Nature Reserves (LNR's) within the Study Area. At the study area level there are 0.22 ha/1000 of nature reserves, which falls well below the ANGSt standard of 1ha/1000.
Access via the PROW network	The PROW network provides access between open spaces and settlements and provides an important element of access to/within the countryside.

7.4　Application of quality standards

7.4.1　Quality of open space – consultation key findings

Respondents in the 2015 household survey (Community and Stakeholder Consultation Report (2015)) were asked how they rated various types of facilities in the Study Area in terms of quality. The responses of those expressing an opinion on specific categories of facility are illustrated in Figure 21 below.
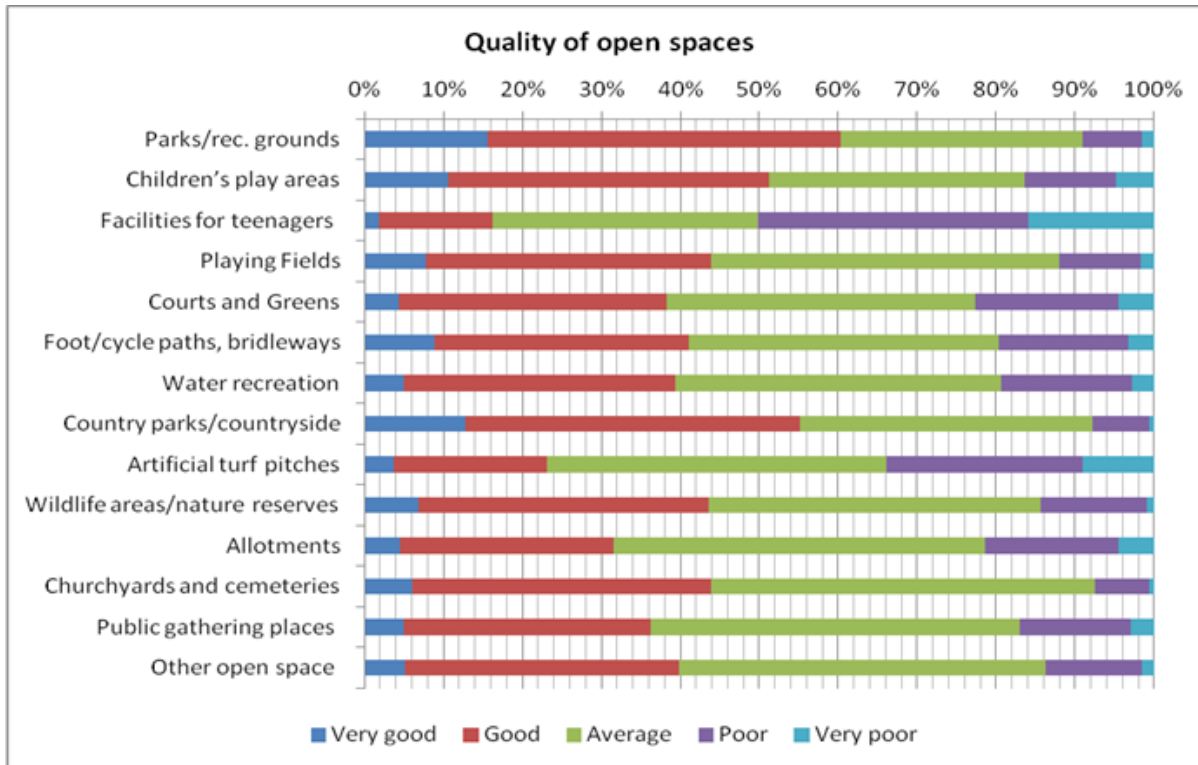
Figure 21 Quality of open space (responses from 2015 household survey)

Key findings (2015)

- All facilities are rated average or better by a majority of households other than facilities for teenagers. 50% of households highlighted the quality of outdoor facilities for teenagers as being either poor or very poor.
- Over 20% thought that the quality of astro-turf pitches; allotments; and courts and greens was poor or very poor.
- The high quality of parks and recreation grounds stands out notably, being viewed by around 60% of respondents as very good or good. Other kinds of open spaces where quality is widely thought to be good/very good by a majority are country parks, countryside and woodlands; and play areas.

Urban/Rural variations (2015)

- The quality of play areas and parks and recreation grounds is rated higher in urban areas than rural e.g., 15% of urban households rate play areas as very good compared to 6% in rural areas; 17% in urban areas rate parks as very good compared to 14% in rural.
- Over 56% of rural households rate teenage facilities as poor/very poor compared to 44% in urban areas.
- The quality of country parks, accessible woodlands etc; rights of way; and allotments is rated higher in rural than urban areas e.g., 36% of rural households rate allotments as good/very good compared to 26% in urban areas.
- Otherwise, the variation in ratings quality for different typologies of open space and facilities was relatively small.

Householder survey update (2020)

The findings from the 2020 householder survey update support the findings from the 2015 consultation:

- For the most types of open spaces, the majority of households suggested that in general they were of "good" or "adequate". The exception to this was facilities for teenagers in which 77% of households rated them as "poor" or "very poor".
- Only two types of open spaces were rated relatively highly in terms of quality. These were parks and recreation grounds (71% rated as very good or good) and country parks/countryside (67% similarly).

7.4.2   Quality of open space – audit methodologies (2023 and 2015)

2023 methodology

The 2023 quality audit methodology updates the previous 2015 methodology (set out below) undertaken as part of the draft open space study (2015). It continues to be based on the Green Flag Assessment[27] criteria but has been refined to make it more easily repeatable. 269 quality audits were undertaken.

Sites selected for audit were agreed with the project team and focused on parks and recreation grounds and amenity green spaces that overlapped with play spaces, to focus on multifunctional spaces, and also to include spaces in every rural Community Area. Sites were visited, and data captured using a phone/tablet with ArcGIS Field Maps and Survey 123. A photographic record will be made of key features (these will be geolocated within the GIS database), along with a description of the site and recommendations for improvements. An assessment of the quality of the open space was undertaken using the scoring and criteria set out below.

Scoring

Table 32 Quality scoring (2023)

Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	Exceptional
0 -1	2, 3, 4	5, 6	7	8	9	10

Each of the 10 criteria below is scored between 1 (very poor) and 10 (exceptional), and there is also an N/A option for some of the criteria. The scores for each site are added together and the mean calculated based on how many criteria were scored (e.g., If 'Appropriate signage and information' is given N/A for a site, the total will be divided by 9). This mean is then multiplied by 10 to produce the percentage final score.

The final percentage score is used to group sites into categories as follows:

- Excellent (81% and above)
- Good (66% - 80%)
- Fair (46% - 65%)
- Poor (up to 45%)

If a site has particular issues e.g., scores poor (or 4 or below) for any particular criterion, this is flagged up within the analysis.

Criteria

Table 33 Quality audit criteria (2023)

Criteria	Considerations
1. Welcoming	- Is the main entrance well maintained, obvious and safe?

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[27] https://www.greenflagaward.org/

	• Is the site managed/laid out so that there is an overall sense of welcome?
2. Good and safe access	• Are the paths clean and tidy? • Are the paths accessible for mobility scooter/wheelchair users? • Are there good links to adjacent green spaces/community facilities?
3. Appropriate signage and information (N.b. there is an N/A option for this criterion as not appropriate for all open spaces e.g., small amenities to have signage).	• Are there clear and well-maintained signs/maps/information boards, which are appropriate to the site. • Is the site easy to find with directional signage where required?
4. Appropriate Provision of Facilities (N.b. there is an N/A option for this criterion as not appropriate for all open spaces to have facilities).	• Are there a range of good quality facilities which are appropriate to the site? • Do play spaces have good play value?
5. Quality/Management of Facilities and Infrastructure (N.b. there is an N/A option for this criterion as not appropriate for all open spaces to have facilities).	• Is equipment fit-for-use and well-maintained and has redundant equipment been removed? • Is the infrastructure (paths, lighting, fencing, seating) and buildings (if present) well-maintained? • Are equipment and facilities safe and dangers/hazards cordoned off? • Do surfaces drain well?
6. Maintenance of soft landscaping/ grounds maintenance	• Are the grounds, horticultural areas and trees managed appropriately?
7. Biodiversity	• Does the site contribute positively to biodiversity through providing a diversity of habitats and features which are well managed and connected within the site?
8. Personal Security on Site	• Is the site overlooked by housing? • Does it look like the site has a problem with anti-social behaviour (e.g., graffiti, dumping)? • Is there a feeling of personal safety?
9. Dog fouling	• Are dog bins available and visible and is there dog fouling present?
10. Litter and waste management	• Are bins/signs available and visible and is there a litter issue/fly tipping across the site?

2015 methodology

The 2015 quality audit was undertaken at 266 sites across the study area. The sites selected for audit focused on multi-functional parks and recreation grounds. The details on the sites audited are provided in a quality audit database which has been provided to the Council. The quality audits were undertaken using a standardised methodology and consistent approach. However, audits of this nature can only ever be a snapshot in time and their main purpose is to provide a consistent and objective assessment of a site's existing quality rather than a full asset audit.

The quality audit did not assess all typologies against the same criteria as not all categories are relevant to each typology. For assessment purposes, the same assessment criteria were applied to (under the heading of 'Open Space'):

• Parks & Recreation Grounds

- Play Spaces
- Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace
- Outdoor Sports (Public)

The remaining categories of Allotments, Amenity greenspace, Outdoor sport (limited access), Churchyards and Cemeteries and Education were scored individually and separately, according to relevant criteria.

The quality audit recorded the following in addition to GIS reference, site name, ownership total area etc. and facilities at the site:

- Access
- Welcoming
- Design
- Condition (General; furniture, soft landscape, hard landscape, buildings, litter, dog fouling)
- Safety
- Community involvement
- Natural features and biodiversity
- Value assessment (For recreation, to the neighbourhood, for biodiversity, for children, for the elderly, for families, for teenagers, for disabled users)
- Outdoor sport (Grass sports pitches, MUGAs, tennis courts, bowling greens, sports building)
- Play and youth facilities.

Information was collected on open spaces from a variety of sources:

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

Where sites were accessible, they were assessed and 'scored.' In brief this involved looking at:

- **Quality:** Based on a score from 1 to 5 with 1 being 'Very Poor' and 5 being 'Excellent'. The scores were derived from a large and complex 'working' spreadsheet that considered factors (where appropriate) covering: Management & Maintenance, Access, Design, Safety & Security, Marketing/Information, Community Involvement. Biodiversity, Play, Sports Provision. These factors have themselves been derived from other accepted methods of open space assessment such as 'Green Flag[28]' but suitably modified to take into account the diverse range of spaces covered by the audit. In many situations the assessment of some of the above factors was inappropriate for sites, in which case they were not scored, and the overall scoring was modified accordingly, to provide a mean score for each criterion.

- **Potential:** The considered view of the assessor as to what extent the site is capable of improvement within its current use. The maximum range was again 1 to 5. Site characteristics and location etc. may impair the maximum score being achieved. Once again, scores were derived from the 'working' spreadsheet that considered the above factors (where appropriate).

- **Gap Score:** When the Quality score is subtracted from the Potential score this will give an indication of the perceived net scope for improvement within the sites current use. The final gap score for each site can be used as a tool in helping prioritise between sites in relation to new investment and to inform decisions about protection, enhancement, and potential disposal of sites. For example, a site ranked existing 'very poor' may also be ranked as potential 'very good' – these are sites where offsite contributions could be targeted. Conversely, a site with existing 'very poor' and potential 'very poor' may be a site that could be used for

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[28] https://www.greenflagaward.org/how-it-works/judging-criteria/

alternative uses. However, as the Gap score only relates to current use, its utility in helping to determine investment priorities will be limited where a change of use to a different open space function is being considered.

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

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

Our audit methodology since 2015 has been substantially updated and uses criteria adapted from the Green Flag assessment. Auditors select and discount criteria from a comprehensive range on a site-by-site basis so that each typology and site can be custom assessed using the same fundamental assessment. The use of ArcGIS Collector makes these audits easily repeatable with minimal technical training.

7.4.3   Quality of open space – audit findings (summaries for 2023 and 2015)

2023 audit findings

Figure 22 and Table 34 summarises the results from the quality audits undertaken at 269 open spaces during February/March 2023 (full details are provided in Appendix 5 and the GIS database provided to the Council). As can be seen, the majority of sites were assessed as being of good quality. It is worthy of note that approximately one third of sites assessed were identified as having particular issues (i.e., scoring 4 or below (poor) for at least one criterion).

Table 34 Summary of quality audit results (2023)

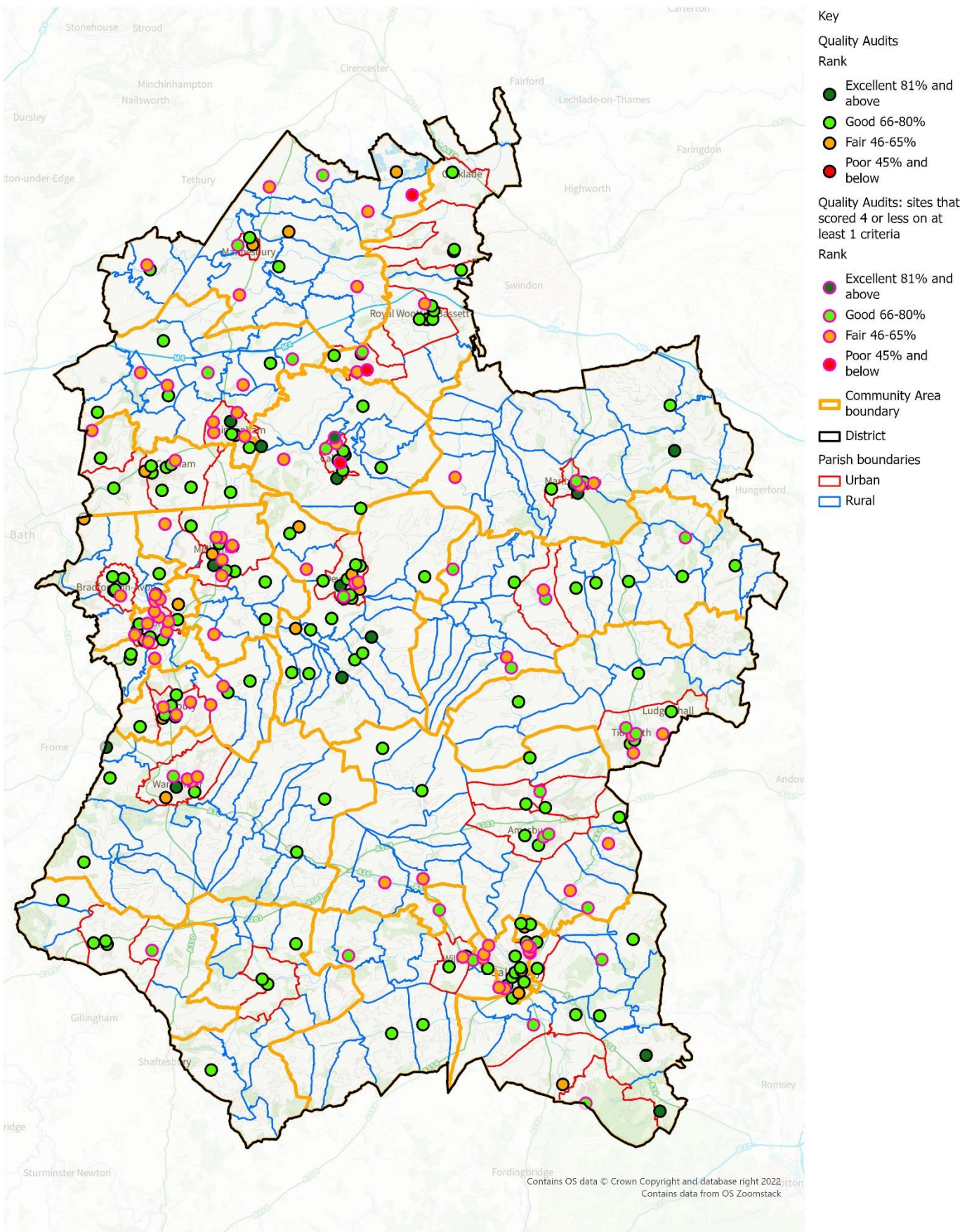| Typology	Excellent	Excellent with 1+ Poor Criterion	Good	Good with 1+ Poor Criterion	Fair	Fair with 1+ Poor Criterion	Poor	Total
Accessible Natural Green Space	1	0	3	0	0	2	0	**6**
Amenity Green Space	5	0	47	8	11	33	1	**105**
Natural Green Space (Limited Access)	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	**1**
Park and Recreation Ground	9	1	83	18	9	35	2	**157**
Total	**15**	**1**	**133**	**26**	**20**	**71**	**3**	**269**

Figure 22 Summary of quality audit results (2023)

2015 audit findings

Figure 23 and Table 35 below provide an overview of the 'existing quality' scores across the study area. As can be seen, the majority of open spaces have been assessed as being of good quality (B). Full details are provided in Appendix 4 and the GIS database has been provided to the Council.

The key findings by Community Area are provided in the area profiles (part 2 of this report).

Table 35 Summary of 2015 quality audit scores

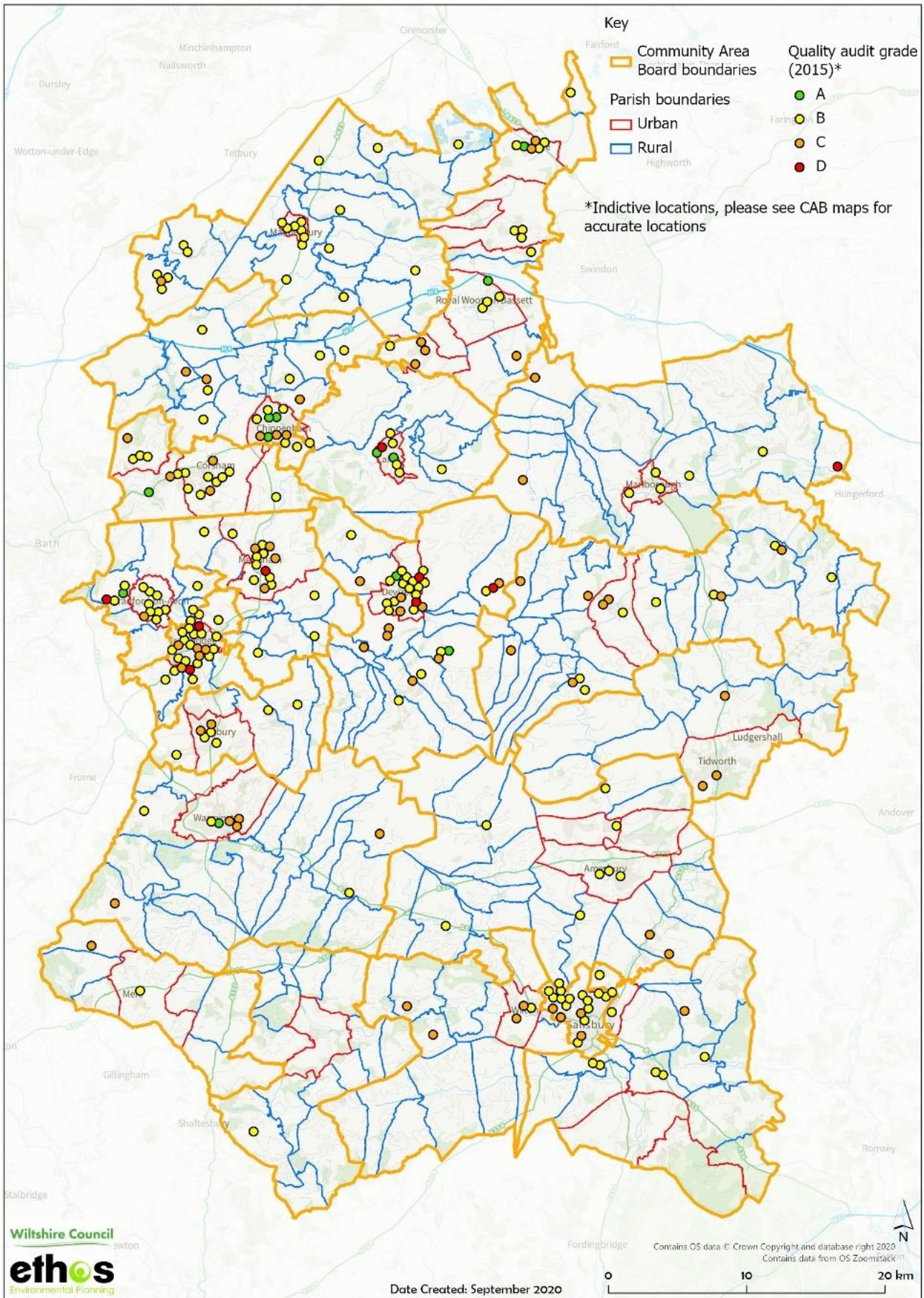| Quality Audit Grade (2015)					
Typology	A	B	C	D	Total
Accessible Natural Green Space		2			2
Allotments		1			1
Amenity Green Space	4	66	27	2	99
Education		2	1		3
Outdoor Sport (Fixed)	1	4	3		8
Outdoor Sport (Private)	2	5	11	5	23
Park and Recreation Ground	5	88	27	2	122
Play Space (Children)		8			8
Total	12	176	69	9	266

Figure 23 Overview map of 2015 quality assessment

8.0   STRATEGIC OPTIONS, POLICY & MANAGEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

This section sets out recommended strategic options and policy recommendations for open space within Wiltshire, that will be considered by Wiltshire Council. It draws on all the previous steps of the study to bring together informed recommendations and addresses a number of specific requirements of the study brief.

8.1   Strategic Options

8.1.1   Introduction

The strategic options address six key areas:

1)   Existing provision to be protected;
2)   Existing provision to be enhanced;
3)   Opportunities for re-location/re-designation of open space;
4)   Identification of areas for new provision;
5)   Facilities that may be surplus to requirement; and
6)   Developer contributions and recommended thresholds for on-site provision of open space.

8.1.2   Delivering Strategic Options

The NPPF was first published in 2012 and has undergone a number of updates (the most recent in July 2021). The NPPF sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The planning system has three overarching objectives (economic, social and environmental), which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. Open spaces (provision, protection, enhancement) and their associated intrinsic benefits are key components of all three of the objectives.

Whilst local authorities have an important role in delivering open space, sport and recreation facilities, their role may move from that of 'deliverer' to 'facilitator'. The aim will be to work with community organisations to make local decisions about how facilities and services will be provided. Organisations such as residents' groups, voluntary organisations, sports clubs and societies will all have a key role in this.

Although it is up to local communities to define their own priorities (such as through neighbourhood plans) the information provided within this study will form a good basis to inform any decisions related to the provision of open space.

The following sections consider the key issues for open space in the study area, and the recommendations that emerge need to be taken in context with the Localism Act and consider how they can fit into local decision making. The following sections serve to highlight issues, but do not necessarily resolve how they may be delivered.

The information provided within this study will also form the basis for potential future strategies and any open space policies adopted by Wiltshire Council. The open space standards (quantity, access and quality) set out in this study should be formalised in planning policy (and SPDs where required e.g., an update to the Wiltshire Planning Obligations SPD). Policy recommendations are provided in the sections below (Wiltshire Council are not bound by these recommendations, but they may form the basis of new Local Plan policy). The majority of these are local plan policy recommendations (and therefore will be managed and implemented by the Council's Development Management and Control team). Where new open space or improvements to open spaces are sought as part of new development, these will be secured through on site provision, or developer contributions.

8.2   Existing provision to be protected

The starting point of any policy adopted by Wiltshire Council should be that all open space should be afforded protection unless it can be proved it is not required. Even where open spaces are in sufficient supply within a parish or CA, this does not necessarily mean there is a 'surplus' in provision of open space, as additional factors such as the supply of other typologies of open space, the quality of open space, access to existing open space where new development is planned (or the connectivity of fragmented sites (Lawton Review – More, Bigger, Better and Joined up)) needs to be taken into account (as explained further in the sections below).

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

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

The area profiles (part 2) of this study provide more detailed results at CA level as to the above considerations. The quantity analysis, summarised in Section 7.2 shows that in every parish or CA, there is a deficiency in at least two typologies of open space. Therefore, the following recommendations are made:

Open Space Policy Direction (protecting open space):

OS1	The distribution of open space varies across the study area, however, there are identified shortages of at least two typologies of open space in all urban parishes and rural CAs. It is therefore recommended that priority is placed on protecting those open spaces where there is an existing shortfall of supply.
OS2	Sites which are critical to avoiding deficiencies, or making existing deficiencies worse, in quality, quantity or accessibility should be protected unless suitable alternative provision can be provided which would compensate for any deficiencies caused.
OS3	Sites may have other values beyond their open space function (not assessed as part of this study) e.g., green infrastructure, nature conservation/biodiversity, visual amenity, historical or cultural value, which may require them to be protected, even if there is an identified surplus in quality, quantity or accessibility in that local area.

The importance of privately managed spaces (e.g., sports grounds) as a community facility has been highlighted in this study, although these spaces are not afforded protection through policy recommended as part of this study, as they are not covered by standards. The Playing Pitch Strategy covers these facilities.

The importance of small spaces (below 0.2 ha in size) is also recognised within the study, and although not included within the open space standards, it is recommended that these spaces are afforded protection (these small sites could be covered under policy direction OS3).

8.3   Existing provision to be enhanced

In areas where there is a quantitative deficiency of provision but no accessibility issues then increasing the capacity of existing provision may be considered. Alternatively, in areas where facilities or spaces do not meet the relevant quality standards, qualitative enhancements will be required.

This includes those spaces or facilities which:

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

Those sites which require enhancement are identified within the 2023 and 2015 quality audits (although it is recognised that these audits will not pick up all priorities and aspirations, and they only cover a proportion of all open space within Wiltshire). Some of the key observations related to site enhancement include:

1. The importance of providing high quality provision and maintenance of formal facilities such as Parks and Recreation Grounds and Play Space.
2. The need for additional and improved facilities for young people.
3. The role of private sports spaces to some local communities and the need to provide opportunity for investment.
4. The need to ensure high quality open spaces are designed and provided through new development where feasible.
5. The importance of rights of way and natural green space within the study area, and the need to maintain, manage and enhance provision for biodiversity.
6. The role of open space in contributing to wider initiatives and strategies.
7. Extending and enhancing the network of green infrastructure including the connectivity between sites and improved accessibility to existing sites.

An overview of the 2023 and 2015 open space quality audit scores is provided in section 7.4.3, with further information provided in the area profiles at CAB level (Part 2). The following recommendations are made in relation the quality of open space:

Open Space Policy Direction (enhancing open space):

OS4	Where new housing development is proposed, should provision not be able to be provided on site/is not practicable on site, consideration should be given to improving existing open spaces within the parish/CA where the development is located. Priority should be given to those sites identified as poor or average as detailed in the 2023 and 2015 database and the maps by CA (in part 2)[29]. Where a development is proposing to deliver off site enhancement, an update quality assessment of potential sites may be required by the Council.
OS5	Any potential future green space strategies and/or neighbourhood plans should consider the opportunities for protecting, enhancing and creating a Green Infrastructure network. Wiltshire Council could advocate the Building with Nature Standards as part of any GI Policy, to ensure that new development is multi-functional, biodiverse, climate resilient, future proof, responds to policy (local and national) and is appropriate to the landscape context/ contributes to sense of place.
OS6	The findings of the 2015 quality audits make recommendations for improving the quality of open space across the study area, however these quality audits would benefit from being updated, and a long-term strategy for achieving improvements would be beneficial. This could be achieved through an open space and/or GI strategy and action/implementation plan, for achieving improvements to open space and the wider components of GI.

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[29] There may also be a demonstrated need to improve the quality of open spaces which were not included within the 2023 or 2015 quality audits. There may also be local aspirations for site improvements over and above those identified within the quality audits.

OS7	The highest priorities for quality improvements (identified in the household surveys in both 2015 and 2020) are footpaths, bridleways and cycleways; Woodlands, wildlife areas and nature reserves; country parks/countryside; as well as parks and recreation grounds; and facilities for teenagers.
OS8	Management plans (if not already established) should be developed for the main parks and open spaces. These priorities could also be considered in neighbourhood plans and by the local community[30].

8.4   Opportunities for re-location/re-designation of open space

In some areas it may be possible to make better use of land by relocating an open space or sport and recreation facility, especially if this will enhance its quality or accessibility for existing users or use land which is not suitable for another purpose. In some cases, existing open space (where in sufficient supply) may be able to accommodate other types of open space which are in shortfall e.g., amenity green space could be upgraded to a park and recreation ground, accommodating play space and a community food growing area. This needs to be determined at a local level, considering the quality, quantity and access to facilities at a Neighbourhood level and in some cases across the Study Area.

Although it is up to local communities to define their own priorities within neighbourhood plans or management plans, the information provided within this study will form a good basis to inform any decisions related to the provision or replacement of open space, sport and recreation facilities. Some settlements may seek a consolidation of facilities on a single site, such as a new sports hub.

These decisions could include the spatial and investment plans for green space and set the foundations for green space provision (e.g., for the lifetime of a plan period). They should outline where different types of facilities and space - such as children's playgrounds, sports pitches, young people's facilities etc. are to be located. It will also identify if any open space is no longer needed and how its disposal or re use can be used to fund improvements to other spaces.

Each plan should apply the standards and be in accordance with the strategic policies set out in the adopted Local Plan (as informed by this study) and seek to ensure that where significant investment is anticipated for green spaces that this is prioritised and realised with the help of key stakeholders and communities.

The standards recommended in this study can be used to help determine a minimum level of quality and quantity of green space provision and the maximum distance people should have to travel to access different types of green space.

This study provides information on the existing supply of different types of open space, an analysis of access and identifies local issues related to quality. It will act as a good starting point for feeding into strategies for future decision making in consultation with the local community.

8.5   Identification of areas for new provision

New provision will be required where there is a new development and a planned increase in population, and/or an existing deficiency in supply or access to facilities exists. Section 7 outlines the existing situation with regards to supply and access to open space. As previously discussed, neighbourhood plans would provide a good mechanism to determine exactly where new provision is required, however, this study can be used as the basis for decision making, as follows:

Quantity

Within the study report, for each typology, there is an identified 'sufficient supply' or 'under supply' for each of the of the urban and rural analysis areas. If an area has an existing under supply of any typology, there may be need for

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[30] This is aimed at the Council's parks team, not development management/control.

additional provision. This could be delivered through developing a new site (for example as part of a housing development), acquiring land to extend the site or changing the typology of an existing space (which may be in over supply).

The supply statistics should be used as part of the decision-making process in development management to determine if a new development should provide facilities on-site or enhance provision off site through developer contributions.

The use of the quantity statistics should not be in isolation and should be considered alongside the access standards.

Access

This study considers how access to different types of open space varies across parishes against the proposed standards. The access maps in Section 7 (and Part 2 for each CAB) show where there are deficiencies and potential over supply of facilities. This information can be used alongside the quantity statistics to determine if new provision or improved accessibility is required in an area. For example, if a new development is proposed, the maps should be consulted to determine if there is an existing gap in provision of a particular typology which could be met by the development.

Therefore, even though the quantity statistics may identify a sufficient supply of a particular typology, there may be gaps in access/connectivity and thus new provision may still be required.

Delivering new open space provision

There are a number of opportunities for delivering new facilities through new development – developer contributions and (S106 and CIL), biodiversity net gain and to a lesser extent through capital and grant funding.

Developer Contributions - Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Planning Obligations (S106)

CIL came into effect in Wiltshire on 18 May 2015 and is charged on all CIL liable development granted planning permission on or after this date.

The Community infrastructure levy (CIL) is a charge that local authorities in England can place on development in their area. The money generated through the levy contributes towards the funding of infrastructure to support growth. CIL is applied as a charge on each square metre of new development and will be payable by most developers in Wiltshire. CIL will be used to help fund infrastructure projects on the Wiltshire Regulation 123 List. The intention behind CIL is that it will contribute towards the funding of infrastructure to support the cumulative impact of development across the county. Planning obligations (S106 Contributions) will be used to mitigate the site-specific impact of development and deliver affordable housing.

The Council will generally mitigate the site specific impact of development on Wiltshire's open space and green infrastructure through planning obligations (S106). CIL may be used to fund open space and green infrastructure projects.

New development will be required to provide on-site open space in line with the standards outlined in this study. Whilst not all developments will be of a size that will generate the requirement for on-site open space (see Table 31), when considering future housing numbers for Wiltshire, there will be many that will. This study should be used to make local decisions about where and when new on-site provision will be required. As identified in Section 7.2, every urban and rural analysis area has a shortfall in at least one typology of open space, therefore, the starting point for new housing (of a certain size – see Table 31 for recommended thresholds) is to assume that some form of on-site open space provision would be required.

As part of this study, costings for S106 developer contributions have been provided in Section 8.7, which the Council may wish to adopt.

Figure 24 shows an example flow chart/decision making process to help developers/council officers determine the need for on or off-site provision of open space. This is only a guide and requirements will be determined on a case by case basis using the standards and assessment within this study. Where possible, this should be determined through pre-application discussions with the applicable council.

Biodiversity net gain

Biodiversity Net Gain is an approach to development that leaves biodiversity in a better state than before. Where a development has an impact on biodiversity it encourages developers to provide an increase in appropriate natural habitat and ecological features over and above that being affected in such a way it is hoped that the current loss of biodiversity through development will be halted and ecological networks can be restored. Mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain to compensate for loss of biodiversity through development is set to become a part of planning in late 2023 through requirements within the Environment Act 2021 which was ratified in November 2021. Once enacted, this will require any development under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (except Permitted Development and Householder Applications) to evidence a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity value, delivered through habitat creation or enhancement either on-site, off-site or through biodiversity credits, and 30 years management of those habitats. Further to this, BNG is supported within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which states that planning policies and decisions 'should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures.'

Capital and grant funding

Although the availability of capital and grant funding has diminished in recent years, nevertheless funding does become available for providing facilities for open space, sport and recreation. National and governing bodies for individual sports should be consulted where new infrastructure is required, such as changing rooms and sports pitches. Environmental grants and stewardship schemes are available for managing natural green space. As neighbourhood plans are developed and open space priorities are established within these, funding requirements will be identified and delivery through grant funding could be considered.
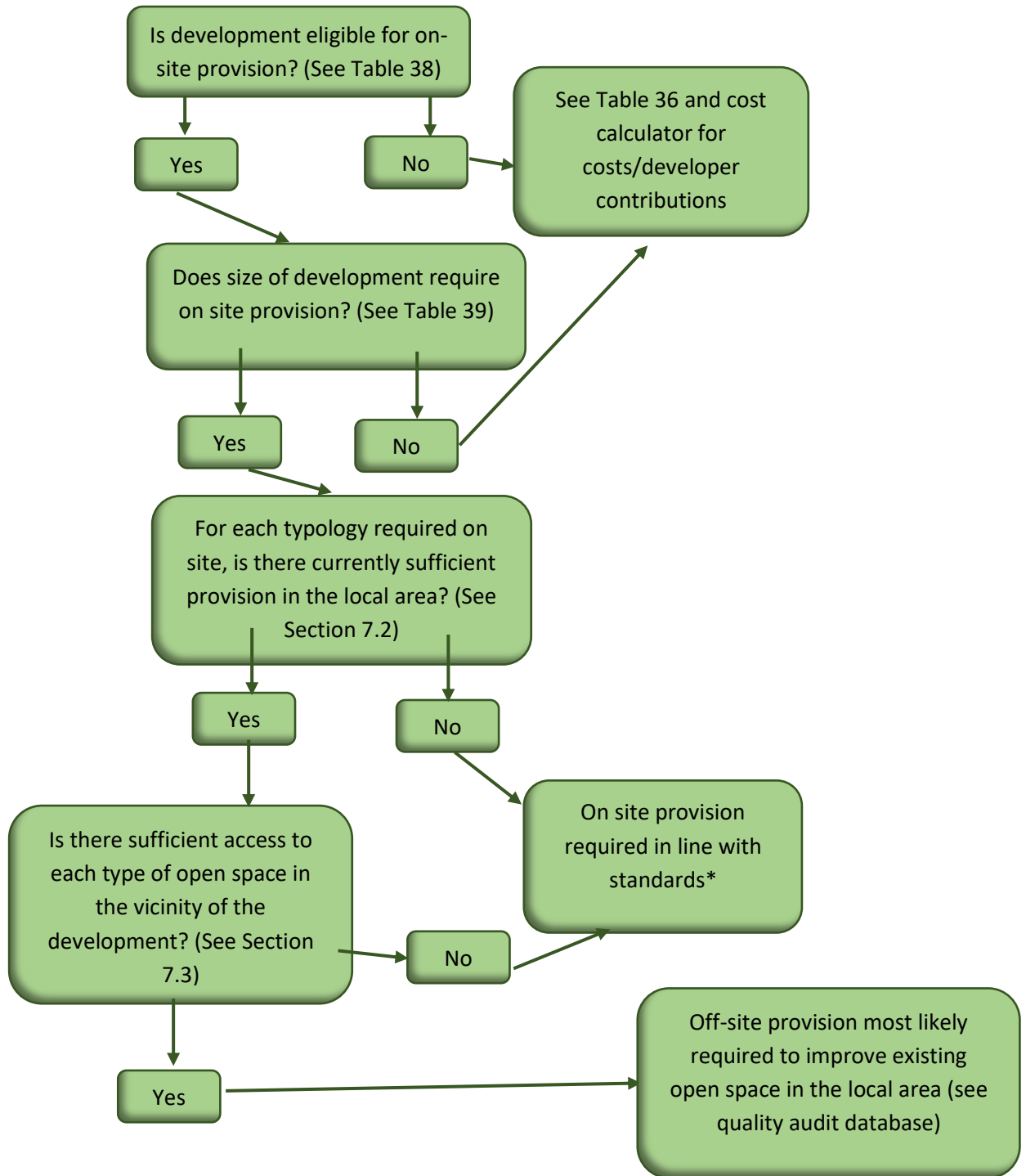
*if it is not feasible to deliver open space on site due to exceptional circumstances e.g., viability or land availability, then potential to make off site provision will be considered on a case by case basis.

Figure 24 Decision making process for on-site provision of open space, or off-site contributions to enhance existing open space

Open Space Policy Direction (new provision of open space):

OS9   New provision of open space will be required as part of new residential development (in accordance with the flow chart at Figure 23). Where on-site provision is required, it should be provided in line with the proposed open space standards.

Where on-site provision is deemed impractical, or not required e.g., for small sites, consideration will be given to opportunities for off-site provision and/or improvements.

Improvements to existing open space will be considered first in the parish within which the development is located, then in open spaces in neighbouring parishes. open spaces requiring improvements will be identified using the results from the 2023 and 2015 quality audits (those sites which were assessed as being of poor or average quality being the highest priority) and also from site management plans and the council's own knowledge of their sites. The Council may also require an update quality assessment for potential sites for off-site improvement.

8.6   Facilities that are surplus to requirement

In addition to the strategic options outlined above, consideration should also be given to facilities that are surplus to requirement. There are important issues to resolve in terms of getting the correct balance of open space across the study area before any disposal can be contemplated. Whilst there is under provision relative to the minimum standards in several areas, there are other areas where provision compares favourably with the standards. However, it is once again emphasised that the proposed standards are for *minimum* levels of provision. Where the supply of open space exceeds the quantity standard, this does not mean it is surplus to requirement as the site may form an important part of the GI network and have biodiversity value. Factors to be taken into account before any decision to release open space for alternative uses can be taken include:

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

Figure 25 and the associated paragraphs below suggests an outline of the decision process that should be followed before the development/alternative use of an open space can be seriously contemplated. This can be used by development control and developers to help guide decision making.
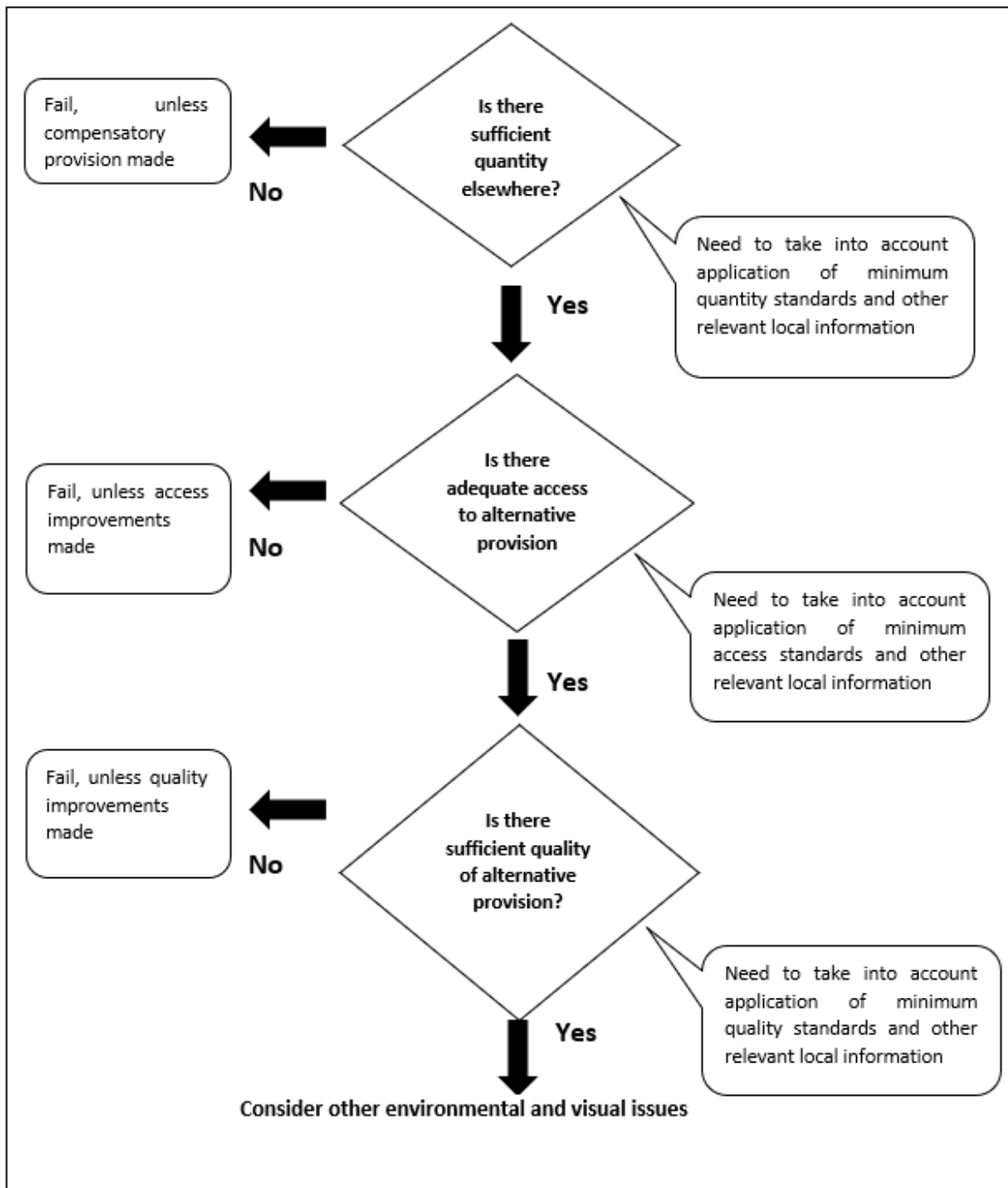
Figure 25 Outline decision making process in relation to sanctioning (re)development of open space

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

Q. Is there sufficient quantity?

A. If the minimum quantitative standard for amenity green space is exceeded in a defined geographical area, the relative provision of other forms of open space must then be considered. (Amenity green space can in principle be converted into other forms of open space where the need arises). If a) provision meets the minimum quantitative standard; b) there is no significant local information suggesting a need to retain the site; and c) there is not a perceived lack of other forms of open space. The next question can be addressed.

Q. Is there adequate access to alternative provision?

A. Within the defined geographical area there may be good overall provision of amenity green space relative to the quantity standard, but is it in the right place and can it be easily reached? Applying the accessibility component of the

minimum standards will help to answer this question. If other similar open space cannot be easily reached, the site's disposal for other uses may be unacceptable.

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

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

The 2023 and 2015 quality audit provide a useful starting point for identifying and prioritising open spaces that require improvements. Those open spaces which have existing quality scores of C or D (moderate/poor), and 'potential' scores of A, B or C have the highest potential for improvement. If existing open spaces in the vicinity of new development are of poor/moderate quality, then funding for their improvement (e.g., access improvements, signage, improvements to facilities and/or habitats – as recommended in the 2023 and 2015 quality audit spreadsheets provided to Wiltshire Council) would need to be secured before any 'surplus' in a particular open space typology could be considered. The Council may also require updated quality assessments of open spaces in the vicinity of the development, in order to identify up-to-date priorities and improvements needed.

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

8.7   Developer Contributions

This section draws on the policy recommendations in the previous section and outlines a process for calculating developer contributions for on and off-site provision and recommendations for management and maintenance procedures and costs.

8.7.1   S106 and CIL

This section sets out higher level strategic recommendations and recommends an approach to developer contributions which can be used to inform policy for both on-site and off-site contributions.

CIL is a fixed, non-negotiable charge on new development. The amount is based upon the size of a development and is charged in pounds per square metre. It varies according to the type of development (e.g., residential, retail or employment uses) and in which area of Wiltshire the development takes place. The Wiltshire CIL Charging Schedule sets out the CIL rates that apply to different types of development in different parts of the county.

The intention behind CIL is that it will contribute towards the funding of infrastructure (on the Wiltshire Regulation 123 List, taken from the Wiltshire Infrastructure Delivery Plan) to support the cumulative impact of development across the county. Planning obligations (S106) will be used to mitigate the site-specific impact of development and deliver affordable housing.

1)   *Capital cost of providing open space*

In order to calculate developer contributions (through a S106 agreement) for facilities, a methodology has been adopted which calculates how much it would cost Wiltshire Council to provide them. These costs have been calculated by Ethos Environmental Planning using Spon's[31]. A summary of the costs are outlined in Table 33 below. These are guidance costs, which may be adopted by Wiltshire Council, however up-to-date costings may also be considered from other sources and may include indexation to cover inflation.

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[31] Spon's Architects' and Builders' Price Book 2021

Contributions towards the provision or improvement of open space are calculated using the capital cost of provision. The same charges apply to both provision of new facilities and the upgrading/improvement of existing facilities, which more often than not includes new provision. Contribution per person is therefore taken to be a reasonable measure of that impact, irrespective of whether new provision or improvement of existing facilities is required. The calculated costs have drawn on the standards of provision for urban areas (summarised in Table 18), as this is where the majority of proposed growth is planned.

Table 36 Costs for providing open space

Typology	Standard (m²) per person	Cost of provision	
		Cost / m²	Contribution per person
Allotments	2.5	£34.20	£85.5
Parks and Recreation grounds[32]	11	£116.53	£1,281.83
Play Space (Children)	2.5	£149.91	£374.77
Play Space (Youth)	3	£163.30	£489.90
Amenity green space	9	£16.40	£147.60
Accessible Natural green space	18	£6.20	£111.60
Total	**46**		**£2,491.20**

Table 28 shows that it costs £2,491.20 per person to provide new open space to meet the Wiltshire standard for open space in full[33]. These calculations may be used to calculate developer contributions for on-site provision and where required for off-site contributions. Costs should be updated at least annually to account for inflation based on the Bank of England inflation rate. **Viability issues will be taken into account when considering the on and off-site contributions that would be required, on a case by case basis.**

A **cost calculator** has been provided to the Council so that the on and off-site requirements for open space can be calculated for different sized developments. This cost calculator is a recommendation by Ethos that might be taken further or developed by the Council. It provides an example of how costs might be calculated, but site circumstances will also need to be taken into account e.g., topography.

The cost calculator is based on the following assumptions:

- Average household size of 2.3 persons per dwelling
- The open space quantity standards (see Table 18)
- The cost of open space per m2 (see Table 33)
- Thresholds for on-site provision (see Table 36)

Cost calculator: Example

A housing development of 100 dwellings (with an average household size of 2.3 persons per dwelling) would generate the following minimum requirements for open space. Both the required quantity for on-site provision, and the capital

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[32] The Wiltshire Playing Pitch Strategy (adopted 2017) indicates how funding is to be spent in each Community Area. In some cases, the target site is not always clear cut, and in these circumstances the Council will defer to parish/town council's and their respective Neighbourhood plans.

[33] These costs do <u>not</u> include land costs or professional fees such as contract administration, maintenance and handover. The cost of provision for parks and recreation grounds does <u>not</u> include the cost of providing playing pitches or fixed facilities such as tennis or bowls, which are additional costs and would need to be agreed in addition to the open space costs. Costs of a range of types of facilities are set out in Sport England's Kitbag Facility Costs: https://www.sportengland.org/media/13346/facility-costs-q2-18.pdf

costs for off-site provision/enhancement are shown (for example, if open space provision on site is not feasible, or not required due to exiting provision in the vicinity):

- 0.0575 ha/575 sqm of allotments (£19,665)
- 0.2070 ha/2070 sqm of amenity green space (£33,948)
- 0.2530ha/2530 sqm of parks and recreation grounds (£294,821)
- 0.0690ha/690 sqm of youth play space (£112,677)
- 0.0575 ha/575 sqm of equipped children's play space (£86,198)
- 0.4140 ha/4140 sqm of accessible natural green space (£25,668)

A screenshot from the cost calculator is provided below:

Number of dwellings	Enter number	Equivalent people	Open Space requirement	Required msq per person	Cost per msq	Total requirement (msq)	Cost of provision (£)	On site required?	Required quantity on site (msq)	Enter actual provision on site (msq)	Value of provision	Contribution required
1 bed		0	*Allotments*	2.5	34.20	575.00	£19,665	Y	575	0	0	£19,665
2 bed		0	*Amenity Green Space*	9	16.40	2,070.00	£33,948	Y	2,070	0	0	£33,948
3 bed		0	*Parks & Recreation Grounds*	11	116.53	2,530.00	£294,821	Y	2,530	0	0	£294,821
4 bed		0	*Play Space (Children)*	2.5	149.91	575.00	£86,198	Y	575	0	0	£86,198
5 bed		0	*Play Space (Youth)*	3	163.30	690.00	£112,677	Y	690	0	0	£112,677
Elderley 1 bed		0	*Natural Green Space*	18	6.20	4,140.00	£25,668	Y	4,140	0	0	£25,668
Elderley 2 bed		0										
TOTAL	100	230		46.00		10,580	£572,977		10,580		0	£572,977

Figure 26 Screenshot from cost calculator

Recreation Space has not been included separately in the cost calculator, as the requirements/costs will depend on the form of recreation space being delivered.

2) *Maintenance Contributions for on-site provision*

Where new open space is provided, the developer would be expected to provide the open space and either maintain the open space through a management company, or if, the site is to be adopted by the Local Authority, then maintenance fees of at least 20 years will be included in the Section 106 legal agreement. If the open space is maintained by a Management Company, then the open space must be publicly accessible in perpetuity. It is expected that a management plan for the open space would be submitted and approved by the council as a planning condition or part of the legal agreement. Details of how the Management Company will be established and managed, and the provisions put in place should the management company fail etc. would also need to be approved by the council.

In the event that the open space would be adopted by the council/parish council, they may be willing to accept a commuted sum and make arrangements for management of the open space. The amount payable for the commuted sum may be calculated using the figures in Table 34 below. These figures do not include professional fees, set up costs and admin etc. The figures in Table 34 provide guidance on how much it costs to maintain open space per metre squared. The costs have been provided from maintenance costs estimated by Ethos Environmental Planning using Spon's 2020[34], and include lifecycle replacement costs. An inflation rate based on the Bank of England inflation rate should be applied. As with the capital costs, these costs may be reviewed and updated by the Council.

Table 37 Maintenance costs for open space

Typology	Cost/sq. m per annum
Play Space (Children)	£13.34
Play Space (Youth)	£9.21
Parks and Recreation Grounds	£3.47

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[34] Spon's Architects' and Builders' Price Book 2020.

Amenity Green Space/Accessible Natural Green Space	£0.77
Allotments	£0.76

3)   Eligible types of development for on-site provision

Table 35 acts as a guide showing the types of housing that could be considered eligible for making contributions towards open space to meet the needs of future occupants.

Table 38 Eligible types of residential development

Category	Open Market Housing / Flats	Affordable Housing *	Housing for the active elderly	Permanent mobile homes
Play Space	✔	?	×	✔
Outdoor Sports Space	✔	?	✔	✔
Parks and Gardens	✔	?	✔	✔
Amenity Open Space	✔	?	✔	✔
Natural Green Space	✔	?	✔	✔
Allotments	✔	?	✔	✔

* Should recognise that affordable housing generates a need for new green infrastructure, but it is a policy decision as to whether GI contributions should be provided]. Includes agricultural workers' dwellings. Excludes extensions (for administrative reasons). Excludes replacement dwellings and nursing house types.

4)   Thresholds for provision

The required open space, sport and recreation facilities should in the first instance be provided on-site, with off-site provision/contributions only to be considered where on-site provision is not possible/practicable.

Where facilities are to be provided on-site, Wiltshire Council will expect the developer to provide the land for the facility and either:

- Design and build the provision to the satisfaction of the Council; or
- Make a financial contribution to the Council so that it may arrange for the construction and development of the required facility.

The decision on whether facility provision is to be on-site, off-site or both depends on the following considerations[35]:

- The scale of the proposed development and site area;
- The suitability of a site reflecting, for example, its topography or flood risk;
- The existing provision of facilities within the neighbourhood and/or the sub area;
- Other sites in the neighbourhood where additional provision is proposed;
- Existing access to facilities within the parish/neighbourhood; and
- Additional natural capital benefits and the ecosystem services it provides to people such as air quality regulation and climate regulation.

The table below provides a guide to assess which scales development sites generate a need for facilities in the categories listed to be provided on-site. The flow chart at Figure 23 should also be referred to, as it shows how the quantity, accessibility and quality analysis needs to be taken into account e.g., if a development is of a size that generates the need for on-site provision of open space, but there is sufficient provision of open space typology within the vicinity, then consideration will be given to improving existing facilities as an alternative to new on-site provision.

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[35] Also see flow chart at Figure 8.1

Where new development would result in less than 0.2 ha of amenity green space, this should be provided as a single open space, in order to avoid a proliferation of small spaces with limited recreational value.

While the table below acts as a useful guide to the recommended types of provision in relation to the size of a scheme, each proposal will be considered on a site by site basis, with on-site provision always to be considered as the first solution. The council require flexibility over what type of open space is required on site based on the assessment of need - quantity, quality and access standards and analysis within this Study. For example, the requirement for open space may be assessed against the total requirement/standard for new provision (4.6 ha/1000), and the form of the open space provision would depend on the existing quantity, quality, and access analysis in the local area. For example, as all types of open space are required on site from 50 dwellings, if the quantity, access and quality analysis revealed sufficient provision of parks and recreation grounds, children's play space and youth play space, then the requirement for 4.6ha/1000 may be split between amenity green space and allotments.

At 20-49 dwellings, amenity green space is going to be the main form of open space provision, however, as with all open spaces, it should be designed to be multifunctional, providing 'playable' space (see Section 6.4) in addition to providing biodiversity value and perhaps even food growing opportunities e.g., a community orchard.

Developers are encouraged to use the standards for innovative design of open space (and green and blue infrastructure) as part of their developments.

Table 39 Requirement for open space

Type of Provision	1-19 dwellings	20-49 dwellings	50+ dwellings
Allotments (Urban and rural)	X	X	✓
Amenity Green Space (Urban)	X	✓	✓
Parks Sports and Recreation Grounds (Urban)	X	X	✓
Play Space (Children) (Urban and Rural)	X	X	✓
Play Space (Youth) (Urban and Rural)	X	X	✓
Accessible natural green space	X	X	✓
Recreation Space (Rural)	X	✓	✓

KEY: ✓ on-site provision normally sought
X off-site provision/improvements to existing open space normally required

9.0   CONCLUSION

9.1   Summary

This study provides a robust analysis of the status of open space within Wiltshire in 2020. It includes an audit of provision and stakeholder consultation, with findings used to produce new recommended standards for access and quantity, with quality standards also recommended based on Green Flag[36] criteria. The study also includes a suite of policy recommendations and methodologies for interpreting and informing the needs for the assessed typologies over the proposed revised plan period, as well as process for calculating developer contributions. It should be read in conjunction with the area profiles in Part 2 of this report.

The role and value of open space in contributing to the delivery of national and local priorities and targets is clear from this assessment. It is important that the policies and recommendations included within this assessment are considered for inclusion in the revised Local Plan, and acknowledged in relevant strategies and policy documents, as and when they are reviewed. Council officers and elected members play a pivotal role in adopting and promoting the recommendations within this assessment and ensuring that key stakeholders such as town and parish councils, community groups and agents and developers are suitably informed and engaged in the open space process.

9.2   Comparison to 2015 Study

The table below compares the quantity (ha) of open space recorded in the 2020 open space mapping, to the 2015 study, by typology and across urban and rural analysis areas. As can be seen, in general the quantity of each open space typology has increased since 2015. It is worth noting that this may not be due to an actual increase in provision but could be down to improvements in the GIS review and mapping.

Some changes in provision may be due to how an open space is recorded, or changes in management – for example, the line between amenity green space and accessible natural green space can often be blurred, with both types of open space often having elements of the other. There was also a large quantity of open space recorded as accessible natural green space in the 2015 study compared to the 2020 study, which classified much more natural green space as limited access.

A thorough review of the desktop mapping was undertaken in 2020 by Wiltshire Council, through a detailed review of the 2015 mapping, which was informed by the results of questionnaires sent to town and parish councils. This has underpinned this 2020 Open Space Assessment Update. The Council intend to manage and update the mapping of open space on a regular basis through the thorough monitoring of planning permissions that alter the quantum of open space. This information will be used to ensure that the GIS database remains as up to date as possible in order to inform any future re-fresh of the assessment.

Table 40 Comparison of quantity of open space (ha) between 2020 and 2015 studies

Typology	2020 Urban Analysis Areas (ha)	2020 Rural Analysis Areas (ha)	2015 Urban Analysis Areas (ha)	2015 Rural Analysis Areas
Allotments	65.20	29.79	55.30	26.53
Amenity Green Space	382.54	137.49	467.36	466.01***
Parks and Recreation Grounds (combined)	362.66	189.3	292.16	
Parks and Recreation Grounds	*343.33*	*183.15*	*271.63**	
Outdoor sport (fixed)	*19.34*	*6.15*	*16.75*	
Play Space (Children)	20.57	8.05	14.09	8.71****

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[36] https://www.greenflagaward.org/how-it-works/judging-criteria/

Play Space (Youth)	5.75	2.08	4.64	
Accessible natural green space	995.60	4212.10	2528.1	4907.01
Outdoor sport (private)	236.34	109.25	89.15**	
Natural green space (limited access)	373.32	323.99	99.14	173.7
Churchyards and cemeteries	93.36	80.06	83.39	81.24
Education	384.39	164.30	375.62	186.26

*includes pitches
** excludes golf courses
*** Recreation space (Parks and Amenity Green Space combined)
**** Children and Youth Play Space combined

9.3 Summary of quantity and access standards

The tables below summarise the quantity and access standards that have been recommended as part of this study. Overall, the quantity standards recommended are higher than in the 2015 study, reflecting the policy and strategy review and research undertaken as part of this study, which demonstrates the importance of open space in helping to meet key priorities around health and wellbeing, and the climate and ecological emergency.

Although the standards for amenity green space (and recreation space in rural areas)[37] are slightly lower than the 2015 recommendations, these standards are justified based on existing levels of provision and the results of the consultation undertaken in 2015 and 2020. The addition of a quantity standard for the new provision of accessible natural green space (rather than combining it with the amenity green space standard as was recommended in 2015), also increases the overall provision of open space and reflects the need for more biodiverse spaces that provide benefits for both people and the environment. The quantity standards for children and youth play space and allotments have also been increased to reflect national guidelines and local priorities for reducing inequalities and improving health and wellbeing.

Urban analysis areas

Table 41 Summary of urban analysis area standards

Typology	Quantity standard (ha/1000 population) for analysing Existing Provision	Quantity standard (ha/1000) for New Provision	Access standard	Recommended thresholds for on-site provision
Allotments	0.25	0.25	480 metres straight line or 10 minutes' walk time	50+ dwellings
Amenity Green Space	0.9	0.9	480 metres straight line or 10 minutes' walk time	20+ dwellings
Parks and Recreation Grounds	1.1	1.1	600 metres straight line or 12-13 minutes' walk time	50+ dwellings

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[37] Although the standard for parks and recreation grounds appears slightly lower (1.1ha/1000 compared to 1.2ha/1000 in 2015, the 2015 standard included the provision of private sports grounds, which this study does not, as the focus is on freely accessible public open space).

Play Space (Children)	0.25	0.25	480 metres straight line or 10 minutes' walk time	50+ dwellings
Play Space (Youth)	0.30	0.30	600 metres straight line or 12-13 minutes' walk time	50+ dwellings
Natural Green Space	N/A – use access standards to identify key gaps.	1.8 (including SUDs)	720 metres straight line or 15 minutes' walk time (for sites above 0.2ha) Natural England ANGSt	50+ dwellings
Total Multi-functional Open Space		**4.6**		

Rural analysis areas

Table 42 Summary of rural analysis area standards

Typology	Quantity standard (ha/1000 population) For analysing Existing Provision	Recommended Parish size threshold for analysing Existing Provision	Quantity standard (ha/1000) for New Provision	Access standard	Recommended thresholds for on-site provision
Allotments	0.25	1000	0.25	480 metres straight line or 10 minutes' walk time	50+ dwellings
Recreation Space*	2.0	300	2.0	600 metres straight line or 12-13 minutes' walk time	20+ dwellings
Play Space (Children)	0.25	500	0.55 (combined standard for children and youth play space).	480 metres straight line or 10 minutes' walk time	50+ dwellings
Play Space (Youth)	0.30	1000	See combined standard above for new provision.	600 metres straight line or 12-13 minutes' walk time	50+ dwellings
Natural Green Space	N/A – use access standards to identify key gaps.	N/A	1.8 (including SuDs)	720 metres straight line or 15 minutes' walk time (for sites above 0.2ha) Natural England ANGSt	50+ dwellings

Total Multi-functional Open Space			4.6		

*Can either be met by park and recreation grounds and/or amenity green space.

9.4   Summary of key policy areas

The policies and recommendations that are made in the study identify where new provision is required and where provision needs to be enhanced, protected or relocated, or where there may be potential for alternative use (in exceptional circumstances). The following identifies the key findings for open space:

- New provision: Open space should be provided as part of new development in line with the recommended Wiltshire quantity, quality and access standards. Where it is not practical to provide open space on site, there should be new provision off site or enhancement to existing facilities.
- Enhanced provision: Key sites for improvement have been identified through the study, and opportunities to improve sites through development and also external funding should be sought.
- Protected provision: Public open space should be afforded protection through planning policy. Due to the shortfalls in supply and/or access across the study area, there is little opportunity for disposing of open space, unless there is a greater community need and/or alternative provision can be provided.
- Relocated provision: With significant variation in supply across Wiltshire, neighbourhood plans need to consider addressing the 'balance' between different types of open space.
- Facilities that are surplus to requirement: A process for considering open space that may have potential for alternative use has been set out, however, considering the shortfalls in open space across the study area and the value of accessible natural green space in terms of green infrastructure functions and benefits (not assessed through this study, but highlighted through the research, policy review and consultation undertaken), this is unlikely to be justifiable.

The study also provides a set of robust capital and maintenance costs and a cost calculator that the council can consider to inform the requirements for developer contributions.