

# Cheshire West and Chester Council Open Space Audit and Assessment

## Appendix D – Setting Local Standards





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# 1. Setting Standards Process

01

## Introduction

This section summarises the processes for setting standards as part of the PPG17 Study.

Standards are required to be set for:

- Accessibility – the distance that residents expect to travel to reach each type of open space (and the mode of transport that they would expect to use)
- Quantity – the amount of provision (in hectares) that would be expected for each type of open space per 1000 population
- Quality – the key features that are important to residents for each type of open space.

In order to ensure that in line with PPG17, the standards that are set are robust and derived directly from the findings of the consultation, a detailed process has been followed. The processes used are set out in Tables 1 – 4 and give consideration to national standards as well as current provision and consultation findings.

Standards are set for the following types of open space:

- Parks and Gardens
- Amenity Green Spaces
- Provision for children
- Provision for young people
- Outdoor Sports Facilities

- Allotments
- Natural and Semi Natural Open Spaces.

The background evidence supporting the standards set is contained in this document. The standards and justifications for these standards are found in the body of the main report.

### Accessibility Standards

The following issues are considered in the preparation of local accessibility standards.

**Table 1 – Accessibility Standards Process**

Field Collected	Definition
Definition	Open space definition.
National standards	Details of any existing national standards for each typology usually provided by national organisations e.g. 'Fields for Trust' (formally NPFA) for playing pitches.
Local standards	Any existing local standards that will need to be taken into account and used as guidance when setting new local standards.
Consultation (household survey)	Statistical information collected from the household survey. This is one of the most important elements as it is directly representative of the local needs of residents.
Consultation (other)	Any other qualitative consultation / information that has been extracted on local needs in terms of accessibility to provision e.g. from workshop sessions and local strategic documents.
Standard	Recommended Standard
Justification	

Accessibility standards are set in the form of distances. For simplicity, it is essential to associate a walk time with a straight line distance.

National Guidelines reduce actual distances into straight line distances by a 40% reduction. This is to allow for the fact that routes

to open spaces are not straight-line distances but more complex. The 40% reduction is based on robust research by the NPFA in numerous areas using a representative sample of pedestrian routes. The assumed distances are therefore set out overleaf.

**Table 2 – Travel Distance Assumptions**

Time (minutes)	Miles	Metres	Metres (straight line to be mapped)
5	0.25	400	240
10	0.5	800	480
15	0.75	1200	720
20	1	1600	960
25	1.25	2000	1200
30	1.5	2400	1440

### Quantity Standards

Quantity standards are set once accessibility standards have been agreed, as the amount of facilities required depends upon the distance that residents should expect to travel to reach the facility. The key considerations when setting quantity standards are summarised overleaf in Table 3.

**Table 3 – Quantity Standards Process**

Field Collected	Definition
National standards	Details of any existing national standards for each typology usually provided by national organisations e.g. 'Fields for Trust' (formally NPFA) for playing pitches.
Local standards	There may be some existing local standards that will need to be taken into account and used as a benchmark when setting new local standards.
Current provision (per 1000 population)	This is the current provision within the local authority area.
Consultation	Statistical information derived from local consultation.
Consultation comments	<p>A summary of reasons behind people's choices and opinions. PPG 17 indicates that where local provision is regarded as inadequate it is important to establish why this is the case. The feeling of deficiency can sometimes be due to qualitative issues of existing open space sites rather than actual quantity issues.</p> <p>Any other qualitative consultation / information that has been extracted on local needs in terms of quantity of provision e.g. from neighbourhood drop-in sessions and local strategic documents is also included in this section.</p>
Distribution of existing provision	A brief summary of the distribution of existing provision based on the application of accessibility standards.
Recommendation	Recommended local standard based on the evidence collected
Justification	Justification and rationale behind local standard once it has been agreed.

Comments

## Quality standards

Table 4 – Quality Standards Process

Field Collected	Definition
National standards and / or benchmarks	Details of any existing national standards for each typology usually provided by national organisations e.g. 'Fields in Trust' (formally NPFA) for playing pitches.
Local standards	There maybe some existing local standards that will need to be taken into account and used as guidance when setting new local standards.
Benchmarking against other local authorities (levels of satisfaction)	These are figures detailing satisfaction levels of other authorities to the quality of their open space.
Consultation – household survey	Results from the household survey with regards to users of each typology in relation to their aspirations and needs and existing quality experiences.
Consultation - other	Results from all the consultations undertaken with regards the quality issues for each typology.

For each typology, the recommended features have been derived directly from local consultations, where residents were asked to consider their opinions on the quality of sites in their local area and also to highlight the key features of a good quality site for each typology. Good practice derived from national standards as well as the feedback from site visits.

For each typology, these key features have been divided into those that are essential, and those that are desirable. National standards for provision and good practice examples for the rest of the country have also been taken into account as part of these recommendations.

These lists of features, once approved, will make up the quality vision (as required by PPG17) that should be applied to all new sites and should inform the enhancement of existing sites.

For each typology, two lists are therefore provided. An example is set out overleaf:

Essential	Desirable
Clean and litter free	Toilets
Provision of seats	A range of equipment
Provision of bins	An information board

Comments



## 2. Parks and Gardens

02

### Definition

This type of open space (as defined by PPG17) includes country parks, urban parks and formal gardens that provide opportunities for various informal recreation and community events.

Examples of such facilities across the Borough include:

- Grosvenor Park, Chester
- Castle Park, Frodsham
- Whitby Park, Ellesmere Port

Parks often contain a variety of facilities and amenities, including some that fall within different categories of open space (e.g. children's play facilities, sport pitches and wildlife areas). For classification purposes, the different open spaces within parks have been separated according to the PPG17 typology under which they most appropriately fall. Large green areas, footpaths, less dense woodland will provide the park area (total hectares) and the other facilities will be calculated separately under their own typology classification. This ensures that open space sites are not counted twice within this study and that the Council cannot be challenged on the quantity of provision that is requested.

### Overall Views and Perceptions of Parks and Gardens

Issue	Key Findings
Quantity	Overall positive perceptions on the quantity of both formal and country parks. Some consultations however identify areas where new provision may be required, including Willaston, Stanney Oaks, Ellesmere Port and Winsford. On the whole, access to the parks and the quality of facilities are likely to take higher priority than new provision. The importance of protecting existing parks was however emphasised throughout consultations. Formal parks are not expected locally in smaller settlements.

Quality	<p>On the whole, views on the quality of provision are positive. Parks are seen as multi functional open spaces and a wide variety of facilities is expected. Cleanliness and maintenance is the most important feature. Other expectations include trees / flowers, appropriate and level footpaths, seating, parking, dog free areas and signage. Events at parks were also suggested by a variety of stakeholders. Although personal safety did not arise as a big issue, rangers and / or CCTV were felt to be beneficial. The importance of providing facilities for cycle storage was also highlighted and particularly in country parks, it is important to ensure that there is sufficient and appropriate space for both pedestrians and cyclists.</p>
Accessibility	<p>Location / proximity to the home is a key determinant of usage.</p> <p>Access was one of the most important issues raised, particularly for country parks, and it was suggested that additional transport routes and cycle tracks are required. Parks should be part of the overall network of connected open spaces and improving links within and between parks will be as important as improvements to the qualitative and quantitative elements of provision.</p> <p>In the urban areas, parks are expected to be found within walking distance from the home, while in the more rural parts, it is expected that these sites will be accessible by car / bike. It is important that the facilities at the site reflect the modes of transport that will be used to get there.</p> <p>Connectivity between different types of space, and the importance of green corridors in linking open spaces together emerged as one of the key priorities. This will need to be central to future thinking around open space, sport and recreation facilities.</p>
General	<p>Other issues which need to be addressed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• importance of partnership working and support for voluntary groups</li> <li>• opportunities to use parks as part of wider health programmes – as alternative opportunities to formal sport</li> <li>• the need to maintain the identity of each park while ensuring that they are of a consistent standard (including parking policies).</li> </ul>

## Accessibility Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National standards	None.
Local standards	Chester City Council – 15 minute walk Vale Royal Borough Council – 15 minute walk EPNBC – n/a

Comments

Household survey findings

**Usage**

3% of respondents to the household survey visit parks daily and a further 15% visit them once per week or more. Residents in the urban wards use formal parks more frequently than those in the rural wards, reflecting findings that proximity to the home is a key determinant of use.

Access relates directly to views on the quantity of provision. Those that feel that provision is insufficient generally do not have local access to a park.

21% of residents visit country parks at least once a week. Again supporting the emphasis on location, slightly more residents in the rural wards use country parks than those in the urban wards reflecting the location of country parks in the Borough.

**Formal Parks**

Residents in the urban areas expect local access to country parks.

***Current travel patterns***

61% walk, 11% travel by public transport and the remainder travel by car. The majority of users (66%) travel for up to 15 minutes.

***Preferred travel patterns***

**Overall** - 47% walk, 41% car and 9% public transport.

Walk – average travel time is 14 minutes and the most common travel time is 10 minutes.

Drive - average travel time is 16 minutes and the most common travel time is 10 minutes.

Analysis of quartiles demonstrates that 75% of the population are willing to walk for 10 minutes to reach a park. (50% quartile is also 10).

**Urban wards** – 61% walk, 27% drive. Average walk time is 13 minutes and the modal response is 10 minutes.

**Rural wards** - 60% drive, 26% walk. Average travel time is 15 minutes and the most common response is 10 minutes.

Residents travel further to country parks and fewer expect them locally. Half of frequent users drive to access a site. 36% currently walk to access a country park. 85% travel for up to 20 minutes.

Other consultation findings	<p><b>Online survey</b></p> <p>Findings generally support those of the household survey.</p> <p>Current travel patterns: Half of frequent users walk to access a formal park. All users travel for less than 5 minutes.</p> <p>Expected travel patterns: 45% walk and 40% drive. Only 33% would expect to walk to a country park.</p> <p><b>Officers survey</b> - Expected travel patterns: 45% drive and 40% walk. Over 70% of respondents expect to reach a formal park within 15 minutes. For country parks, 64% would expect to drive.</p> <p><b>Children and young people's survey.</b> Over three quarters of users walk to access a site (77%). Local access to formal parks is a key determinant of usage for young people, with 45% of users indicating this is their favourite site because it is close to home.</p> <p><b>Friends group survey</b> - The need to ensure that formal parks are accessible for all by providing appropriate footpaths to and from sites was emphasised. The Wirral Way was felt to give good access to parks in Willaston.</p> <p><b>Workshops</b></p> <p><b>Older Residents' Network</b> – access to formal parks on foot and by public transport was identified as an issue within some settlements in the Borough. Car parking charges were identified as a barrier to access for some residents.</p> <p><b>External agencies</b> – improving access to and within formal parks was identified as important.</p>
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## Quantity Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National Standards	None
Local Standards	<p>Chester City Council - maintain existing level of provision and seek to increase provision where available strategically located space and resources allow. Existing level of provision is 0.17ha</p> <p>Vale Royal Borough Council – 0.9 ha per 1000 population</p> <p>EPNBC – n/a</p> <p>None of the local plans specifically reference parks</p>
Household Survey Consultation	<p><b>Formal Parks</b></p> <p>Overall the majority of residents are satisfied with the current provision of formal parks. Perceptions within the urban and rural wards are consistent.</p> <p>Overall - 59% sufficient (more than enough/about right), 34% insufficient (nearly enough/not enough)</p> <p>Urban wards – 59% sufficient, 31% insufficient</p> <p>Rural wards – 60% sufficient, 33% insufficient</p> <p>Access to formal parks is the key issue for residents. There is a clear trend, with those who state that provision is sufficient indicating that they have local access to a park, while those who view provision to be insufficient highlight a lack of parks in close proximity to their home.</p>

<p>Other consultations</p>	<p>Other consultations generally support the views of the household survey respondents.</p> <p><b>Online survey</b> - 58% sufficient, 34% insufficient. The majority of comments made by people who believe that there are not enough formal parks relate to a lack of provision within their area. In particular it is indicated that there is a lack of green space in Chester for the amount of people that live there.</p> <p><b>Officers survey</b> - 56% sufficient, 39% insufficient. A variety of reasons were however given for the perception that provision is insufficient. While many referenced that there are no formal parks near their homes (in particular officers living in Ellesmere Port and Winsford) it was also felt that there are opportunities to improve the functionality of existing parks. Satisfaction with the amount of country parks was slightly lower, with 52% satisfied. Reasons given by those who indicate that there is a lack of country parks predominantly focus around the need to travel substantial distances to reach a park or the lack of provision in their local area. Other comments made include the importance of ensuring that sites are accessible by public transport and the need to balance the needs of cyclists and walkers.</p> <p><b>Children and young people’s survey</b>- 39% of young people suggest that there are enough parks, and 8% think that there are more than enough. 50% of respondents however believe the overall quantity of parks to be insufficient.</p> <p><b>Community group survey</b> - Little Stanney Village Residents and Willaston Residents identified the need for additional formal parks within their settlements. In contrast, the Helsby Village Action Association indicated that there are sufficient parks and open spaces, highlighting the presence of the recreation grounds and Parish Fields. At the drop in session, the importance of protecting larger parks was reinforced.</p> <p><b>Workshops</b> - External agencies – enhancing the quality of and increasing access to formal parks was identified as more important than increasing the quantity of this type of open space. The large numbers of country parks were highlighted.</p> <p><b>Parish/Town Council</b> – no demand for additional parks was identified by any Parish or Town Councils.</p>
<p>Distribution of existing provision</p>	<p>No formal parks in the rural areas. Setting standard at recommended level, to be applied to urban only– deficiencies in Winsford NE and SW (*), Central and Westminster, Blacon (*) Grange and Rossmore, Sutton and Manor and Upton. * indicates residents also dissatisfied. There are no wards with a surplus where residents are dissatisfied.</p>

## Quality Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National Standards	None
Local Standards	<p>Chester City - All formal Parks and Gardens should be of 'good' quality or higher (scoring at least 50%). They should be clean and well-maintained sites that are visually attractive and provide opportunities for leisure and relaxation. The sites should have well-defined boundaries. They should also be safe and secure with appropriate lighting and provision of ancillary facilities, including benches and litter bins where appropriate. Sites should have appropriate, well designed and accessible interpretative signage where necessary e.g. parks with historic/heritage features. Management plans should also be designed and implemented where appropriate.</p> <p>Vale Royal BC – overarching standard set for open spaces: A clean, litter and dog fouling free area that is well-lit and provides a level of varied vegetation and biodiversity, including well-kept grass and other natural features where suitable. The site should be regularly maintained and have suitable parking in close proximity where appropriate. "</p>

Comments



Consultation –  
Household Survey

### Formal Parks

Perceptions overall are positive and parks are one of the most highly valued types of space.

**Overall** – positive perceptions are portrayed with parks generally rated as good (33%) or average (25%). 13% of respondents indicate that the quality of formal parks is poor.

**Urban wards** – the quality of formal parks is perceived to be good (34%) or average (26%). 13% of respondents consider the quality of this type of open space to be poor.

**Rural wards** – respondents consider the quality of formal parks to be good (30%) or average (24%). Only 13% of residents rate the quality of formal parks as poor or very poor.

**Aspirations:** clean and litter free, well kept grass and flowers trees and shrubs. It was also felt that larger parks sites should contain toilets, appropriate footpaths, seating and facilities for children and young people. Parking was also perceived to be important and a relatively large proportion of users indicated that a café is a key component of a park. The importance of having a dog free / dog walking area was also raised. Issues with inconsistency over parking fees were raised by residents.

The main problem experienced by frequent users is dog fouling. Other minor problems highlighted by current users are poor quality changing provision (for sports pitches), vandalism and litter.

Consultation - other

Other methods of consultation support the household survey, largely indicating that the quality of parks is high.

**Online survey** - The quality of formal parks is viewed positively, with almost 45% rating parks as good or very good. Only 13% think parks are poor or very poor. 62% rated country parks as good or very good. Footpaths, cleanliness and natural features were highlighted as the most important characteristics of a country park.

**Officers survey** - 41% indicate that the quality of provision is good, while a further 44% suggest that the quality of parks is average. However, the quality of formal parks was perceived to vary between different sites and settlements in the Borough. Most officers who considered provision to be poor suggested that parks were bland and lacking in infrastructure, or indicated that the infrastructure (particularly for children) needed improving. Events were perceived to be successful in the larger parks and it was felt that more should be provided. The provision of separate areas for dog walking was also suggested.

For those that use formal parks more frequently than any other, the key priorities highlighted with regards quality are cleanliness and maintenance (89%), the provision of dog bins (60%) footpaths (56%), natural features (56%), lack of litter (54%), access boards (47%) and the presence of information boards.

The key issues raised in parks related to dogs (18% consider dog fouling to be a major problem and a further 30% a minor problem) and litter (10% view litter as a significant problem and 23% a minor problem). The safety of equipment and grass cutting were viewed as the least problematic areas.

Over half of officers consider the quality of country parks to be good or very good and only 5% rate the quality of this typology as poor.

Few issues were identified regarding country parks, with only dog fouling being identified as a significant problem. The most important components of country parks were highlighted as being clean (86%), containing dog bins (64%), nature features (57%), parking (57%) and having level and even footpaths.

**Children and young people's survey** - 58% of young people indicate that quality is ok but could do with some improvements, and 6% suggest that there are no improvements needed. 32% of young people however indicated that parks needed extensive improvement. Suggestions for improvement include: more events and different activities, enhanced maintenance and improved facilities for young people.

## Site Visits

Parks were amongst the most highly scoring sites and the overall average score of parks (75%) is significantly higher than any other typology. Issues identified included quality of facilities within sites, potential to improve site functionality and appearance) bedding, quality of facilities, range of provision, footpaths. In particular, the quality of parks is significantly higher than the quality of other types of informal amenity space.

Typology	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Average
Parks and Gardens	44	97.5	75
Natural and Semi Natural Open Space	17	95	54
Amenity Green Space	17	95	53

Recommendations	Essential	Desirable
	Clean and litter free	Toilets (at larger sites)
	Well kept grass	Events/activities (particularly at larger sites)
	Flowers, trees and shrubs	Park Wardens / CCTV security measures
	Clearly defined and well maintained footpaths	Information boards
	Seating	Lighting
	Dog and litter bins	Car park and cycle storage facilities
	A range of facilities (ie provision for children, sports facilities)	

Comments

### 3. Amenity Green Space

03

#### Definition

Amenity green space is most commonly found in residential areas. It includes informal recreation spaces, green spaces and village greens in and around housing, with a primary purpose of providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work. Amenity green space is also often used for landscaping purposes.

The function of this type of open space overlaps with many others, in particular parks and gardens and natural areas, and it can also provide informal opportunities for children’s play where there are no other facilities.

#### Overall Views and Perceptions

Issue	Key Findings
Quantity	The split views relating to the quantity of provision suggest that amenity green space may be unevenly distributed across the Borough. Local green space was highlighted as important, however in some instances, the value of these spaces was perceived to be limited due to the quality of provision. It is clear that in some instances, perceptions of quantity were influenced by views on the quality of provision.
Quality	On the whole, the local nature of amenity spaces means that there are lower expectations with regards site infrastructure. Cleanliness and maintenance was highlighted as the key priority however basic infrastructure such as bins and benches is also expected. The key concerns at existing amenity spaces are dog fouling and litter. The personal safety concerns expressed at these sites should also be investigated, but may be a result of the anti social behaviour it was indicated that many of these sites suffer from. As well as being important for recreation, amenity green spaces are important from a landscape perspective. This is particularly important in the urban areas, as many residents indicated that there is insufficient green space for both recreation and landscape.
Accessibility	Amenity spaces are expected to be the most local type of space and should be accessible on foot. Few access issues were raised as almost all residents currently walk to such spaces.

Comments

### Accessibility Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National standards	None
Local standards	Chester City – 15 minutes walk. <span style="float: right;">Vale Royal BC – 10 minute walk</span>

Comments

Household survey findings	<p><b>Usage</b></p> <p>Amenity green space is a valuable local open space, with 24% of respondents indicating that they use this type of open space at least once a week. 29% of residents in the urban wards use amenity green space at least once a week, emphasising its importance to residents in the urban areas of the Borough.</p> <p>Analysis of both current user patterns and expectations demonstrate the view that amenity space should be provided locally.</p> <p><b>Current travel patterns</b></p> <p>Users walk to access a site (86%) with 50% travelling less than 5 minutes.</p> <p><b>Expected travel patterns</b></p> <p><b>Overall</b></p> <p>81% walk to amenity spaces</p> <p>Walk – average travel time is 9 minutes and the most common travel time is 5 minutes.</p> <p>There are few differences in expectation between the rural and urban wards.</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> - 83% walk, 10% drive. The average walk time is 9 minutes and the modal response is 5 minutes.</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> - 79% walk, 16% drive. The average walk time is 8 minutes and the most common response is 5 minutes.</p>
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Other consultation findings	<p>Other consultation findings also emphasise the expectation that sites will be local to the home.</p> <p><b>Online Survey</b> - Expected travel patterns: 58% walk and 18% drive.</p> <p><b>Officers survey</b> -Expected travel patterns: 66% walk and 34% drive. All but one respondent expect to travel for up to 5 minutes to access a site.</p> <p><b>Children and Young People’s Survey</b> – location is a key determinant of use</p>
Notes and Comments	<p>The interrelationship between parks, natural open spaces and amenity spaces will be considered as part of the application of standards. The standard set for parks and gardens will have implications for that set for amenity green space.</p>

### Quantity Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National Standards	None
Local Standards	<p>Chester City Council - 1ha per 1000 population. 25m2 per dwelling for new developments</p> <p>Vale Royal Borough Council – 0.5ha per 1000 population (rural) and 1.3ha per 1000 population (urban)</p> <p>Both of the above local plans suggest that a standard of 0.5ha per 1000 will be used.</p> <p>EPNBC – indicates that amenity space should be provided on all new developments.</p>



<p>Household Survey Consultation</p>	<p>Views are split between those who feel that provision is sufficient and those that think more is required.</p> <p><b>Overall</b> - 44% sufficient (more than enough/about right), 42% insufficient (nearly enough/not enough)</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> – 41% sufficient, 45% insufficient</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> – 48% sufficient, 38% insufficient</p> <p>A difference in opinion regarding the quantity of amenity green space is portrayed by respondents. This perception is reflected in both the urban and rural wards. However, slightly higher levels of satisfaction are evident in the rural wards.</p> <p>The main reason given by those who state that provision is insufficient relate to a lack of local green space in their area. However, some quality issues were also raised.</p>
<p>Other consultations</p>	<p>Like the household survey, views on the quantity of amenity space vary.</p> <p><b>Online survey</b> -There is a high level of dissatisfaction - 57% state that provision is insufficient and 28% indicating that provision is sufficient. The need for localised green space in some areas of the Borough was highlighted.</p> <p><b>Officers survey</b> – the split views are also evident through the officer survey. 41% insufficient, 37% sufficient. The majority of respondents who indicated that provision was insufficient suggested that there are not enough spaces suitable for informal play or for recreation. Northwich and Ellesmere Port were specifically mentioned as containing a lack of informal space.</p> <p><b>Children and young people’s survey</b> -A high level of satisfaction with the provision of amenity green space is evident from responses, with 63% indicating that provision is sufficient</p> <p><b>Drop in session</b> -The importance of protecting this type of open space from development was emphasised.</p> <p><b>Parish/Town Council</b> – the provision of amenity green space was generally perceived to be adequate, however, the need for more of this type of open space in the Sandiway ward was emphasised.</p>

Distribution of existing provision	Provision is relatively evenly spread between rural and urban areas. Key areas of deficiency against quantity standard will be Grange and Rossmore*, Weaver, Hoole and Newton, City, Winsford North and East*, Frodsham and Helsby, Eddisbury, Ledsham and Willaston. Areas which exceed the quantity standard include Northwich West*, Winsford South* and West, Upton*, Central and Westminster*, Marbury, Mickle Trafford. In some of these areas, residents are dissatisfied with the amount of provision, and also the quality, suggesting links between these issues. Application of the access standard demonstrates similar issues, and highlights overlapping catchments in Northwich and Winsford, although there are also some gaps.
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### Quality Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National Standards	None
Local Standards	<p>Chester City - All sites should be of 'good' quality or higher (scoring at least 50%). They should be clean and well-maintained sites that are visually attractive and provide opportunities for a variety of leisure and recreational uses for an appropriate range of ages. They should also be safe and secure with appropriate lighting and provision of ancillary facilities, including benches and litter bins where appropriate. The sites should be accessible for all with appropriate signage.</p> <p>Vale Royal BC – overarching standard set for open spaces: A clean, litter and dog fouling free area that is well-lit and provides a level of varied vegetation and biodiversity, including well-kept grass and other natural features where suitable. The site should be regularly maintained and have suitable parking in close proximity where appropriate. "</p>

<p>Consultation – Household Survey</p>	<p>Although perceptions of the quality of amenity space are reasonably positive, residents are more positive about other types of open space.</p> <p><b>Overall</b> – generally positive perceptions are portrayed by respondents to the household survey, with almost half of respondents (48%) stating that the quality of amenity green space is average or good. However, 20% of residents consider the quality of amenity green space to be poor or very poor.</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> – the quality of amenity green space is generally perceived to be average (31%). 18% of residents rate the quality of this type of open space as good and 15% poor.</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> – respondents consider the quality of this type of open space to be good (28%) or average (20%). However, 16% of residents rate the quality of amenity green space as poor.</p> <p>The most important characteristics of amenity green space are considered to be: clean and litter free, well kept grass and a level surface.</p> <p>Like other types of open space, current users indicated that the main issue experienced at amenity green space is dog fouling. Litter problems, maintenance of seating and footpaths were also highlighted as issues. Significantly, personal safety was considered to be more of an issue at amenity green spaces than at any other type of informal open space.</p>
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<p>Consultation - other</p>	<p><b>Online survey</b> - Negative perceptions regarding the quality of amenity green space are evident, with 37% of respondents rating the quality of this type of open space as poor or very poor and only 17% of residents stating that the quality of amenity green space is good or very good.</p> <p><b>Officers survey</b> -A quarter of officers rate the quality of amenity green space as poor and 21% feel that the quality of this type of open space is good. It was however highlighted that some spaces have improved significantly recently, with recent investment in parts of the Borough. Ensuring that amenity green space is clean and litter free was identified as important. Dog and litter bins were also considered to be essential features of this type of open space.</p> <p><b>Children and young people’s survey</b> - 23% think that extensive improvements are required and 57% suggest that the quality is ok but that some improvements are required. Bins and benches and regular maintenance were the key priorities identified for improvement. Some young people also indicated that lighting would be beneficial.</p> <p><b>External agencies</b> – enhancing the quality of amenity green space was identified as a priority. This type of open space was also considered to be important in terms of flood storage.</p>																
<p>Site Visits</p>	<p>Amenity green spaces are the poorest of all types of open space. There is considerable scope to improve the functionality of amenity space. The majority of sites achieving high scores were well maintained with appropriate infrastructure (bins, benches etc). The key issues identified were litter and dog fouling, and a lack of basic infrastructure. A Lack of basic infrastructure was the key reason for the lower quality scores. These sites also seem to attract anti social behaviour, fly tipping etc.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="465 979 1429 1270"> <thead> <tr> <th>Typology</th> <th>Minimum Score</th> <th>Maximum Score</th> <th>Average</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Parks and Gardens</td> <td>44</td> <td>97.5</td> <td>75</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Natural and Semi Natural Open Space</td> <td>17</td> <td>95</td> <td>54</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Amenity Green Space</td> <td>17</td> <td>95</td> <td>53</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Typology	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Average	Parks and Gardens	44	97.5	75	Natural and Semi Natural Open Space	17	95	54	Amenity Green Space	17	95	53
Typology	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Average														
Parks and Gardens	44	97.5	75														
Natural and Semi Natural Open Space	17	95	54														
Amenity Green Space	17	95	53														

Recommendations	Essential		Desirable	
		Clean and litter free		Flowers and trees
	Seating		Footpaths	
	Level surface		Lighting (where appropriate) / overlooked to aid perceptions of personal security	
	Litter and dog bins			

Comments

## 4. Provision for Children

04

### Definition

Provision for children includes **equipped play areas** and adventure playgrounds that cater for children under 12. Toddlers play areas are also considered under this classification. Indoor facilities etc are not included.

### Overall views and perceptions

Issue	Key Findings
Quantity	Overall, there are more concerns relating to the quantity of facilities for teenagers than any other typology. There are also more residents who perceive the amount of facilities for children to be insufficient than who believe that they are sufficient. Concern is evident throughout consultation, although it is clear that in some instances, the quality of provision is impacting on views on the quantity of facilities.
Quality	<p>Like the quantity of provision, views on the quality of facilities are poorer than most other types of facilities. In addition to improving the cleanliness and maintenance of facilities, it will be important to provide higher quality facilities with a variety of more challenging equipment. Sites should also contain litter bins, benches.</p> <p>While the quantity of provision emerged as a big issue, it is clear that many comments relating to quantity originate from the poor quality of existing facilities. Qualitative improvements will therefore be as important as the provision of new facilities.</p>
Accessibility	Location / proximity to the home is a key determinant of usage and residents expect to find facilities for children and young people in close proximity to the home. It is essential that sites are accessible to all residents, however in this instance, access to facilities was less frequently referenced than quality and quantity.
General	<p>Other issues which need to be addressed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>the importance of consulting with the community to ensure that facilities provided meet community need</li></ul>

- and create a culture of respect
- the importance of providing a variety of different facilities including natural play and traditional play
- the role of events / activities at parks etc in providing alternative activities for children and young people

### Accessibility Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National standards	<p><b>Fields in Trust</b></p> <p>LAP - 60m radial (1 minute); 100m walking distance (overlaps with amenity space)</p> <p>LEAP – 240m radial (5 minutes); 400m walking distance</p> <p>NEAP – 600m radial (15 minutes walk); 1,000m walking distance</p>
Local standards	<p>Chester City – children’s play space 5 minutes, neighbourhood play area 15 minutes. Vale Royal BC – 10 minute walk</p>
Household survey findings	<p>Survey findings indicate that residents expect local access to play areas.</p> <p><b>Current travel patterns</b> - The majority of users walk to access a site (62%).</p> <p><b>Expected travel patterns</b></p> <p><b>Overall</b> -89% walk. The average travel time is 9 minutes and the modal response is 10 minutes</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> - 89% walk. The average travel time is 9 minutes and the most common response is 10 minutes</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> - 87% walk. The average travel time 9 minutes, most common response 10 minutes</p>

Other consultation findings	<p>The expectations of local access to facilities are also evident through other consultations.</p> <p><b>Online survey -</b></p> <p>Current travel patterns: 71% walk</p> <p>Expected travel patterns: 76% walk</p> <p><b>Drop in session</b> -there was perceived to be a need to travel to access a play area in some parts of the Borough. It was stated that play areas located close to the town centre/civic square would encourage usage.</p> <p><b>Workshops</b> - Increasing access to school play areas/facilities was considered to be important. It was stated that there are a number of school facilities are not available for community use.</p>
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### Quantity Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National Standards	<p><b>Fields in Trust (NPFA)</b> - six acre standard (2.43 hectares) per 1,000 population for 'playing space' consisting of 2 acres (ie 0.81 hectares per 1,000 population) for children's playing space - includes areas designated for children and young people and casual or informal playing space within housing areas.</p> <p><b>Fields in Trust (NPFA)</b> - in the past some local authorities have added 1 acre (0.4 hectares) arbitrary to cover 'amenity areas' and 'leisure areas' or something similar that may not be covered within the NPFA standard. In almost all cases, this additional requirement is intended for residential areas and does not cover open spaces such as parks or allotments.</p>



<p>Local Standards</p>	<p>Chester City Council - 0.2ha per 1000 population.</p> <p>Vale Royal Borough Council – 0.2ha per 1000 population</p> <p>EPNBC – 0.2ha per 1000 population.</p> <p>Note that in both Chester and Vale Royal, although standards were set at 0.2ha per 1000 population, current provision equated to 0.06 ha per 1000.</p>
<p>Household Survey Consultation</p>	<p>Views are split between those who feel that provision is sufficient and those that think more is required.</p> <p><b>Overall</b> - 47% insufficient (nearly enough/not enough), 42% sufficient (more than enough/about right)</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> – 51% insufficient, 37% sufficient</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> – 50% sufficient, 41% insufficient</p> <p>There is a split in opinion regarding the quantity of children’s play areas. Higher levels of satisfaction are portrayed in the rural wards, suggesting that more residents in these areas are able to access facilities.</p> <p>While many general comments indicate that there are no facilities, many residents refer to the poor quality of existing facilities, small size of existing facilities and misuse of facilities by older children. This suggests that while in some areas there is a genuine lack of provision, in other areas qualitative issues may influence perceptions of quality.</p>

<p>Other consultations</p>	<p>Like the household survey, there is evidence of differing opinions through other modes of consultation.</p> <p><b>Online survey</b> -Over half of respondents indicate that the provision of play areas is insufficient (54%), 26% of respondents consider provision to be sufficient.</p> <p><b>Officers survey</b> – The majority of officer comments relating to facilities for children focus on the quality of provision rather than the actual amount of facilities, indicating that there are not enough facilities of sufficient quality. Some officers do however suggest that all residents should have localised access to existing play facilities.</p> <p><b>Community group survey</b> – demand for additional provision identified in Willaston</p> <p><b>External agencies</b> – a lack of play areas in some areas of the Borough was recognised. However, enhancing the quality of and increasing access to existing play areas was considered to be important.</p> <p><b>Parish/Town Council</b> – the need for additional children’s play areas was specifically highlighted in: Tarporley, Pullford, Cotebrook and Utkinton. However, many Parish/Town Council’s indicated that they have funding in place to provide new play areas, for example S106 agreements</p>
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## Quality Standards

Field Collected	Definition
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Comments

National Standards

Criteria set out by **Fields in Trust (NPFA)** in relation to LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs provide quality aspirations in terms of seating for adults, a varied range of equipment and meeting places for teenagers.

**Green Flag criteria** - Welcoming Place / Healthy, Safe and Secure / Clean and Well-maintained / Sustainable / Conservation and Heritage / Community Involvement / Marketing / Management.

**CABE Space** believes that the use of target hardening as a first response to anti-social behaviour is resulting in the fortification of our urban environment, and highlights that there is a better solution: invest in place making and improving public spaces to prevent the onset and escalation of these problems. Evidence from CABE Space's study shows that well designed, well maintained public spaces can contribute to reducing the incidence of vandalism and anti-social behaviour, and result in long term cost savings. CABE Space Policy Note: preventing anti-social behaviour in public spaces.

**Play England Design for Play and Managing Risk in Play Provision**

Guidance outlines the following 10 principles for designing successful play spaces. Successful play spaces:

- are bespoke;
- are well located;
- make use of the natural elements;
- provide a wide range of play experiences;
- are accessible to both disabled and non-disabled children;
- meet community needs;
- allow children of different ages to play together;
- build in opportunities to experience, risk and challenge;
- are sustainable and appropriately managed; and
- allow for change and evolution.

Play England promotes the challenge of risk in play provision, whilst protecting against harm and encourages the provision of more challenging facilities rather than traditional play provision.

<p>Local Standards</p>	<p><b>Chester City</b> - All provision for young people and children should be sites of good quality or higher (scoring 50% or above), providing a well-maintained, enriched play environment which is safe, secure and accessible for all. The space should be located in an open and supervisable area and should be overlooked by nearby dwellings for security reasons. The areas should be clean, well lit, and litter and dog free. They should also comply with appropriate national guidelines for design and safety. Provision for older children / teenagers should include areas of shelter (with seating).</p> <p><b>Vale Royal BC</b> – overarching standard set for open spaces: A clean, litter and dog fouling free area that is well-lit and provides a level of varied vegetation and biodiversity, including well-kept grass and other natural features where suitable. The site should be regularly maintained and have suitable parking in close proximity where appropriate. “</p>
<p>Consultation – Household Survey</p>	<p>There are varied views on the quality of play facilities.</p> <p><b>Overall</b> –27% of respondents rate facilities as good and 21% poor. This suggests that the quality of play areas varies across the Borough.</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> – similar to the overall response, there is a difference in opinion regarding the quality of play areas. 29% consider the quality of facilities to be average, 19% good and 14% poor.</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> – varying perceptions are highlighted regarding the quality of play areas with responses split between good (26%), average (22%) and poor (18%).</p> <p>For those that use children’s play areas more than any other type of open space, cleanliness and appropriate facilities are perceived to be the most important features. Toilets, a dog free area, flowers and trees, a picnic area and seating were also considered important.</p>

<p>Consultation - other</p>	<p>Participants in other consultations are less positive than those responding to the household survey.</p> <p><b>Online survey</b> – the quality of children’s play areas is viewed negatively with 62% rating the quality of facilities as poor and 17% good or very good. Well equipped play areas, with clean and litter free sites that are dog free are desired. It was also indicated that toilets would be beneficial.</p> <p><b>Officers survey</b> - Only 19% of respondents rate the quality of play areas as good or very good. 66% rate them as poor or very poor highlighting negative perceptions. General comments focused on the lack of exciting and challenging facilities and the need to ensure that larger facilities offering more play value are provided. Those that used these facilities more frequently than any other indicated that cleanliness and maintenance, dog and litter bins and appropriate maintenance of these facilities were the highest priorities.</p> <p><b>External agencies</b> – a large amount of recent investment in play was identified as a key strength across Cheshire West and Chester. It was stated that 22 new or enhanced play facilities will be completed by March 2011 through the Playbuilders programme.</p> <p><b>External Stakeholder</b> – the good relationships with the local community were highlighted as particularly positive. It was indicated that early involvement of children and young people in the design of the facilities ensures that the end result meets local needs and also that there is ownership of the site.</p>								
<p>Site Visits</p>	<p>The quality of play areas varied significantly with some high quality facilities and some poor sites. The average of 67% means that play areas are one of the more positively scoring types of open space, however the range of scores demonstrates that there are some poor facilities as well as some high quality sites. The key issues raised included vandalism, litter and damage to the sites, a lack of variation in provision (almost all sites are traditional facilities) and large numbers of sites with few facilities and seemingly little value.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="465 1110 1429 1272"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="465 1110 972 1209">Typology</th> <th data-bbox="972 1110 1160 1209">Minimum Score</th> <th data-bbox="1160 1110 1301 1209">Maximum Score</th> <th data-bbox="1301 1110 1429 1209">Average</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="465 1209 972 1272">Provision for Children</td> <td data-bbox="972 1209 1160 1272">24</td> <td data-bbox="1160 1209 1301 1272">100</td> <td data-bbox="1301 1209 1429 1272">67</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Typology	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Average	Provision for Children	24	100	67
Typology	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Average						
Provision for Children	24	100	67						

Recommendations	Essential	Desirable
	A variety of challenging and exciting play facilities for a range of ages and mobility	Dog free area
	Clean / litter free	Seating
	Well kept grass and safety surfacing	Community involvement
	Appropriate boundaries	Appropriate location. Overlooked / natural surveillance.
	Litter bins	
	Conformity with national guidance (including size) to be a minimum of LEAP size) and taking into account buffer zones, access and location	

Comments

## 5.Provision for Young People

05

### Definition

Facilities for young people include:

- Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)
- Basketball courts
- Youth shelters
- Informal kickabout areas
- Play areas / adventure playgrounds targeting teenagers
- Skate parks
- BMX tracks.

### Overall views and perceptions

Issue	Key Findings
Quantity	Overall, there are more concerns relating to the quantity of facilities for teenagers than any other typology. There are also more residents who perceive the amount of facilities for children to be insufficient than who believe that they are sufficient. Concern is evident throughout consultation, although it is clear that in some instances, the quality of provision is impacting on views on the quantity of facilities.
Quality	Like the quantity of provision, views on the quality of facilities are poorer than most other types of facilities. In addition to improving the cleanliness and maintenance of facilities, it will be important to provide higher quality



	<p>facilities with a variety of more challenging equipment. Sites should also contain litter bins, benches.</p> <p>While the quantity of provision emerged as a big issue, it is clear that many comments relating to quantity originate from the poor quality of existing facilities. Qualitative improvements will therefore be as important as the provision of new facilities.</p>
Accessibility	<p>Location / proximity to the home is a key determinant of usage and residents expect to find facilities for children and young people in close proximity to the home.</p> <p>It is essential that sites are accessible to all residents, however in this instance, access to facilities was less frequently referenced than quality and quantity.</p>
General	<p>Other issues which need to be addressed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the importance of consulting with the community to ensure that facilities provided meet community need and create a culture of respect</li> <li>• the importance of providing a variety of different facilities including natural play and traditional play</li> <li>• the role of events / activities at parks etc in providing alternative activities for children and young people</li> </ul>

### Accessibility Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National standards	<p><b>Fields in Trust</b></p> <p>LAP - 60m radial (1 minute); 100m walking distance (overlaps with amenity space)</p> <p>LEAP – 240m radial (5 minutes); 400m walking distance</p> <p>NEAP – 600m radial (15 minutes walk); 1,000m walking distance</p>

Local standards	<p>Chester City – Facilities for teenagers: 15 minutes</p> <p>Vale Royal BC – 10 minute walk</p>
Household survey findings	<p>Location / proximity to the home is a key determinant of usage and residents expect to find facilities for young people within walking distance.</p> <p><b>Usage</b> - Only 7% of residents visit play areas at least once a week.</p> <p><b>Expected travel patterns</b></p> <p><b>Overall</b> - 68% walk. The average travel time is 11 minutes and the modal response is 10 minutes.</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> - 73% walk. The average travel time is 12 minutes, the most common response is 10 minutes</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> - 62% walk. Average travel time 10 minutes, most common response 10 minutes.</p>
Other consultation findings	<p>Reflecting the findings of the household survey, other consultations reinforce the importance of local access.</p> <p><b>Online survey</b> - Expected travel patterns: 53% walk</p> <p><b>Young people’s survey</b> - Of those young people who identify facilities for young people as their favourite place, 42% stated that they like these facilities because they are close to home. This indicates that local access to facilities is important for young people.</p> <p><b>Community group survey</b> - Within Willaston it was stated that young people have to travel outside of the settlement to access a facility for their age group.</p> <p><b>Workshops</b> - Increasing access to school facilities was considered to be important. It was stated that there are a number of school facilities are not available for community use that could serve the needs of young people.</p>
Notes and Comments	<p>It is important to obtain a balance between sustainability, quality and quantity of provision.</p>

## Quantity Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National Standards	<p><b>Fields in Trust (NPFA)</b> – six acre standard (2.43 hectares) per 1,000 population for 'playing space' consisting of 2 acres (ie 0.81 hectares per 1,000 population) for children's playing space - includes areas designated for children and young people and casual or informal playing space within housing areas.</p> <p><b>Fields in Trust (NPFA)</b> - in the past some local authorities have added 1 acre (0.4 hectares) arbitrary to cover 'amenity areas' and 'leisure areas' or something similar that may not be covered within the NPFA standard. In almost all cases, this additional requirement is intended for residential areas and does not cover open spaces such as parks or allotments.</p>
Local Standards	<p>Chester City Council - 0.2ha per 1000 population</p> <p>Vale Royal Borough Council – 0.2ha per 1000 population</p> <p>EPNBC – 0.2ha per 1000 population.</p> <p>Note that in both Chester and Vale Royal, although standards are set at 0.2ha per 1000 population, current provision equated to 0.06 ha per 1000.</p>
Household Survey Consultation	<p>There is a high level of dissatisfaction with the provision of facilities for young people. This is reflected in both the urban and rural wards, suggesting that there is a lack of provision across the Borough.</p> <p><b>Overall</b> - 62% insufficient (nearly enough/not enough), 17% sufficient (more than enough/about right)</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> – 63% insufficient, 15% sufficient</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> – 61% insufficient, 18% sufficient</p> <p>A direct lack of facilities was the main reason given for these responses. The other key issue raised was the number of young people who hang around the street as they have nothing to do.</p>

Other consultations	<p>The high level of dissatisfaction is also reflected in the findings of other consultations.</p> <p><b>Online survey</b> - 82% of respondents feel that provision is insufficient, highlighting a high level of dissatisfaction.</p> <p><b>Officers survey</b> - Supporting other consultations, nearly three quarters of officers indicate that the provision of facilities for young people is insufficient (73%). Almost all comments provided on facilities for teenagers relate directly to the lack of facilities provided and the need to reduce the amount of young people hanging around on streets.</p> <p>Officers highlighted a high level of demand for additional facilities, particularly large scale facilities such as skate parks and BMX tracks.</p> <p><b>Young people's survey</b> - 30% of young people think that there are sufficient facilities for people their age, while 52% think that there are not enough and 12% think that there are no facilities.</p> <p>14% of young people indicated if they could have any facility it would be a teenage shelter, while 8% would like a skate park, 7% an indoor youth facility, 6% a MUGA and 6% a ball court. 2% would like planned and organised activities.</p> <p><b>Community group survey</b> – Shortfalls of provision were identified in Helsby and Willaston.</p> <p><b>External agencies</b> – the emphasis for the future delivery of facilities for young people was on qualitative improvements to existing sites, rather than on the quantity of provision (although the need for additional facilities was also identified)</p> <p><b>Parish/Town Councils</b> – almost every Parish/Town Council representative identified new facilities for young people as a priority.</p>
Distribution of existing provision	<p>Application of the accessibility standard highlights gaps in provision across the Borough and there are deficiencies in all major settlements, and relatively few facilities in smaller settlements. Over 10 facilities would be required to fill existing gaps.</p>
Notes	<p>While PPG17 considers equipped facilities for young people it is important to consider informal facilities and spaces for this age group. Facilities for young people will also be considered within the context of informal open space.</p>

## Quality Standards

Field Collected	Definition
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Comments

National Standards

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<p>Consultation – Household Survey</p>	<p>Perceptions of the quality of facilities for teenagers are relatively negative.</p> <p>Overall – Nearly half of all respondents rating the quality of facilities as poor or very poor (45%). Less than 10% of respondents think that provision is good or very good.</p> <p>Urban wards – consistent with the overall response, 47% of respondents rate the quality of facilities as poor or very poor. Just 6% of respondents consider the quality of facilities to be good or very good.</p> <p>Rural wards – 44% of residents consider the quality of facilities for young people to be poor or very poor. Only 9% of respondents rate the quality of facilities as poor or very poor. It was considered important to provide a clean and litter free site, with appropriate facilities, well kept grass and parking. No major problems at existing sites were highlighted, although vandalism, safety and age of equipment, litter and dog fouling were all viewed as minor problems.</p>
<p>Consultation - other</p>	<p>Like the household survey, respondents to other modes of consultation are negative about the quality of facilities for young people.</p> <p><b>Online survey</b> - Over half of respondents (57%) consider the quality of facilities to be poor or very poor. Only 7% of residents rate the quality of facilities as good or very good, highlighting a negative perception regarding the quality of facilities for young people. Cleanliness and maintenance, and appropriate facilities (including toilets) were considered essential. Seating and changing facilities were also suggested as being useful provision on sites for teenagers.</p>

Site Visits	<p>The quality of teen facilities varied significantly with some high quality facilities and some poor sites. Despite the overall negativity apparent during consultation, there are some high quality facilities for young people, with scores ranging between 28.5% and 87%. The key issues raised included vandalism, litter and damage to the sites and most sites suffered from these issues to a greater or lesser extent. There are several sites containing a variety of facilities (for example skate park and BMX) and these provide particularly good local amenities. These facilities were receiving higher levels of usage throughout the site visit programme than MUGAs. Many of the facilities for young people appeared relatively new in comparison to other sites.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="465 491 1429 655"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="465 491 972 587">Typology</th> <th data-bbox="972 491 1162 587">Minimum Score</th> <th data-bbox="1162 491 1303 587">Maximum Score</th> <th data-bbox="1303 491 1429 587">Average</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="465 587 972 655">Provision for Young People</td> <td data-bbox="972 587 1162 655">28.5</td> <td data-bbox="1162 587 1303 655">87</td> <td data-bbox="1303 587 1429 655">61</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Typology	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Average	Provision for Young People	28.5	87	61						
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Recommendations	<table border="1" data-bbox="465 655 1413 1264"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="465 655 972 719">Essential</th> <th data-bbox="972 655 1413 719">Desirable</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="465 719 972 879">Accessible, challenging and exciting play facilities catering for people with a range of mobilities that conform with national guidelines</td> <td data-bbox="972 719 1413 879">Dog free area</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="465 879 972 943">Clean / litter free</td> <td data-bbox="972 879 1413 943">Seating</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="465 943 972 1007">Well kept grass and safety surfacing</td> <td data-bbox="972 943 1413 1007">Community involvement</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="465 1007 972 1134">Appropriate boundaries</td> <td data-bbox="972 1007 1413 1134">Appropriate location – overlooked / natural surveillance</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="465 1134 972 1198">Litter bins</td> <td data-bbox="972 1134 1413 1198"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="465 1198 972 1264">Seating</td> <td data-bbox="972 1198 1413 1264"></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Essential	Desirable	Accessible, challenging and exciting play facilities catering for people with a range of mobilities that conform with national guidelines	Dog free area	Clean / litter free	Seating	Well kept grass and safety surfacing	Community involvement	Appropriate boundaries	Appropriate location – overlooked / natural surveillance	Litter bins		Seating	
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Seating																	



# Allotments

## Overall views and perceptions

Issue	Key Findings
Quantity	<p>The quantity of allotments was the key issue highlighted across all consultations. Recent increases in demand have seen waiting lists rise and there are now waiting lists across the Borough.</p> <p>The priority for the future delivery of allotments is likely to focus on increasing the amount of allotments available to residents and providing more opportunities to participate.</p>
Quality	<p>Although quantity was highlighted as the main issue, some qualitative issues were identified. Clean and litter free, well kept grass, nature features and dog free areas were also viewed as being important. Appropriate access was also a key priority. Dog fouling was highlighted as the main issue at allotments. Allotment holders indicated that water, drainage and fencing are also key issues for allotment holders.</p>
Accessibility	<p>Linked to the quantity of provision, it was suggested that access to facilities is low due to presence of waiting lists. It is clear that residents expect to use an allotment that is in close proximity to their home, although residents in the rural areas are more likely to be willing to travel. Given the pressures on existing allotments and the increasing popularity of these sites, there is a need to prioritise local provision.</p>
General	<p>Other issues that arose include;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is a need to facilitate partnership working and effective communication channels</li> <li>• the provision of smaller plots / community allotments may increase interested in allotments.</li> </ul>

## Accessibility Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National standards	None
Local standards	Chester City – 15 minutes walk Vale Royal BC – 15 minutes drive
Household survey findings	<p><b>Usage</b> - A quarter of respondents indicated that they currently use an allotment. 36% of residents that currently do not rent an allotment plot stated that they would be interested in renting one, highlighting a high level of demand.</p> <p>Although there is some variation, allotments are expected in relatively close proximity to the home.</p> <p><b>Current travel patterns</b> - there is an even split between those that walk and those that travel by car. Most allotment users travel up to 15 minutes</p> <p><b>Expected travel patterns</b></p> <p><b>Overall</b> - 63% walk, 28% drive. For those that walk, the average travel time is 11 minutes and the modal response is 10 minutes.</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> - 68% walk, 23% drive. The average travel time is 12 minutes and the most common response is 10 minutes. For those that would drive, there is an expectation of a 10 minute drivetime.</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> - 57% walk, 35% drive. For those that walk, the average travel time is 11 minutes and the modal response is 10 minutes.</p>
Other consultation	<b>Online survey</b> - Half of respondents would expect to walk and 25% would expect to drive. There is a variation in the expected travel times.

Recommendation	<p>10 minute walk time.</p> <p>Application of a 10 minute walk time should be treated as indicative only, as allotments should be demand led. This standard however points to issues in Tattenhall, Tarvin, Mickle Trafford, Cuddington, Winsford and Davenham / Moulton. There are some parts of Chester outside of the access catchment, which would be reduced if the travel time was increased to 15 minutes. There are also gaps in East Ellesmere Port and the Great Sutton area. Changing the travel time would have no impact in these areas.</p>
Notes and Comments	<p>It is important to obtain a balance between sustainability, quality and quantity of provision. There was however an emphasis on local access to allotments.</p>

### Quantity Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National Standards	<p><b>National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners</b> - 20 allotment plots per 1,000 households (ie 20 allotments plots per 2,200 people (2.2 people per house) or 1 allotment plot per 200 people. With an average allotment plot of 250 sq/m this equates to 0.125 ha per 1,000 population</p> <p><b>1970 Thorpe Report</b> suggested 0.2 ha per 1,000 population. A 1996 allotments survey indicated that 0.38ha per 1,000 population is appropriate.</p>
Local Standards	<p>Chester City Council - 0.22ha per 1000 population</p> <p>Vale Royal Borough Council – 0.05ha per 1000 population</p>

<p>Household Survey Consultation</p>	<p>A level of dissatisfaction with the current provision of allotments is evident, with nearly half of all respondents stating that provision is insufficient (44%). This perception is mirrored Boroughwide.</p> <p>Almost all reasons given for the perception that provision is insufficient relate to the lack of provision in local area and existing waiting lists.</p> <p><b>Overall</b> - 44% insufficient (nearly enough/not enough), 23% sufficient (more than enough/about right)</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> – 42% insufficient, 24% sufficient</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> – 48% insufficient, 21% sufficient</p>
<p>Other consultations</p>	<p>The shortage of allotments is also reflected in other consultations.</p> <p><b>Online survey</b> -Nearly half of respondents state that provision is insufficient (46%). Only 17% feel that the quantity of allotments is sufficient. Waiting lists were the main reason given for these negative views.</p> <p><b>Allotments societies</b> - Increasing the quantity of allotments in the Borough was identified as a priority. 9 out of 11 allotment societies identified the quantity of allotments is an issue and waiting lists were noted on four allotment sites. However, the quantity of allotments in Chester was commended. Protecting allotments from development was identified as important.</p> <p><b>Community group survey</b> - Respondents identified a high level of demand for allotments in the Borough, with waiting lists evident at a number of sites.</p> <p><b>External agencies</b> – the provision of additional allotments was identified as a key priority, particularly in light of large waiting lists evident at sites across the Borough.</p> <p><b>Parish/Town Councils</b> – several Parish/Town Councils indicated that they had plans for new allotments or were actively seeking land. Almost all that attended identified waiting lists at existing sites.</p>

Distribution of existing provision	<p>Waiting lists of at least 200 people. Assuming half plots, circa 2.5 ha would be required to accommodate this. Dissatisfaction equates to unmet demand in all areas except Grange and Rossmore. Wards with greatest undersupply against the standard include: Winsford South and West, Grange and Rossmore, Marbury, Weaver, Abbey, Blacon, Frodsham and Helsby, Broxton, Northwich West.</p> <p>The standard should provide an indication of likely demand only, as demand will vary according to the type of housing etc. Demand for allotments is also often generated by the presence of existing allotment sites.</p>
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### Quality Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National Standards	<p><b>Green Flag criteria</b> - Welcoming Place / Healthy, Safe and Secure / Clean and Well-maintained / Sustainable / Conservation and Heritage / Community Involvement / Marketing / Management.</p> <p><b>National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG)</b> – The NSALG provides guidance on the creation of allotments and the facilities required on site. The NSALG recommends the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plots should be 250m<sup>2</sup>;</li> <li>• Paths should be 1.4m wide to enable disabled access;</li> <li>• An accessible water supply is essential and there should be one water point for every 6 – 8 plots;</li> <li>• Good fences and hedges are required as a precaution against vandalism;</li> <li>• Entrances to the site should be attractive with a notice board showing contacting details and other site information;</li> <li>• Car parking should be provided where allotment holders have to travel by car to access the site;</li> <li>• Haulage ways should be fit for purpose; and</li> <li>• Communal composting areas are recommended on larger sites.</li> </ul>

<p>Local Standards</p>	<p><b>Chester City</b> - All allotments should be of 'good' quality or higher (scoring at least 50%). They should be clean and well-maintained sites that encourage biodiversity and promote education and health benefits. The sites should have good quality soils, clearly marked pathways and well-defined boundaries. They should also be safe and secure with appropriate provision of ancillary facilities (particularly waste disposal e.g. litter/composting bins and access to water). Sites should have clear and appropriate signage and plot numbering.</p> <p><b>Vale Royal BC</b> – overarching standard set for open spaces: A clean, litter and dog fouling free area that is well-lit and provides a level of varied vegetation and biodiversity, including well-kept grass and other natural features where suitable. The site should be regularly maintained and have suitable parking in close proximity where appropriate. “</p>
<p>Consultation – Household Survey</p>	<p>There are mixed views on the quality of allotments.</p> <p><b>Overall</b> – over half of respondents had no opinion regarding the quality of allotments (54%). Of those that did have an opinion, 17% rated the quality of allotments as average, 11% poor and 9% good. This suggests that the quality of allotments in the Borough is varied.</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> – 18% rate the quality of allotments as average, 10% good and 10% poor.</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> – the quality of allotments in the rural wards is perceived to be lower in comparison to the urban wards, with 22% of residents rating allotments as poor or very poor. 15% of respondents consider the quality of allotments to be average and 7% good.</p> <p>The highest rated aspirations are parking and toilet facilities. Clean and litter free, well kept grass, nature features and dog free areas were also viewed as being important. Dog fouling was highlighted as the main issue experienced by frequent users of allotments.</p>

<p>Consultation - other</p>	<p>Like the household survey, there are mixed views on the quality of allotments, although views are generally more negative than those for many other types of open space.</p> <p><b>Online survey</b> - Over three quarters of respondents rate the quality of allotments as average (76%). 14% consider the quality of allotments to be poor and 9% good.</p> <p><b>Officers survey</b> - The quality of allotments is generally considered to be average or below.</p> <p><b>Allotment societies</b> - Sites were generally perceived to be well maintained and of good quality. However, security of sites was identified as an issue with a number of sites identified as suffering from vandalism. Fencing, water supplies, paths and surfacing were also identified as issues.</p> <p><b>Community group survey</b> - Helsby Village Action Group stated that the quality of allotments in the village is adequate.</p>								
<p>Site Visits</p>	<p>The quality of allotments varied from sites that were largely overgrown with few plots neatly cultivated, to sites which appeared fully utilised, with water supplies, sheds, composting etc. Footpaths were a key area for improvement, along with signage. Many sites also did not have visible water supplies.</p> <p>Reflecting this, the quality of sites ranged from 21% to 92%. The average score is relatively low in comparison to other types of open space, this reflects the lack of infrastructure at many of the sites.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="465 911 1429 1077"> <thead> <tr> <th>Typology</th> <th>Minimum Score</th> <th>Maximum Score</th> <th>Average</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Allotments</td> <td>21</td> <td>92</td> <td>62</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Typology	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Average	Allotments	21	92	62
Typology	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Average						
Allotments	21	92	62						

Recommendations	Essential	Desirable
	High quality boundaries	Parking facilities at sites where residents have to travel by car to access them
	Accessible water supply	Notice boards at site entrances
	Clean, tidy and well maintained	Toilets
	Composting and litter bins	Clearly defined access routes suitable for residents of all ages
	Features enhancing safety and security	

Comments



## Natural and Semi Natural Open Spaces

### Definition

This type of open space includes woodlands, urban forestry, scrubland, grasslands (e.g. downlands, commons and meadows), wetlands, nature reserves and wastelands with a primary purpose of wildlife conservation and biodiversity. The countryside and natural open space is a defining feature of the Borough. Only sites which are of public value are included within this audit.

### Overall views and perceptions

Issue	Key Findings
Quantity	<p>Overall there are positive perceptions about the amount of natural open space. The majority of those who feel that provision is insufficient reference the fear of losing natural space to development, the role of these sites in conservation and the provision of habitats, or qualitative issues, rather than the need for additional sites.</p> <p>Given the nature of this type of open space, and the challenges in replicating it, future priority is likely to focus on protecting, maintaining and improving these spaces.</p>
Quality	<p>On the whole, views on the quality of provision are positive although some residents felt that provision was poor quality, meaning that there remain areas for improvement. Cleanliness and maintenance is the most important feature of a natural open space. Other expectations include appropriate and level footpaths, natural features, seating, parking and litter bins. It will be important to balance quantitative improvements with the wider ecological functions of natural and semi natural open spaces.</p>
Accessibility	<p>Location / proximity to the home is a key determinant of usage and residents expect to find natural open space in close proximity to the home. This also emphasises how important natural open space is to residents of the Borough.</p> <p>Access was one of the most important issues raised and it is essential that sites are accessible to all residents.</p> <p>Connectivity between different types of space, and the importance of green corridors in linking open spaces together emerged as one of the key priorities. This will need to be central to future thinking around open</p>

	space, sport and recreation facilities.
General	Other issues which need to be addressed include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• importance of partnership working and support for voluntary groups</li> <li>• the balance between recreational and ecological benefits of natural and semi natural open spaces</li> </ul>

### Accessibility Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National standards	<p><b>Natural England Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt)</b> recommends at least 2 hectares of accessible natural greenspace per 1,000 people based on no-one living more than: 300m from nearest natural greenspace / 2km from a site of 20 ha / 5km from a site of 100 ha / 10km from a site of 500 ha. Woodland Trust Access Standards recommend that no person should live more than 500m from at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 2 ha in size and that there should also be at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 20 ha within 4km (8km round-trip) of people's homes.</p> <p><b>Natural England</b> have a commitment to champion preventative health solutions in the natural environment and have adopted an objective of providing accessible natural space within 300 metres (or 5 minutes walk) of every home in England for exercise, relaxation and wellbeing.</p>
Local standards	Chester City – 25 minutes walk. Vale Royal BC – 15 minutes walk time

Household survey findings

**Usage** - Natural and semi natural open space is the most frequently used type of open space. 13% of respondents to the household survey visit natural open spaces daily and a further 25% visit them once per week or more. Nearly half of residents in the rural wards visit this type of open space (46%) at least once a week, highlighting its importance, particularly in the rural areas of Cheshire West and Chester.

Many residents expect natural and semi natural open spaces to be in close proximity to their home. The size of site is also a key contributing factor to residents' viewpoints.

**Current travel patterns** - The majority of users walk (63%) with a travel time of up to 10 minutes most commonly experienced (60%).

#### **Expected travel patterns**

There is a balance between those who expect to walk and those who travel by car, potentially impacted upon by the size of the site. Most residents expect to access natural space local to their homes.

**Overall** - 55% walk and 34% car. For those that walk, the average travel time is 12 minutes and the most common travel time is 10 minutes. For drivers, the average travel time is 19 minutes and the most common travel time is 10 minutes.

**Urban wards** -55% walk, 34% drive. The average walk time is 14 minutes and the modal response is 10 minutes. For those that would drive, the mean response is 19 minutes and the mode is 10.

**Rural wards** -56% walk, 36% drive. For those that would drive, the mean response is 19 minutes and the mode is 10. The average expected walk time is 10 minutes and the most common response is also 10 minutes.

<p>Other consultation findings</p>	<p><b>Online survey</b> - Current travel patterns: users walk (88%) with a travel time of up to 10 minutes experienced.</p> <p>Expected travel patterns: 55% walk and 22% drive.</p> <p><b>Officers survey</b> - Expected travel patterns: 62% drive and 38% walk. Of those who expect to walk, a travel time of less than 5 minutes is expected. Travel times by car vary significantly.</p> <p><b>External agencies</b> – increasing access to natural and semi natural open space was identified as a priority.</p> <p><b>Parish/Town Councils</b> – increasing access to natural and semi natural open space was highlighted as being important.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>10 minute walk time (although in reality many of these sites draw visitors from a wider catchment)</p> <p>Application of this standard results in relatively few gaps in provision, with a few minor deficiencies in Chester, to the west of Ellesmere Port and in Winsford. Blacon Meadows in Chester is a particularly important site. There are gaps in some of the more rural settlements (eg Malpas, Tilston) emphasising the importance of improving access to countryside in these areas.</p>
<p>Notes and Comments</p>	

**Quantity Standards**

Field Collected	Definition
<p>National Standards</p>	<p><b>Natural England Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt)</b> recommends 2 hectares of accessible natural green space per 1,000 people and 1 hectare of Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 people.</p> <p><b>Rethinking Open Space Report</b> - Average of all local authority applicable standards = 2 hectares per 1,000 population - areas that promote biodiversity and nature conservation.</p>

Local Standards	Chester City Council - 1ha per 1000 population. Vale Royal Borough Council – 0.7ha per 1000 population
Household Survey Consultation	<p>Overall the majority of residents are satisfied. However, different perceptions are evident in the urban and rural wards. There is no decisive viewpoint emerging in the urban areas, however, nearly 70% of respondents in the rural wards state that provision is sufficient. This reflects the location of natural and semi natural open space in the Borough.</p> <p><b>Overall</b> - 57% sufficient (more than enough/about right), 35% insufficient (nearly enough/not enough)</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> – 48% sufficient, 42% insufficient</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> – 68% sufficient, 26% insufficient</p>
Other consultations	<p>Like the household survey, varying views on the adequacy of natural and semi natural open space are evident. There is a particular emphasis on the importance of the protection of this type of space.</p> <p><b>Online survey</b> -62% sufficient, 33% insufficient. While many respondents indicated that the area is rich in natural resource (although some issues relating to accessibility were raised), the fear of losing natural open space to development was a common theme</p> <p><b>Officers survey</b> - 47% sufficient, 43% insufficient. Many officers who suggested that there is insufficient natural and semi natural space indicated that it is important to protect this type of open space to maintain the character of the area. Many comments also however related to the quality of provision, rather than the need for more. Accessibility was also a key issue raised. It was indicated that there is an abundance of natural open space however much of this is not accessible to the local community.</p> <p><b>External agencies</b> – the abundance of countryside in the Borough was identified as a strength. The importance of protecting this type of open space from development was emphasised.</p> <p><b>Parish/Town Council</b> – the provision of natural and semi natural open space was perceived to be adequate.</p>

Distribution of existing provision	Provision per 1000 population significantly higher in rural areas than in urban areas (to be expected). The key areas of deficiency are: Upton, Gowy, Hoole and Newton, City, Neston and Parkgate and Blacon. Dissatisfaction largely corresponds with deficiencies, except for Neston and Gowy. Satisfaction increases significantly when provision exceeds 1ha per 1000 population and there is a direct correlation between quantity and satisfaction.
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## Quality Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National Standards	<p><b>Countryside Agency (now part of the Natural England Partnership)</b> - land should be managed to conserve or enhance its rich landscape, biodiversity, heritage and local customs.</p> <p><b>Green Flag criteria</b> - Welcoming Place / Healthy, Safe and Secure / Clean and Well-maintained / Sustainable / Conservation and Heritage / Community Involvement / Marketing / Management.</p> <p><b>Natural England</b> highlights the need to conserve and protect the natural environment and promotes local community involvement and consultation. They also have a commitment to work with local authorities in developing Local Area Agreements (LAA) for improved community infrastructure to enhance access to high quality natural environments.</p>
Local Standards	<p><b>Chester City</b> - All sites should be of 'good' quality or higher (scoring at least 50%). Sites should provide a pleasant natural environment, free from litter and fly tipping. Sites should be utilised and maintained in such a way that biodiversity and existing wildlife habitats are enhanced and conserved. Information alerting and educating visitors to the natural and ecological significance of sites should be provided where appropriate.</p> <p><b>Vale Royal BC</b> – overarching standard set for open spaces: A clean, litter and dog fouling free area that is well-lit and provides a level of varied vegetation and biodiversity, including well-kept grass and other natural features where suitable. The site should be regularly maintained and have suitable parking in close proximity where appropriate. "</p>

Consultation –  
Household Survey

There are reasonably positive perceptions of the quality of natural open space, although some basic issues were highlighted by large proportions of respondents.

**Overall** –this type of open space is generally rated as good (37%) or average (25%). 16% of respondents indicate that the quality of natural and semi natural open space is very good and only 10% consider the quality of this type of open space to be good or very good.

**Urban wards** – the quality of natural and semi natural open space is rated as good (37%) or average (27%). 12% consider the quality of this typology to be very good and 12% poor or very poor.

**Rural wards** – Respondents are slightly more positive – 40% consider provision to be good. Fewer than 10% of residents rate the quality of natural and semi natural open space as poor or very poor.

Those components considered to be most important by frequent users are: clean and litter free, footpaths, natural features and trees.

Current users indicate that the main issue experienced at natural open spaces is dog fouling. Few residents felt that this was not a problem at all. Litter problems and maintenance of footpaths were the only other issues highlighted by more than half of respondents.

Consultation - other	<p>Like the household survey, respondents to other consultations are relatively positive about the quality of natural open spaces.</p> <p><b>Online survey</b> -Natural and semi natural open space is rated highly, with 64% rating the quality of sites as good or very good and only four respondents indicating that the quality of this type of open space is poor or very poor.</p> <p>Footpaths, cleanliness and maintenance, natural features, toilets and facilities for dog walking were highlighted as desirable features of a natural and semi natural open space.</p> <p><b>Officers survey</b> - The quality of natural and semi natural open space is perceived positively. 41% rate the quality of this typology as good or very good and only 8% consider the quality of sites to be poor.</p> <p>The key reasons given by respondents who considered the natural open space to be of poor quality related to the amount of dog fouling. Many natural areas were also highlighted as containing rubbish and being unkempt. The quality of footpaths was also considered to be a key issue at natural and semi natural open spaces. Vandalism and graffiti and maintenance of footpaths, equipment and seating were highlighted as the key issues by frequent users of natural open space.</p> <p>The most important components of a high quality natural and semi natural space is thought to include: cleanliness and maintenance, footpaths, nature facilities, dog and litter bins, seating and on site security.</p> <p><b>External agencies</b> – achieving a balance between the recreational use and conservation of natural and semi natural open space was identified as important.</p>
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Site Visits

The quality of natural open spaces was lower than most other types of space. While these sites would be expected to have more limited maintenance regimes, many sites were overgrown and there are litter problems. The dense undergrowth also leads to perceptions of safety issues. A large proportion of natural sites had little or no recreational function, and there were opportunities to increase usage through the provision of bins, benches etc.

Typology	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Average
Parks and Gardens	44	97.5	75
Natural and Semi Natural Open Space	17	95	54
Amenity Green Space	17	95	53

Recommendations	Essential		Desirable	
		Clean and litter free		Dog and litter bins
	Clearly defined footpaths		Parking (at larger sites) and cycle storage	
	Natural features and appropriately managed vegetation		Seating	
	Trees		Water features	
	Wildlife and conservation benefits		Information boards	

Comments

## Outdoor Sport Facilities

### Definition

Outdoor sports facilities include a range of facilities:

- Pitches
- Athletics Tracks
- Tennis Courts
- Bowling Greens
- Golf Courses
- AGPs

### Overall views and perceptions

Issue	Key Findings
Grass Pitches	Issues are balanced between quality and quantity. While outside Chester the overall quantity of pitches is perceived to be sufficient, pitches are at a premium in Chester. There are also several quality issues, including drainage and changing facilities. Future priorities therefore include both quantitative and qualitative improvements.
Synthetic Turf Pitches	There are mixed views on the quantity of synthetic turf pitches, however it is suggested that outside Chester there is more limited provision. Furthermore, consultation demonstrates that some facilities are difficult to access at peak times.  In addition, there are qualitative issues at some sites and some concerns over longer-term sustainability where sinking funds have not been established.
Tennis Courts	While there are many tennis courts across the Borough, not all are accessible to the public and there is a need to increase access to some facilities. Some qualitative improvements, particularly at public facilities are also required. In addition, some clubs identify the need to increase the number of courts at their disposal to ensure that club development is not inhibited.
Bowling Greens	Overall, the amount of bowling greens is considered adequate and there is a need to focus on maintaining and improving the quality of existing facilities.  Residents in the urban wards expect to find bowling greens within walking distance of their home.

Athletics	<p>Despite high levels of dissatisfaction from respondents to the household survey and online survey, there are mixed views relating to the quantity of athletics facilities by clubs. While provision in the Ellesmere Port area is of good quality, there is perceived to be a lack of appropriate facilities in the south of the Borough. A balance between qualitative improvements is therefore required.</p> <p>It is recognised that these facilities are strategic and residents therefore expect to drive.</p>
Golf	<p>The overall amount of golf courses in the Borough is perceived to be sufficient and residents are willing to travel to reach these facilities. Some qualitative improvements are however required.</p> <p>The key issue is however to improve access to existing golf courses both in terms of transport routes, but also by encouraging different sectors of the population to participate.</p> <p>It is recognised that these facilities are strategic and residents therefore expect to drive.</p>
General	<p>Other issues which need to be addressed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the role of school facilities in providing for the community</li> <li>• the long term sustainability of facilities – the establishment of a sinking fund is key</li> <li>• the potential implications of increases in participation on demand for facilities</li> <li>• the importance of building relationships with partners including schools, clubs and National Governing Bodies, and facilitating effective communication between these groups.</li> </ul>

### Accessibility Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National standards	None.
Local standards	<p>Chester City Council – all residents should have access to an outdoor sports facility within a 20 minute walk time</p> <p>Vale Royal BC – 10 – 15 minutes drive time, depending upon the facility type.</p>

Household survey findings

**Current travel patterns**

67% of users travel by car to access outdoor sports facilities. Nearly three quarters of respondents travel for less than 15 minutes to access a site (74%).

**Expected travel patterns**

**Grass Pitches**

Grass pitches are expected local to the home. The most commonly expected time is a 10 minute walk. There is potential that this is influenced by views on kickabout / recreational sport as well as travel expectations for formal grass pitches.

**Grass pitches – 61% walk, 30% drive.**

*Urban wards* - Walk (68%), drive (24%)

*Rural wards* - Walk (51%), drive (38%)

**Synthetic turf pitches**

Overall, residents expect to drive to synthetic pitches.

**Overall** - Walk (33%), drive (52%)

**Urban wards** - Walk (45%), drive (42%)

**Rural wards** - Walk (17%), drive (69%)

A 10 minute drive time is the most commonly expected travel time.

**Tennis courts**

Residents in the rural areas expect to drive, while provision is expected more locally in the urban parts of the Borough.

**Overall** - Walk (46%), drive (42%)

**Urban wards** – Walk (52%), drive (39%)

**Rural wards** - Walk (38%), drive (47%)

**Bowling greens**

Other consultation findings

General

**Children and young people’s survey**

53% of regular users of outdoor sports facilities walk to their favourite site while the remainder travel by car. Proximity to the home (42%) was given as the main reason why young people like this type of open space, indicating that local access to facilities is important to children.

**Grass Pitches**

Online survey – balance between those who would walk and those that drive

**Football** - Clubs currently travel by car to access a pitch (86%) with a travel time of 10 – 20 minutes most commonly experienced. The availability of pitches was identified as an issue by 36% of clubs.

**Rugby** -Access to training facilities was identified as problematic.

**Synthetic Pitches**

Online survey– 38% drive, 18% walk

**Bowls**

Club members travel by car to access a green with travel times ranging from 10 – 30 minutes.

Online survey – views split between walking and driving - 29% walk, 29% drive

**Athletics**

Online survey - athletics tracks – 57% drive, 15% walk

Vale Royal Athletics Club indicated that they have problems securing appropriate times for training at indoor venues or other athletics tracks. Helsby BICC Running Club have no access to indoor training facilities.

**Tennis**

Online survey - 29% drive, 28% walk

Current Provision	Bowling greens – most residents are able to access a facility within a 10 minute drivetime. There are gaps in provision if a ten minute walk time is preferred, particularly in Chester and Ellesmere Port.
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## Quantity Standards

Field Collected	Definition
National Standards	<p><b>Fields in Trust</b> - 6 acre standard (2.43 hectares) per 1,000 population for 'playing space' consisting of 4 acres (i.e. 1.62 per 1,000 population) for outdoor sport - includes pitches, athletics tracks, bowling greens, tennis courts training areas and croquet lawns.</p> <p>The LTA indicates that 2% of the population regularly play tennis and demand court usage. On the basis of assumptions about frequency of use, the LTA advocates provision of 1 court per 45 players.</p> <p>England Athletics Planning and Delivery Strategy (2007 –2012) - One outdoor synthetic track (6 or 8 lanes) per 250,000 within 20 minutes drive (45 minutes in rural areas)</p>
Local Standards	<p>The above standard is adopted within the local plans.</p> <p>Chester Open Space Audit sets a standard of 1.6ha per 1000 population. Vale Royal BC sets a standard of 1.75ha per 1000 population.</p>
Household Survey Consultation	<p><b>Overall</b> – there is a general level of satisfaction with the current provision outdoor sports facilities, with more respondents stating that the quantity of all types of facilities, except athletics tracks, is about right than those who feel that there are not enough. The greatest levels of satisfaction are shown with the provision of golf courses and grass pitches.</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> – findings are consistent with the overall response, with residents generally satisfied with the provision of all types of outdoor sports facilities except athletics tracks.</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> – responses within the rural wards generally mirror the overall response, however, there is a difference in opinion regarding the quantity of tennis courts.</p>

<p>Other General Consultations</p>	<p><b>Young people’s survey</b></p> <p>Dissatisfaction with the provision of outdoor sports facilities is evident. Over half of young people suggested that there are not enough sports facilities in their local area (55%) and a further 9% suggested that there are none. This compares to 21% who said that there are enough and 7% who indicated that there are more than enough.</p> <p>Interestingly when looking at the views of only those who select outdoor sports facilities as their favourite site, more young people think that the quantity of provision is sufficient than think there is a need for more. This may infer that the right type of facilities are not provided to capture the interest of these young people.</p> <p><b>External agencies</b> – a high level of participation in the Borough was identified as a strength. It was stated that there have been recent increases in participation in a number of sports.</p> <p><b>Parish/Town Council’s</b> - the quantity of outdoor sports facilities was generally perceived to be adequate by Parish and Town Council representatives and there was an expectation that certain specialised facilities, such as synthetic turf pitches, are not provided within the smaller settlements and parishes.</p>
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**Grass Pitches**

Online Survey - 45% sufficient, 26% insufficient

**Football** -43% of responding clubs indicated that membership had increased in the past five years.

**Cricket clubs** -The quantity of cricket pitches was perceived to good. A number of clubs identified an intention to increase participation through links with schools.

**Rugby clubs** -Participation was identified as having increased in recent years.

Sports league workshop – the quality of and increasing access to existing provision was viewed as more of a priority than increasing the quantity of facilities.

**Synthetic turf pitches –**

Online Survey 34% insufficient, 28% sufficient

Clubs identified the need for additional grass pitches and synthetic turf pitches. However, the majority of responses came from clubs in Chester, where there is pressure on existing pitches.

Active Places Power reveals that the provision of synthetic turf pitches and golf courses in Cheshire is above national and regional averages.

**Sports League workshop** - the only issues relating to quantity of provision that were raised related to difficulties in accessing hockey pitches outside of Chester.

**Bowling greens**

Online Survey 33% sufficient, 7% insufficient

**Bowls clubs** - feedback is positive, with clubs rating provision as very good (2), good (1) and average.

**Tennis courts**

Online Survey – 43% sufficient, 17% insufficient

Only one club indicated that the availability of tennis courts is an issue. All other responding clubs indicated that provision is good or very good.

**Athletics tracks**

Online Survey 65% insufficient, 12% sufficient

Distribution of existing provision	<p>Current Provision equates to just over 1.8ha per 1000 population.</p> <p>Tennis – 145 Tennis Courts. The LTA standard (1 court per 45 players, 2% play) suggests 145 courts are required.</p> <p>Bowling – 77 greens.</p> <p>STP – 19 (above levels recommended on APP). The Leisure Stock review identifies potential additional STPs (Christleton High, Hartford) as well as the use of one STP as a five a side facility.</p> <p>MUGA – 118 (includes many sites which double as tennis in summer and netball in winter).</p> <p>Grass Pitches – 545 ha in total</p> <p>Bowling Greens – 77.</p> <p>Setting access standards with suggested drive time standards would mean additional provision not required to meet standards, although given current levels of use at STP sites, new provision may be supported, although is not identified as a key priority(linking with Leisure Stock review).</p>
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**Quality Standards**

Field Collected	Definition
National Standards	<p><b>Green Flag criteria</b> - Welcoming Place / Healthy, Safe and Secure / Clean and Well-maintained / Sustainable / Conservation and Heritage / Community Involvement / Marketing / Management.</p> <p><b>Fields in Trust</b> – quality of provision could include gradients, ancillary accommodation, planting and community safety.</p> <p><b>National Governing Bodies</b> – specific design guidance for different types of outdoor sports facilities.</p>

<p>Local Standards</p>	<p><b>Chester City</b> - All sites should be of 'good' quality or higher (scoring at least 50%). Sites should be well-planned, clean, litter and dog fouling free, with level and well-drained good quality surfaces. Sites should also have appropriate good quality ancillary facilities including changing accommodation, toilets and car parking. Sites should have appropriate management ensuring community safety, and lighting and CCTV where appropriate to address any issues of anti-social behaviour.</p> <p><b>Vale Royal BC</b> – overarching standard set for open spaces: A clean, litter and dog fouling free area that is well-lit and provides a level of varied vegetation and biodiversity, including well-kept grass and other natural features where suitable. The site should be regularly maintained and have suitable parking in close proximity where appropriate. "</p>
<p>Consultation – Household Survey</p>	<p><b>Overall</b> – a difference in opinion regarding the quality of outdoor sports facilities is clear. 27% rate the quality of facilities as average, 17% good and 15% poor.</p> <p><b>Urban wards</b> – consistent with the overall response, 26% rate the quality of outdoor sports facilities as average, 19% good and 16% poor.</p> <p><b>Rural wards</b> – over a quarter of respondents consider the quality of outdoor sports facilities to be average (29%). 14% of residents state the quality of facilities is good and 14% poor.</p> <p>For those that visit outdoor sports facilities more than any other type of open space, cleanliness and maintenance was perceived to be significantly more important than other feature. Parking facilities, toilets, and changing facilities were the next highest rated priorities.</p> <p>Current users indicated that the main issues experienced at outdoor sports facilities are dog fouling, litter and vandalism and graffiti.</p>

Consultation - other

**General Views:**

Online Survey - In general, respondents have relatively negative views of the quality of provision. Overall, 8% consider the quality to be good or very good, while 57% of respondents rate provision as poor or very poor. Appropriate facilities, changing facilities, toilets and security were highlighted as being central to the success of an outdoor sports facility.

**Children and young people’s survey**

Views on the quality of provision are relatively positive. 9% feel that no improvements are required while 51% suggest that the quality is reasonable although some improvements are required. 29% think that extensive improvements are required.

**Sport Specific Views:**

**Grass pitches**

**Online Survey** - Grass pitches – 22% good/very good, 16% poor/very poor

**Football Club Survey** - Over three quarters of responding clubs indicated that the quality of pitches has deteriorated in the past couple of years (79%). The key issues relating to the quality of pitches were drainage, dog fouling and litter and changing facilities. The quality of grass and line markings was rated as very good by half of all clubs. Parking, evenness of the surface, the pitch and the quality of posts and nets were also viewed relatively positively. Despite this, only 21% of clubs felt that provision was good, 43% average and 35% poor or very poor.

Cricket Club Survey– quality good (but response from private clubs)

Rugby Club Survey - The quality of pitches was rated as average, however, drainage was identified as an issue. Improvements to the quality of pitches was perceived to be more important than increasing the number of pitches.

Workshop Football – a lack of drainage was identified as the main issue. The need for enhanced maintenance and better changing facilities was also highlighted. A number of pitches were also identified as being overused

**Bowls**

**Online Survey**- 22% good/very good, 4% poor/very poor

**Bowls Club Survey**- relating to the quality of provision are positive, with one club rating provision as excellent, two as good, one as average and only one as poor.

Site Visits	<p>The quality of sports facilities ranged more than any other type of facility (site visit scores demonstrate scores of between 10% and 97%. There are some very high quality private sites, which provide a range of ancillary facilities and some poorer provision. The quality of pitches in particular was varying, with many facilities doubling as recreation grounds and experiencing issues such as litter and dog fouling. On the whole, the quality of bowling greens and golf courses is high. There are some poor quality tennis courts, as well as some good facilities, and the quality of athletics tracks is also varying.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="465 422 1429 587"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="465 422 972 523">Typology</th> <th data-bbox="972 422 1160 523">Minimum Score</th> <th data-bbox="1160 422 1303 523">Maximum Score</th> <th data-bbox="1303 422 1429 523">Average</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="465 523 972 587">Outdoor Sports Facilities</td> <td data-bbox="972 523 1160 587">10</td> <td data-bbox="1160 523 1303 587">97</td> <td data-bbox="1303 523 1429 587">68</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Typology	Minimum Score	Maximum Score	Average	Outdoor Sports Facilities	10	97	68						
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