

# **NORWICH OPEN SPACE NEEDS ASSESSMENT**

Leisure & the Environment

December 2007

## **PART 1 FINAL REPORT**





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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### VISION FOR OPEN SPACE

To meet the objectives set for the study, the following vision for open space in Norwich has been developed:

*To ensure the provision and retention of a network of sustainable, varied, high quality and accessible open spaces and recreational facilities throughout the city. These will be planned, designed, managed and maintained to meet the diverse requirements of residents, workers and visitors alike, while at the same time respecting the needs of wildlife. The range of uses will be multi-functional, including recreation, sport, physical activity, informal and quiet activities and biodiversity, so contributing towards the quality of life, environment, economy and community in Norwich.*

### EXISTING PROVISION

**Parks and gardens** - The total area of open space in use as parks and gardens in the City is about 81 hectares. This is the equivalent of about 0.62 ha per 1000 population. This excludes land in the above parks that are allocated to a separate primary typology – if these are included, open space in parks and gardens totals about 135 has. Generally parks and gardens are of a good quality, with a consistency around the middle scores, and no facilities were rated at the extremes.

**Natural green space** - The total area of natural and semi natural green space is about 430 ha, of which 293 ha are in public ownership and a further 137 ha in private ownership, but with potential public access. 'Public' land is the equivalent of 2.24ha per 1000 population, with an overall ratio of 3.29 ha per 1000 population. This very high proportion of natural and semi natural green space for an urban area results largely from the fact that Mousehold Heath and extensive areas of river valley are within the city boundary. Most natural and semi natural green space is rated as average compared with parks and gardens.

**Green corridors** - The green corridor network in Norwich is primarily concentrated on routes following the two main rivers, the Yare and Wensum, together with linear routes along disused railway lines such as Marriotts Way and Lakenham Way. These links are important in joining existing areas of open space in the city with the surrounding countryside, but the network is relatively limited at present. While by definition primarily linear in nature, existing provision of green corridors in Norwich is about 29 ha or the equivalent of 0.22 ha/1000 population. Two thirds of green corridors scored at least 70% signifying a generally high quality.

**Informal amenity open space** - There are about 58 ha (0.44 ha per 1000) of informal amenity open space in public ownership within the City, and an additional 62 ha (0.48 ha per 1000) in private ownership, but with potential for public access. Overall this equates to 0.92 ha per 1000 population. In addition there are about 46 ha of churchyards and cemeteries, the equivalent of 0.35 ha per 1000 population. Overall current provision therefore stands at about 1.27 ha per 1000 population. In terms of quality, overall two thirds of sites scored higher than 60%.

**Allotments** - The total number of allotment plots available in these sites in mid June 2007 was 1484. There are a total of 43 ha of allotment space in the City managed by either the City

Council or a local allotments society, which works out at 0.33 ha per 1000 people. Allotments were generally clean with good entrances and boundaries. Disabled access and signage were considered poor.

**Outdoor sport** - It is estimated that there are 97 ha of sports grounds in Norwich, the equivalent of 0.74 ha per 1000 population, though this includes Eaton Golf Course. Excluding the golf course, the total is about 54 ha (0.41 ha per 1000 population).

There is a wide variety of sports pitches in the Norwich area if all possible locations are taken into account (the study of pitches and other sports facilities considered the actual demand and supply over a wider area which also included the fringe parishes in South Norfolk and Broadland). However the facilities which offer the main potential for use by teams and others in the area are those where there is secured community use, either because the pitch is owned and managed by a public authority, or by a sports club, or there is a formal agreement on school pitches that there is assured access to the facility over a period of time such as a full season. In Norwich, of the 242 pitches, courts and greens in total only half (121) are in community use. Over the wider area the equivalent figures are 406 in total but only 252 in community use.

There are also 6 floodlit synthetic turf pitches in the area, which cater for more specific usage, mainly for hockey and football. The existing ratio of provision works out at 1 full size pitch per 34,300 people.

**Play provision for children and young people** - In total children's play facilities occupy an area of 12.77 has (0.1 has/1000 population) and teenagers' facilities 3.17 has (0.02 has/1000), giving a total for overall play provision for children and young people of 15.94 ha or 0.12 has per 1000 population. The quality of provision for children's and teenagers' play is considered to be good, and relatively the best of any category.

### **Built sports facilities**

**Sports halls** - There are 8 halls in Norwich, including the major facility at the Sportspark, with 4 courts or more, and thus able to offer a full range of activities, together with a further 3 in the fringe parishes. Of these only 4 (3 in Norwich and 1 in the fringe) are considered to offer pay and play opportunities for the local community, the remainder being primarily available on a club or prior booking basis, or solely in private use, and these comprise a total of 33 courts. The Sportspark has almost 50% of the available pay and play courts in the city and wider area. The ratio of provision of 4 court community hall equivalents (the normal benchmark for this) is 1 hall per 25,000 people in Norwich, or 33,000 in the wider Norwich area.

**Swimming pools** - Of the multitude of water space in the area, there are only 6 pools of 25m in length or more allowing the full range of activities, including competitive swimming, 5 in Norwich and 1 in the fringe. Of these only Riverside and the Sportspark are open to the community on a pay and play basis, with a total water space of 1175m<sup>2</sup>. The remainder are used for training and teaching purposes (mainly school sites) or as part of health and fitness clubs mainly in the commercial sector. The ratio of 4-lane 25m community pools (the normal benchmark) is 1:25,000 people in Norwich or 1:39,000 in the wider area.

**Health & Fitness** - Of the total of 1045 stations, about 303 are available to the wider community on a pay and use basis, the remainder usually through subscription to commercial facilities. Overall the ratio of stations per 1000 population (the normal benchmark) is 4.4 in Norwich, and 5.1 over the wider area.

**Indoor bowls** - Most indoor bowls is based at private clubs, though there is local authority provision at the Norman Centre. Norwich provision is the equivalent of 0.08 rinks per 1000 population, and the wider Norwich area figure is 0.11.

**Indoor tennis** - With the recent closure of the Lakenham Tennis Centre (with 4 indoor courts available on a commercial pay and play basis), there are no facilities for indoor tennis in Norwich, though the wider area accommodates 9 courts. All existing provision is based at private clubs. The ratio of provision in the wider Norwich area is 0.04 courts per 1000 population.

**Other sports facilities** – there is a range of other sports facilities in Norwich and the wider area, including golf courses, ski slope, athletics track and ice rink.

**Community Centres** - There are 16 community centres in Norwich (which do not include day centres.) This gives a ratio of 1 small community venue per 8200 people in Norwich.

## LOCAL DEMAND

Local demand for open space and recreational facilities was assessed using a variety of methods.

**Local consultation** - a wide ranging consultation exercise was undertaken, comprising a household survey, schools questionnaire, workshops and topic discussions, involving sport, green spaces and community groups.

The consultation has highlighted a very wide range of issues, of which the following key general points are felt to be most relevant:

- The local importance attached to the provision of a range of open spaces and facilities.
- The value attached to both informal and formal open spaces.
- The concern for the quality of some facilities
- The need when planning for all types of recreation opportunity to take into account people's preparedness to travel, and requirement for different types of space. For children and young people this means easy access by foot/cycle, although this should be a universal aspiration in planning and locating all local community open spaces and recreation opportunities.

The consultation also enabled local demand for open space and other facilities to be identified, as well as the catchments within which facilities are assumed to be accessible (see below).

**Demand for outdoor sports** – a detailed assessment of the demand for pitches, courts and greens for outdoor sport in Norwich was undertaken using information on team generation, future participation targets, demographics and other factors. The future requirements were as follows:

- Football – need for 44 senior, 30 junior and 13 mini pitches overall (in the wider Norwich area)
- Cricket – need for 20 pitches
- Rugby – need for 4 senior, 3 junior and 4 mini pitches
- Tennis – need for 11 courts
- Bowls – need for 31 greens
- Other (e.g. pitch and putt) – existing provision adequate

These were then converted to space requirements, which were used to develop a local standard of provision (see below).

**Demand for built sports facilities** – a detailed assessment of local demand was undertaken using tools available on the Sport England website, and the following requirements were identified:

- Sports halls – up to 11 halls in Norwich
- Swimming pools – 7 pools
- Indoor bowls – up to 3 centres
- Health and fitness – up to 15 centres
- Indoor tennis – up to 3 centres
- Athletics – 1/2 tracks
- STPs – up to 5 pitches

**Demand for allotments** - a requirement for the provision of a total of 2000 plots in the city was considered reasonable, representing an increase of 500 plots or about 33%. This was then converted into a space requirement

**Demand for Children's Play** - the future provision for children's and young people's play was estimated as follows:

- Children's play - 33% increase on existing provision
- MUGAs - 22 courts in total
- Other facilities as current

Similarly these were converted to a space requirement.

## STANDARDS

On the basis of existing supply of facilities and the demand identified above, a set of recommended standards for the provision of open space and recreation facilities has been developed as follows:

- Parks and gardens – 0.62 ha per 1000 people, district parks within 900m, pocket parks within 600m
- Natural and semi natural green space – 2.46 ha per 1000 people, within 600m
- Informal amenity open space – 1.0 ha per 1000 people, within 100m
- Play provision for children and young people – 0.16 ha per 1000 people, pre-teens within 240m, teenagers within 720m
- Allotments – 0.44 ha per 1000 people, within 600m
- Outdoor sports facilities – 1.01 ha per 1000 people, within 3000m
- Total - 5.69 ha per 1000 people

Built sports facilities should be provided as follows:

- Sports halls – 1 4-court hall per 12000 people
- Swimming pools – 1 4-lane pool per 18000 people
- Indoor bowls – 1 6-rink centre per 55000 people
- Indoor tennis – 1 4-court centre per 57000 people
- Health and fitness – 1 50-station centre per 8300 people
- Athletics – 1 8-lane track per 115000 people
- STP – 1 full size pitch per 30000 people

All built sports facilities should have a catchment of 20 minutes travel, preferably by foot, cycle or public transport.

All facilities should be provided to meet approved quality standards (e.g. Green Flag, City Council, Sport England)

## APPLICATION OF STANDARDS

The application of standards for most aspects of open space are applied at a local level to the four sub areas of the city, and are set out in detail in Part 2 of the study.

More strategic facilities are considered citywide as follows:

**Larger parks and gardens** - existing provision for parks and gardens equates with the recommended standard. There are few parts of the City that are not within easy reach of what can be defined as a major park, such as Eaton Park, Sloughbottom Park, Woodrow Pilling Park or Chapelfield Gardens. For some it may be necessary to take a motorized trip to a park, unless cycle routes can be improved, which would further negate the need to use cars.

**Outdoor sports facilities** – there is a shortage of about 80 ha of outdoor sports space in the city, and the options for future provision should include new facility provision in the city, where this is feasible, considering the extensive nature of pitches and similar facilities, more intensive use of parks and other open spaces which were formerly used for sport, and where other open space uses permit, use of school sites involving improvements to pitches and ancillary facilities, and the negotiation of formal community use agreements or the use of facilities in the wider Norwich area

**Sports halls** – there is a shortage of 8 sports halls in community use in Norwich, which should be addressed by improvements to community access to school halls at Heartsease, Notre Dame, CNS and possibly the private school facilities at Norwich HS and Norwich School (dependent on school requirements), improved community usage of new smaller 3 court halls and Recreation Road and Catton Grove Primary School or new facility provision in those areas currently outside reasonable walking catchments including Hewett School, Bowthorpe and the Mile Cross area

**Swimming pools** – there is a shortage of 2 pools in community use in Norwich, which should be remedied by improvements to community access to school pools at Heartsease and the smaller pools elsewhere on junior school sites (dependent on school requirements), or new facility provision in those areas currently outside reasonable walking catchments, and in particular the Mile Cross area

**Health and fitness** – there is a shortage of 5 health and fitness centres in Norwich, which should be addressed by new facility provision in those areas currently outside reasonable walking catchments, and in particular Heartsease, Eaton and west of the city centre. Much of the existing provision is private and available only through membership, and additional facilities should be provided ideally for community access on a pay and use basis.

**Indoor bowls** – there is a shortage of 3 rinks in Norwich, which could be remedied by new facility provision, extensions where possible to existing centres or reliance on existing provision in the wider Norwich area.

**Indoor tennis** – there is a shortage of 6/9 courts in the Norwich area, the options for which are new facility provision in the city, particularly where this is accessible to people in the south and west of Norwich or extensions where possible to existing centres



**STPs** – there is a shortage of 1 or 2 pitches in Norwich, which should be solved by new facility provision in the city, at Bowthorpe Community Park, which is in a relatively deprived area of the city, and where space exists to accommodate a further pitch, and Hewett School, which lies in a strategic gap in provision

**Athletics** - there is probably little justification in the provision of an additional track in the area, as existing provision, albeit slightly below the required standard, is available and accessible throughout the area. However consideration might be given to the provision of a synthetic 'J track' at one of the high school sites, which will allow training and the development of athletes to complement the existing track at the Sportspark.

**Community Centres** - the current number of community centres matches the recommended standard. However, whilst there is quite good spatial coverage of the City by existing venues, some areas do not appear to be well served. New facilities in these locations would improve the accessibility of local residents throughout the city to small community halls for a variety of purposes, and should be provided as the city develops and population increases.

## **OPTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION PLAN**

A range of options is considered together with an action plan for the implementation of the findings of the study, and recommendations on planning policies to be included in the local development framework and its component documents, including a Supplementary Planning Document for Planning Obligations for Open Space Sport and Recreation.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This is a report of an assessment of open space and recreation facilities in Norwich City, and provides the following:

### Aims

The study's aim is to provide Norwich City Council with an open space, sports and recreation needs assessment and audit analysed and completed in line with the requirements of "Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for Open Space Sport and Recreation" (PPG17), and following the methodology set out in "Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17".

The study has focused on three key outcomes, namely:

- Identifying local open space and recreational needs
- Setting open space provision standards
- Advising on appropriate policies for open space and recreation in connection with the production of the forthcoming Norwich Local Development Framework

### Objectives/Purposes

The specific objectives of the study as set out in the initial brief from Norwich City Council are as follows:

- To identify local needs and standards for open space and recreational provision in Norwich rather than rely on national standards currently in use
- To reflect the wider definition of open space and recreational facilities established in PPG17 in future planning documents.
- To undertake a current assessment to guide open space policy and to justify the requirement for developers to provide open space either through on-site provision or by off-site provision through section 106 agreements.
- To allow greater flexibility in spending off-site payments, for example so that they can be spent outside existing distance thresholds if it is on an open space, which serves the whole of the city.
- To conform to Government advice for the content of Local Development Frameworks that there should be fewer policies than in previous Local Plans
- To gain advice on how the policies should sit within the overall framework of Core Strategy, Development Control and Site Specific documents
- To inform policy advice on issues such as the possibility of amending thresholds to reflect the fact that all housing development creates a need for open space and recreation, and consider the current approach on the creation of numerous small children's play facilities which can become a liability in the long run

In particular, the report seeks to:

- Set new locally based provision standards;
- Establish thresholds above which developers should be required to provide open space;
- Outline the circumstances in which off-site payments could be made for open space instead of on-site provision and appropriate amounts of those contributions for different types of residential development;

- Identify specific sites that require protection, enhancement or allocation to optimise the use of developer contributions;
- Clarify circumstances in which it may be possible to release sites for non-recreational use.

It will form the basis for the wider Green Space Strategy for Norwich, which will contain an Action Plan for improvements to open space in the city.

### **Norwich City context**

The City of Norwich covers an area of about 3,900 hectares. For the purposes of estimating demand and developing a standard for future provision, the city is assumed to have a population of 131,000, and the wider Norwich area (which also includes the built up fringe parishes in Broadland and South Norfolk) a population of 206,000 (see Appendix 1 for assumptions used).

It is a diverse city in terms of its urban form, demographic and social composition, and the relationship of these with recreation and open space opportunities. The following represents an overview of the city, as taken from the draft Sustainable Community Strategy.

*'Norwich has an historic centre, one that compares with the best in Europe. It is walkable and accessible, encompassing architectural styles over a 900-year period, from Romanesque to 21st century. Nowhere else in the country can you find such a well-preserved and extensive medieval street pattern; more pre-reformation churches; a Norman castle and cathedral; 1,500 buildings within the fortified walls listed as historically and architecturally important; and indeed, the only friary left intact after the reign of Henry VIII.*

*Norwich also has 500 hectares of parks and open spaces (now recalculated in this study); 23 formal parks, eight local nature reserves; 33 county wildlife sites; a university; an art college; five theatres; a science trail; festivals and exhibitions that gain international recognition; a renowned community of writers; an arts centre leading the way in combining new technologies and art; three prominent public art galleries and an array of independent art galleries supported by a thriving community of practicing visual artists.*

*Economically, Greater Norwich is booming and growth is expected to continue. The jobs market is buoyant and average house prices have increased significantly over recent years. Norwich is regularly ranked as one of the top ten most popular shopping destinations in the UK and attracts five million day visitors per year for shopping, tourism and leisure. The city is a major centre for employment. Greater Norwich provides some 120,000 jobs, which represents around 40% of all jobs in Norfolk and the largest concentration of jobs in the eastern region. Financial and insurance services are particularly strong, with major companies and many specialist companies providing almost 30% of jobs in the city. However, small businesses are under-represented and the number of business start-ups is low in comparison to national figures. There is a thriving media and creative industries sector, which includes long-established companies, regional broadcasting headquarters, the UK's largest independent regional newspaper and young, innovative companies.*

*However, there are surprisingly high levels of deprivation in the city. Norwich has the highest proportion of housing benefit recipients and council tax benefit recipients of all*

*local authorities in the eastern region. Over 30% of Norwich children are affected by income deprivation. Educational attainment is low in certain areas, and many people lack the basic skills required by employers. Deprivation also has a detrimental effect on health, and mental health is a significant issue for the city.'*

In addition, the following characteristics have an effect on life in Norwich and the surrounding area

- The boundaries of the city are tightly defined, and much of the city is built up. The neighbouring local authorities of Broadland and South Norfolk are responsible for the administration of additional developed parishes on the edge of Norwich, which in day-to-day terms are part of the wider Norwich area. The value of relevant opportunities for recreation in open space in the fringe parishes outside Norwich City must therefore be considered.
- The geographically compact nature of Norwich (and indeed the whole Norwich area) makes it potentially easy to walk or cycle from one part of the City to another, within reason: this represents a good foundation for building a sustainable community.
- There is proximity to neighbouring countryside and open land, in particular due to the presence of Mousehold Heath, local river valleys and links through the main built up area, which serve an important visual and ecological, as well as recreational, function.
- Much of the City is close to water, largely in the form of rivers, lakes and broads. Water is therefore a resource of great value: it can greatly enhance the City for its people and wildlife, and encourage inward investment.
- The variety in urban form across the City is reflected in the contrasting size, characteristics, and quality of open space provision in different areas. The City has a heritage of high quality parks, but in some areas open space is noticeable only by its absence. Other areas seem to be awash with space, although sometimes it is bland and in need of more imaginative treatment and use.
- The city's geographical compactness has had an effect on the amount of open space in Norwich, as accessibility throughout the city means that less space is required per person, compared with the surrounding rural areas, where every village has, for example, a playing field but often not used to capacity
- Norwich has a very distinctive architecture and townscape. It retains these traits where other cities have lost much of their local identity due to 'regeneration', where local character can be easily lost.
- Norwich is undergoing significant growth and change, because the area has been designated as a Regional Growth Point. The co-ordinated planning, design and realisation of new and improved open space and recreation opportunities can help ensure that high standards are achieved. New development is particularly taking place on brownfield sites, and policy responses are required to ensure open spaces are provided to serve this development.

## VISION FOR OPEN SPACE

To meet the objectives set for the study, the following vision for open space in Norwich has been developed:

*To ensure the provision and retention of a network of sustainable, varied, high quality and accessible open spaces and recreational facilities throughout the city. These will be planned, designed, managed and maintained to meet the diverse requirements of residents, workers and visitors alike, while at the same time respecting the needs of*

*wildlife. The range of uses will be multi-functional, including recreation, sport, physical activity, informal and quiet activities and biodiversity, so contributing towards the quality of life, environment, economy and community in Norwich.*

## **FORMAT OF REPORT**

The report is set out to undertake the following:

- Describe the methodology used to undertake the assessment.
- Summarise national and local policy of relevance to this assessment, and identify some of the implications.
- Examine the quantity, distribution and (wherever possible) quality of existing recreation and open space opportunities.
- Review the results of relevant surveys, assessments and consultation into local needs.
- Make recommendations, including standards designed to reflect the needs of both existing residents, as well as the likely demands resulting from housing development. These recommendations also include an Action Plan.

## **A PRACTICAL DEFINITION OF OPEN SPACE**

The scope of this study in terms of the types of open space and recreation opportunities considered is largely determined by guidance contained in PPG 17, together with its companion guide. The typology of opportunities recommended by the guidance includes the following:

- Parks and Gardens
- Natural and semi natural green space
- Green corridors
- Outdoor sports facilities and 'recreation grounds'
- Informal/amenity open space
- Provision for children and young people
- Allotment and community gardens
- Important indoor sports facilities, and community halls.

In terms of the above types of open space and recreational opportunity the study is restricted largely to those areas and facilities that are physically accessible by the community; either informally or on some sort of managed basis, for a genuine recreation activity. It also includes some open spaces which have limited or no accessibility, but have potential for accessibility or are of biodiversity and/or landscape value.

The existing or potential recreation utility of a site is a function of its:

- size
- location
- shape, topography and internal site features.

Even very small sites are potentially large enough to accommodate meaningful recreation activity. A site of 0.2 ha is still sufficiently large to accommodate, for example, an equipped play area, tennis court, or pocket park. For this reason no size threshold has been used as a basis for including or excluding sites from this study.

The location of a space has a profound impact on its recreational utility for many reasons including safety, accessibility, security and nuisance. An unenclosed space immediately adjacent to a very busy road might not be considered to have any practical recreation use for safety reasons. Similarly, a space adjacent to open plan private gardens (as often occurs in many modern housing estates) might generate concerns from residents and effectively stop it being used actively for this purpose. However, if it were a large site, parts of it may be considered to be a safe distance from the road, or sufficiently remote not to cause actual or perceived nuisance to residents.

A site may in theory be open to use by the public, but in practice might be too heavily vegetated, or sloping, hilly, marshy etc to be used for any recreation purpose. A large site may be of such an awkward shape as to exclude any meaningful recreation use; and, apart from safety issues, much highway land cannot be considered to be open space for such reasons.

In short there can be no hard and fast rules for determining the recreation utility of a site for the community. This has meant that judgements have been made on a site-by-site basis as to what should be included and excluded for these purposes. In general this has been easy to achieve in a consistent way for the very large majority of sites.

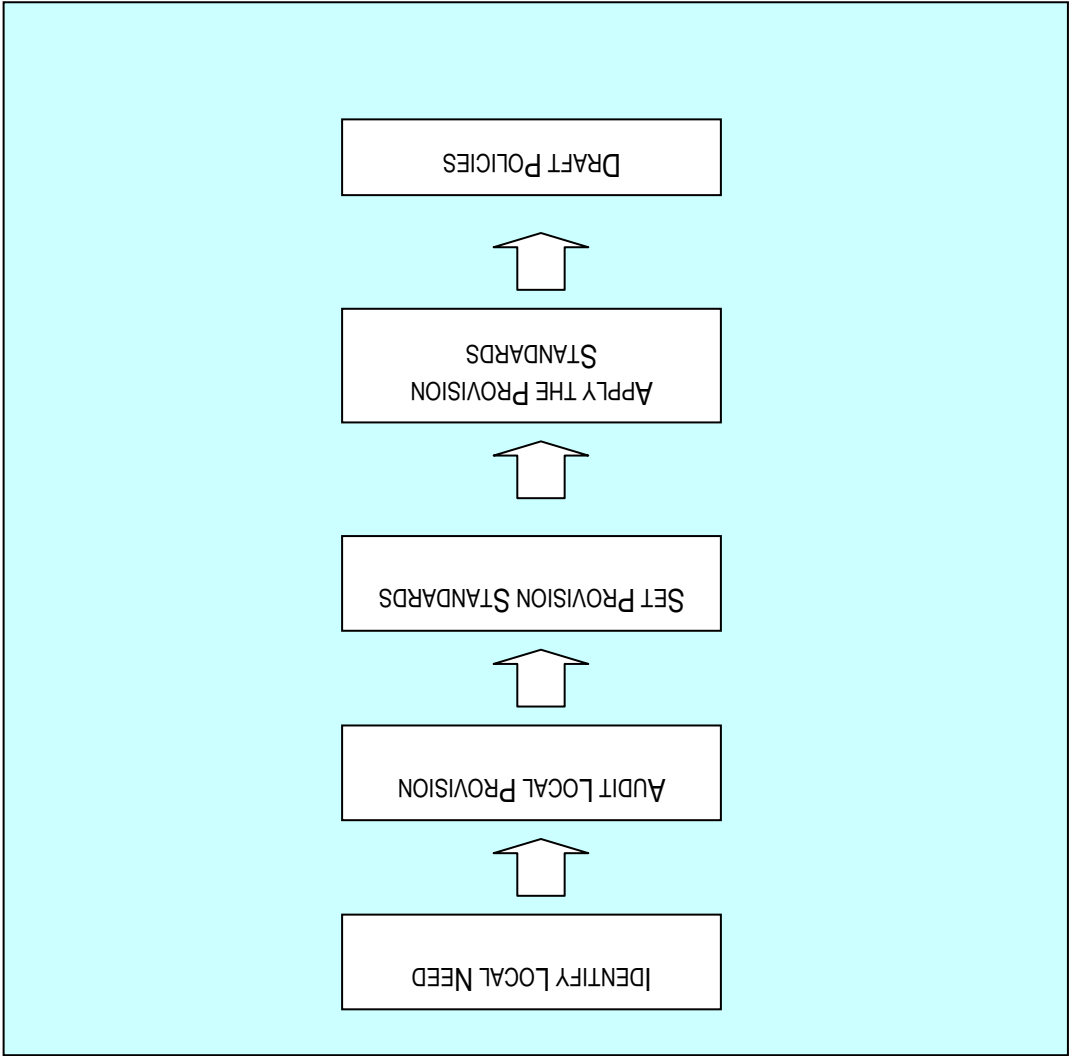
## 2. METHODOLOGY AND SUB AREAS

### GENERAL METHODOLOGY

The starting point for this study has been the government's Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' (PPG17), and its companion guide 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities'. PPG17 places a requirement on local authorities to undertake assessments and audits of open space, sports and recreational facilities in order to:

- identify the needs of the population;
- identify the potential for increased use; and,
- establish the basis for an effective strategy for open space/sports/recreational facilities at the local level through the forthcoming Norwich Green Space Strategy.

The companion guide to PPG17 recommends an overall approach to this kind of study as summarised below.



Within this overall approach the companion guide suggests a range of methods and techniques that might be adopted in helping the assessment process, and these have been used where considered appropriate to local circumstances and permitted by time and resources. These methods and techniques, where they have been used, together with other techniques developed more recently, are explained at appropriate points in this report.

Both the PPG17 and the companion guide place great emphasis on consulting the local community through the assessment process.

## SUB AREAS (WARDS)

Many of the open space, sport and recreation opportunities that are covered by this report will serve *local needs* and therefore have *local catchments*. Play areas and nearby parks are obvious examples of such opportunities. On the other hand major 'strategic' facilities such as large swimming pools, athletics tracks or Mousehold Heath will also meet the needs of people dispersed over much larger catchments.

For the study to embrace these varying needs and opportunities it therefore has to consider provision and need in terms of small and larger geographical areas. Accordingly, surveys and analyses of provision have been based on the following levels:

- Wards (also amalgamated into 4 sub areas as set out in Map 1 below)
- City
- The wider Norwich area comprising the city and the surrounding parishes within the Norwich built up area

Similarly, much of the information arising out of the survey of needs can also be broken down to (or built up from) a very local level. For example, the findings of surveys provide locally

relevant information, and responses to the household survey can be linked to general postcode locations of respondents (with the former).



**Map 1 Norwich City wards and sub areas**



## EXISTING DATA

The City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan (Adopted November 2004) includes reference to open space as follows:

- Urban green space
- Publicly accessible recreational open space.

This does not differentiate its actual use, rather its accessibility to the public. The data incorporated in the existing Local Plan has formed the basis for the information set out in this report. However this has been redefined to reflect the typology recommended in PPG17, and in particular the actual uses of this and other land not previously identified.

Although some of the above space is currently not available to use by the public in the conventional sense it can generally be viewed from external locations and appreciated. It may also have future potential for new or improved community use. The most obvious scenario is where upon application of the standards of provision suggested by this study (see Section 7), there is an apparent deficiency in some form of open space in a particular area, and the only land potentially available to rectify this deficiency is identified as private open space.

The 'site assessments' undertaken as part of this study (and which represent a basis for much of the analysis and findings) largely examined the 'recreation characteristics' of open spaces surveyed – i.e. its operational use for sport, physical activity, informal recreation, etc rather than its amenity or visual value. In recognition of these other important functions of open space, the site assessment proformas also included sections and headings that required judgments to be made concerning the visual quality of spaces and their relationship and contribution to the wider area. This information will be available to the forthcoming green spaces strategy, which will be better placed to examine such matters. However, an important output of this study (standards of provision for open space) will reflect these other functions and ensure that new provision is appropriately designed to contribute positively in aesthetic terms to the surrounding environment.

### 3. STAKEHOLDER AND POLICY REVIEW

#### GENERAL COMMENT

The whole process of this study has been driven by policy: national, regional and local. It is only through being aware of this policy and ensuring that all recommendations and actions within this report in some way link back to the former that this study will have relevance to and be accepted by the widest possible range of stakeholders.

A wide-ranging review of the various agencies, organisations and interests involved in, and having an impact on, Open Space, Sport and Recreation (OS, S&R) has been undertaken. A review has also been undertaken of strategies and policies at local, sub regional, regional, and national levels.

Headline findings are set out later in this section. The more relevant background documents are considered here.

#### PPG 17 PLANNING FOR OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION

The fundamental basis for the current study is government advice set out in PPG17. This planning policy guidance note was revised in July 2002 to replace previous guidance published in 1991, and which concentrated solely on sport and recreation.

The current guidance highlights the wider role that open space, sport and recreation (OS, S + R) play in underpinning people's quality of life and the contribution that they can make in delivering government objectives including:

- Supporting an urban renaissance
- Promoting social inclusion and community cohesion
- Contributing towards health and well being
- Promoting sustainable development

A necessary pre-requisite to planning for open space, sport and recreation is considered to be the preparation of a robust assessment of existing and future needs of the community at a district level and the production of local standards to deliver these. 'A Companion Guide to PPG17 – Assessing Needs and Opportunities' was produced by the ODPM in September 2001 and the guidance contained therein has been followed in this study.

PPG17 also provides guidance on

- Maintaining an adequate supply of facilities for open space, sport and recreation
- Protecting playing fields
- Controlling development within open spaces
- Enhancing existing OS, S + R facilities
- Planning for new facilities
- The use of planning obligations to remedy local deficiencies

Each of these is considered as part of this study.

Open space is defined in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as 'land laid out as a public garden, or used for the purposes of public recreation, or land which is a disused burial ground. However PPG17 advises that this should also include all open space of public value offering

important opportunities for sport and recreation, and acting as a visual amenity. A suggested typology is followed in this study (see above).

Sport and recreation are not formally defined but for the purposes of local needs assessment should include consideration of facilities including the following:

- Swimming pools
- Indoor sports halls and leisure centres
- Indoor bowls centres
- Indoor tennis centres
- Ice rinks
- Community centres

## **SPECIFIC LINKS TO THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

The Norwich Draft Sustainable Community Strategy 2007-2020 was prepared by the City of Norwich Partnership, the local strategic partnership. The long-term vision for this strategy is

*‘To make Norwich the best place in the world to live, work, learn and visit.’*

The proposed mission, themes and strategic objectives include:

‘To work together to enable Norwich to be recognised as a model city of

- Economic growth and enterprise
- Environmental excellence
- Culture and creativity
- Safe and strong communities
- Health and well-being
- Learning and personal development’

Open space, sport and recreation can impact on the priorities and vision of the Community Plan in the following ways:

- Proper planning for and realisation of OS, S&R helps to create diversity of positive opportunities for *culture and creativity*. It also helps provide a varied and attractive City in the physical sense.
- Well-conceived and managed OS, S&R opportunities can contribute towards *safe and strong communities*. Positive leisure opportunities reduce boredom, induce an optimistic outlook on life, and reduce the temptation on some to drift into antisocial behaviour and crime.
- OS, S&R can assist in the *learning and personal development* of young people in a very general sense through teaching them about the value of healthy active lifestyles, and other life skills.
- OS, S&R play a vital role in the lives of people. There are clear and undisputed links between healthy physical activity and reduction in obesity and coronary disease. It is also increasingly acknowledged that recreation and attractive open spaces can help improve emotional welfare. Thus there can be overall benefits in terms of reduced spending on *health and well being*.
- Well-conceived open spaces and recreation corridors within the City also contribute towards environmental excellence to the advantage of both wildlife and people. Recreation such as walking and cycling can also be thought of as a ‘utility’ activity allowing trips to be made to the shops, work, school etc by pollution free modes of

travel. Open space of all kinds can serve equally as a context for and relief from “buildings”. It can also provide an important articulation of the latter to the benefit of the quality of the urban landscape as a whole. Of increasing importance are the opportunities afforded by open space to biodiversity in the city, and the move towards carbon neutrality.

- Attractive OS, S&R opportunities can help promote the City to potential inward investors to the benefit of both *economic growth and enterprise*
- Aside from all these important factors, open space is also important in its own right as a major contributor towards the development of sport and active recreation, which forms such an important part of many people’s life in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## LINKS TO THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

**The City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan** was adopted by the Council in November 2004, with the vision that

‘Norwich will maintain and enhance its status as a significant European regional centre in a sustainable manner, embracing change and innovation with pride in its heritage, a good quality of life for all its citizens, a strong modern economy and a safe, healthy and clean environment, both natural and built.’

A number of strategic objectives include the following of relevance to the current study

- SOBJ3 protecting the city’s assets, including its natural heritage...
- SOBJ4 ensuring that development contributes to a healthier environment...
- SOBJ6 promoting a well connected city, using all modes of transport...

Specific policies that have a bearing on open space, sport and recreation include:

- NE1 – protection of environmental assets, such as Mousehold Heath, river valleys and green wedges from inappropriate development
- NE2 – protection of woodlands
- AEC3 – protection of existing community buildings
- SR1 - adoption of minimum standards for the provision of open space (0.8ha/1000 population for outdoor pitches, 0.4ha/1000 for other sports facilities, 0.5ha/1000 for children’s play and public amenity open space, and longer term higher targets to include dual use facilities
- SR2 – provision of accessible open local open space facilities in each sector of the city
- SR3 – retention of existing recreation facilities and children’s play areas
- SR4 – standards of provision for open space to serve new development
- SR5 – allocation of specific areas in the city for open space (e.g. Old Bowthorpe Park, former Bowthorpe School, Lakenham Common)
- SR6 – dual use by the community of facilities provided at educational and other establishments
- SR7 – provision of children’s equipped play areas to serve new development
- SR8 – protection of historic parks and gardens
- SR9 – protection of existing allotments
- SR10 – provision of recreation facilities and public access in Bowthorpe Southern Park and Colney Lane
- SR11 – completion of the Wensum Riverside and Yare Valley walks
- SR12 – provision of a green links network

- SR13 – locational criteria for new indoor sports facilities
- SR14 – criteria for the development of facilities for sport and recreation that ensure that design and other requirements are met.

There are also a number of housing policies, which have implications for open space, sport and recreation (e.g. HOU6, HOU11)

**Open Space and Play Provision Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** was adopted by the City Council in June 2006 to provide details of how policies SR4 and SR7 of the Local Plan are to be implemented. It also explains the relevant definitions under policies SR1 and SR2.

The Local Plan policies seek provision of open space and play equipment to serve new housing developments of 40 dwellings and more (for open space) and 10 or more (for play provision).

The SPD specifies:

- How the requirements for play and open space will be calculated
- What kind of open space should be developed to serve new housing areas
- The basis for seeking on-site provision or commuted payments for off-site
- The way a commuted sum is calculated
- The way a commuted sum may be used to provide open space and/or play equipment

A separate annex sets out a formula for calculating commuted payments for play and open space, which comprises land costs, design and layout, and maintenance. The differential costs of provision throughout the city reflect the land values in the city centre, southwest part of the city and elsewhere, and apply where land has to be acquired for off-site provision. The annex also recognises that developers may wish to negotiate arrangements in special circumstances.

**Green Links and Riverside Walks Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** was adopted by the City Council in December 2006 to aid interpretation of the green links and riverside walks policies (SR11 and SR12) in the Local Plan. The Local Plan seeks to create a network of sustainable transport routes across the city, linking residential areas into the open space network, as well as employment areas, schools and the like. These routes are intended to be convenient, safe, attractive and wildlife friendly.

The Council will seek the provision of riverside walks and green links on or adjoining the routes identified in the plan, and the guidance sets out examples of schemes already implemented and the future expectations of developers both for implementation and management.

Negotiations with developers will take account of exceptional circumstances applying to individual sites. The preferred means of managing the walks and links is the transfer of the completed routes to the City Council, with a commuted 15-year maintenance sum. In some circumstances the Council will seek a planning agreement or obligation to fulfil their requirements.

#### **Effectiveness of existing policies and guidance**

- The existing system of developer contributions is based on historic standards which rely on national minimum requirements rather than a local assessment of need
- Developer contributions are only sought for open space and play
- There are no requirements for wider aspects of sport and recreation development which are legitimate under relevant circulars and PPG17, including built sports facilities.

- The thresholds for securing contributions are high and exclude smaller developments. Opportunities are lost to ensure provision on the basis of even quite large developments which are just below the threshold. The system is also inequitable, as it discriminates in favour of the developers of small schemes which themselves increase the demand for facilities, the lack of provision for which exacerbates existing shortfalls.
- During the financial year 2006/7, approximately £1.2 million was collected from developer contributions for open space and play.

### **Emerging Planning Policies**

The existing Local Plan will remain the key policy document until the Local Development Framework (LDF) is completed. The LDF will consist of a suite of documents. The overall strategy, known as the Core Strategy, is being jointly prepared by Norwich City Council, Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council. When this is complete, Norwich City Council will prepare its own Development Control Policies Document, to be adopted in 2012, which will contain detailed open space policies.

The LDF is being prepared within the context of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS14), which is shortly to be adopted. This includes future growth requirements for Norwich of approximately 14,100 new dwellings between 2001 and 2021, of which 3,490 were built to March 2006.

The revised planning policies for open space, sport and recreation in the LDF will be informed by this current study, which will form an important part of the evidence base for open space policy.

## **OTHER LOCAL BACKGROUND POLICY**

### **Norwich Policy Area Playing Pitch Assessment and Open Space Policy**

In February 2003, consultants Strategic Leisure undertook a playing pitch assessment and open space study for the Norwich area, comprising Norwich City, and those parts of South Norfolk and Broadland within the Norwich (planning) Policy Area. It partly utilised Sport England's methodology for assessing local supply and demand, and also drew heavily on NPFA minimum requirements to assess the adequacy of existing provision of pitches. The main conclusions reached by the study were as follows:

- Assessed against minimum standards recommended by the NPFA of 1.21 ha/1000 population, there was an overall deficiency of 63ha of pitches in the study area, comprising a 72ha deficiency in Norwich, 9ha deficiency in the Broadland area and an 18ha surplus in South Norfolk.
- Using the Sport England methodology of comparing local pitch provision with actual and identified demand, the existing situation was as follows:
  - Football - a surplus of senior pitches and shortfall of junior and mini in Norwich, a surplus of all pitches in Broadland and a surplus of senior and mini pitches in South Norfolk, but a shortfall in junior pitches
  - Cricket – a major surplus of pitches in all areas and overall to meet current/existing needs
  - Rugby – adequate supply of pitches in Broadland and South Norfolk, no teams therefore no requirement for pitches in Norwich
  - Hockey – adequacy of synthetic turf pitches (STPs) for hockey in the overall area, but identified need by individual clubs for additional time at existing STPs
- The study considered future demand brought about by population change, governing body development initiatives and increased participation in general, together with the

expressed needs of individual clubs to expand the number of teams and improve playing opportunities. This was not quantified in the assessment in detail, but it was considered unlikely to reverse the existing situation where there was a general adequacy of pitches for all 4 sports considered.

- The assessment did not go on to develop a local standard for future pitch provision in the Norwich area as recommended by Sport England (SE). If this had been undertaken, it is highly unlikely from the information above that any local standard would have remotely approached the 1.21 ha/1000 recommended by the NPFA as a minimum overall standard. The numerical shortfalls identified above when using NPFA as a benchmark must therefore be treated with extreme caution, and Strategic Leisure's recommendation that a local standard in accordance with NPFA minimum requirements be adopted is considered excessive. Clearly a more reliable local standard would be in the order of 1ha/1000 based on the SE methodology and the pitch and team information audited by the previous consultants.
- The study made a number of recommendations for quality improvements to pitches and ancillary facilities, the management of school sites not in community use and the retention of all sites then in sporting use.

### **Norwich City Play Strategy Consultation Draft 2007-2010**

This was produced in August 2007 with the vision 'to create a city that is increasingly receptive to the play needs of children and young people, all of whom will have better access to a range of quality play opportunities near to their home.'

The basis for the strategy was a comprehensive audit of facilities, the first time this has been done in the city. The audit identified City Council facilities for children's play (toddlers and juniors), and teenagers (e.g. skate parks and BMX), other facilities for play in parks (such as Eaton Park boating lake), natural play opportunities in extensive areas of natural green space throughout the city, and opportunities provided by other agencies in the voluntary community and statutory sector. For the most part the audit corresponded to that undertaken as part of this open spaces study. In particular the audit compared provision for play areas in the city with the population, existing City Council standards and other measures of need. These are summarised in the table below.

| <b>Table 1 Play provision</b> |                  |                    |
|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------------|
|                               | Actual provision | Required provision |
| Toddlers play areas           | 68               | 89                 |
| Junior play areas             | 47               | 60                 |

From the outset there appears to be a shortfall in provision compared with standards, and this is reflected in more local areas as outlined in the strategy.

Extensive consultation has taken place with local groups, children and young people resulting in an action plan which it is anticipated will lead to better play provision. The plan contains 8 priorities:

- To promote the importance of play to raise the benefits for health, well being and learning
- To make play equally accessible to all children and young people
- To extend the choice and control by children and young people within their own play domain

- To ensure that children and young people are safe from anti social behaviour when they play
- To ensure that all parks, thoroughfares, housing estates and other public spaces take into account the play strategy (particularly relevant to the current open space study)
- To engage children and young people to determine their own play needs and aspirations
- To develop and maintain a variety of local and accessibly play facilities that target deprived communities
- To aim to offer all children and young people the chance to encounter acceptable risks in stimulating and challenging play environments.

### **Greater Norwich Growth Point Area – Draft Green Infrastructure Strategy Stage 1**

The Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) comprises Norwich City Council, Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council, together with Norfolk County Council (with the Broads Authority and EEDA as stakeholders). The GNDP commissioned planning consultants CBA and others to develop proposals for a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the three districts. The report includes a definition of green infrastructure ('a multi-functional network of green spaces and interconnecting green corridors in urban areas, the countryside in and around towns and rural settlements and in the wider countryside') and its benefits and functions, and makes recommendations for developing a multi functional green infrastructure network for future investment and allocation in LDFs.

The report highlights the economic, environmental, physical/psychological and social inclusion benefits of green infrastructure to the wider community.

The report makes recommendations on ecological areas to be maintained and enhanced, the means whereby the community can gain access to natural green space (the development of green ways over land and blue ways alongside water and other more local links) and the connections between Norwich itself and smaller surrounding towns and villages.

The proposed network has significant implications for much of the open space (particularly natural green space) in Norwich and in particular the important areas of Mousehold Heath and the river valleys. The recommendations of the Green Infrastructure Strategy, including its action plan currently being developed, must go hand in hand with the conclusions of the current open space needs assessment being addressed in this study.

## **WIDER POLICY CONTEXT**

Other documents have some bearing on the current study, though these do not purport to be comprehensive. The headline findings are set out below.

### **National**

At national level, the importance of open space, sport and recreation facilities in their wider sense is highlighted in the following policy documents:

- Planning Policy Statement 1 Delivering Sustainable Development (PPS1), the overarching planning guidance, statutorily requires planning to promote sustainable development. It states that Development Plans should: "Provide improved access for all to ..... community facilities, open space, sport and recreation." The recent draft Supplement to PPS1, "Planning for Climate Change", recognises the contribution existing and new open spaces can make to urban cooling and states that planning



authorities should require new developments to provide open spaces for shade and shelter.

- The Government's Urban White Paper 2000 'Our Towns and Cities: The Future – Delivering an Urban Renaissance' stated that good quality parks and open spaces can provide a vital contribution to economic success, through a well designed and managed physical environment, and good quality services and leisure and cultural opportunities.
- The Sustainable Communities Plan 'Building for the Future 2003' set out a long term programme for action for securing sustainable communities, which includes improving the quality of our public spaces
- The Urban Green Spaces Taskforce, established in 2002, stressed that inward investment in to our cities is promoted by high quality parks and gardens. Such areas can provide venues for outdoor leisure pursuits, and for community festivals and events and the involvement of the community in planning such areas is paramount. It also emphasised the importance of open space in combating social exclusion and in providing educational opportunities.
- English Nature in 'Accessible Natural Green Space in Towns and Cities' (1995) highlighted the value of green space in reducing pollution, and more recent concern about global warming has encouraged the provision and retention of green space and tree planting to neutralise the effects of carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas production. Open space is also lauded by conservation bodies for its contribution to biodiversity in our towns and cities.
- The Government's 'Choosing Health' White Paper set out the key principles for supporting the public to make healthier and informed choices regarding their health, including increasing exercise and in particular extolling the benefits of cycling, walking and easy access to sporting facilities. Subsequently the Donaldson report by the Government's Chief Medical Officer set out the available evidence from around the world for the impact that physical activity has on public health, demonstrating that an inactive lifestyle has a substantial, negative impact on individual and public health. Various conferences have since shown that contact with green space is an important means of improving physical and mental health, that provision of good quality sports and informal recreation facilities encourages physical activity and that increased activity reduces many health problems.
- In 'Gameplan' (2002) the Government set itself the objective of a major increase in participation in sport and physical activity, and in response Sport England published 'The Framework for Sport in England – Making England an Active and Successful Nation: A Vision for 2020', where the now well established target of Increasing participation by a minimum of 1% annually was first mooted. This move towards sport becoming a means of increasing physical activity is now enshrined in most thinking about facility development, and open spaces and built facilities are important aspects of this. Everyday Sport was the first major Sport England initiative aimed at meeting this target of a 1% per year participation increase by 2020, and the initiative shows people how they can increase the amount of physical activity they do by not only playing sport but by walking, cycling and using informal spaces.
- Sport England also produced a document 'Sport Playing its Part' where it set out the contribution that sport can make to developing healthier, and strong, safe and sustainable communities, improving economic vitality and workforce development and meeting the particular needs of children and young people. Open space and sports facilities are integral to this.

## Regional

At regional level the context for this study is provided by the following strategies and documents:

- The most recent draft of The East of England Plan (RSS14) was produced in 2006 by Government Office for the East of England (GO East). It sets out a strategy to guide planning and development in the region to the year 2021, and forms the basis for more detailed planning policies in the LDF. It addresses the need to consider open spaces and sport and recreation facilities, in particular in ensuring that new facilities are provided in conjunction with new development, whether these are greenfield or brown field. It also covers the need to retain important open space and other facilities, to undertake proper audits of provision through Needs Assessments (with community involvement) and the use of planning obligations to ensure high levels of provision. It requires the provision and enhancement of a connected network of green spaces, "Green Infrastructure", to provide economic, social and environmental benefits.
- The Regional Plan for Sport in the East – 'Adding value through sport to the lives of the people in the East of England' was produced by the East Sports Board in 2004 to put a regional perspective on the national target of increased participation in sport, and in particular the need to take higher levels of physical activity (30 minutes 5 times a week). The main objectives in the plan include better promotion and marketing to ensure increases in activity, using the planning system to improve facilities, including the better use of S106 agreements with developers, improved partnerships across the board including those with groups often not associated with sport, better use of school facilities by the wider community and strategic planning to ensure that there is a comprehensive evidence base of need. Sport England will continue to work with the Sports Board to fulfil its functions, including the statutory requirement to protect playing fields for sport and physical activity.
- The British Heart Foundation National Centre for Physical Activity and Health was commissioned by Sport England East to conduct an extensive mapping project across the region. The aim was to present an initial picture of direct and indirect sport, exercise and physical activity programmes and initiatives in the region, to provide evidence base for professionals to use in future planning and development. Among the most important findings was that the most common settings are leisure/sports facility driven, formal community settings and informal community settings.
- Active East – A Physical Activity Framework for the East of England 2005 – 2008 aims to contribute to increasing participation in physical activity across the region by 1% per annum year on year between 2005 and 2008, and includes active recreation (walking, dance, and exercise), organised sport (football, hockey, netball, cricket etc), as well as active transport (cycling) and active living (gardening, manual labour etc). The framework makes some reference to the importance of informal areas of open space as well as formal facilities for sport and activity.
- 'A Better Life: the Role of Culture in the Sustainable Development of the East of England' (2006) sets out the new cultural strategy for the region. It explains the vision for culture and aims to encourage decision-makers and funders to make culture a foundation of their infrastructure and planning. Culture is defined to include parks, open spaces, wildlife habitats, water and environment and countryside recreation. Open spaces, parks, woodlands et al provide places for people to enjoy themselves and find spiritual refreshment.
- 'Creating Active Places - Sports Facilities Strategy for the East of England' has recently been produced by consultants for the East Sports Board, and sets out a strategic

framework for the development of sports facilities in the region. This is being supplemented by county strategies, which are currently in the course of production.

## Local

At a local or county level, the following provides guidance on open space, sport and recreation:

- The Norfolk Structure Plan will be replaced by the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) when the latter is formally adopted. In the meantime the approved Structure Plan (1999) forms the strategic basis for Local Plan policies and contains county-wide policies for sport, informal recreation and countryside activities, with particular reference to the Norwich policy area.
- The Broadland District Local Plan (Replacement) was adopted on 22 May 2006. It contains policies for the provision of major sports facilities, those for local need, the provision of playing space in accordance with NPFA standards, maintenance payments for open space and the protection of existing open space and sports facilities. Policies are based on existing strategies for sport, and a 2005 playing pitch study, though there is no evidence of a full local assessment of need for sport and open space (This has since been undertaken by consultants in conjunction with a similar study for South Norfolk, and is highlighted below).
- The South Norfolk Local Plan was adopted in 2003, and contains similar policies to Broadland, including provision for main indoor and small scale sports facilities and village halls, recreational land in new developments, again based on NPFA minimum standards, together with maintenance contributions from developers and policies preventing the loss of recreational land. In neither case does each Local Plan require developers to make significant contributions for sports and open space facilities.
- PPG17 Open Space, Indoor Sports and Community Recreation Assessments were prepared for Broadland and South Norfolk District Councils in September 2007 by Strategic Leisure Ltd, broadly along the lines of this current study for Norwich. These will be used in a similar way to inform the LDFs for the area; including the joint Core Strategy for the Norwich area (currently in preparation). One of the outputs of these studies was a recommended standard of open space provision in both Broadland and South Norfolk, which can be summarized as requiring 15.11 ha per 1000 population for South Norfolk, and 7.29 ha per 1000 population for Broadland.
- Active Norfolk is the County Sports Partnership established in 2005 to guide the development of sport in the County over the coming years. It is a partnership between local authorities, national governing bodies of sport, school sports partnerships and others involved in sport in Norfolk. Its main objective is to increase participation in sport and physical activity by 1% per annum. It has developed a business plan whose main focus is on implementing the main aims of the East Plan for sport, namely increasing participation, improving performance, widening access, improving health, building stronger communities improving education and benefiting the economy. Its vision is 'to make Norfolk an active, healthy and successful sporting county.'

## THE STAKEHOLDERS

There is a huge array of agencies and organisations that in some shape or form have an interest in promoting OS, S&R, and all of them can therefore have a bearing on the planning of local open space and recreation opportunities.

The Figure 'Existing Stakeholders' identifies the public, private and voluntary sector stakeholders having some direct or indirect interest in OS, S&R opportunities. It cannot be

guaranteed that everyone or everything has been identified, but it does illustrate the complexity of potential arrangements between all parties.

It is almost impossible to plot the precise relationship of each stakeholder to others in the figure. However, a few observations can safely be made.

The stakeholders can generally be broken down into 'Users', 'Providers', 'Funders', and 'Enablers' of OS, S&R opportunities, where:

- 'Users' are basically the participants in OS, S&R, be they individuals or groups.
- 'Providers' can be agencies, organisations and (sometimes) individuals in the public, voluntary and private/commercial sectors largely responsible for establishing and maintaining OS, S&R opportunities.
- 'Funders' are those that provide *financial* support to either create or maintain opportunities, including through grant aid.
- 'Enablers' help in creating and maintaining opportunities either through policy, general nurture and support including advice on technical issues and sources of funding etc.

### Existing stakeholders

| Table 2 Stakeholders |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 'Users'              | Individuals, groups and clubs   |
| 'Providers'          | City and County Councils (various departments)- schools - youth and play organisations - local clubs and organisations – landowners - commercial providers - countryside organisations.   |
| 'Funders'            | Central government - local authorities - The Lottery - governing bodies of sport - charitable trusts and foundations - environmental trusts - Countryside Agency/Natural England – housebuilders – business - Private Finance Initiatives/Private Public Partnerships - voluntary fundraising - other grant sources.  |
| 'Enablers'           | City and County Councils (various departments) – County Sports Network - National Governing Bodies of Sport - Regional Sports Board – Regional Assembly, Regional Development Agency - Government Office for the Region – Department of Communities and Local Government - Department for Culture, Media and Sport - Department of the Environment, Farming and Rural Affairs - Home Office - Environment Agency - Community and Voluntary Forum for the Region – Local Environment Partnership – Local Strategic Partnership |

Clearly, some of the stakeholders will fall into more than one category. For example, a club will be a 'User', but potentially also a 'Provider'. The City Council may be a 'Provider' in terms of its own facilities, but also a 'Funder', and 'Enabler'. The variety of stakeholders ranges from national/central government level, through regional and sub regional interests, down to local interests.

Recommendations within this study and actions identified in the Action Plan will need to be alert to the legitimate roles of the above interests.

## CONCLUSIONS

This review has demonstrated the following:

- The very wide range of interests involved in providing, managing, facilitating and using open space, sport, recreation, and green space opportunities.
- The vital contribution that open space, recreation and green space opportunities can make in addressing a wide range of national, regional and local policy themes and issues; and the need therefore to continually cross refer the findings and conclusions of this study to relevant policy, so achieving greatest relevance and efficacy.
- That the policy and stakeholder environment is continually changing in terms of initiatives (especially national government and agency guidance, campaigns, and grant regimes). Other than the constant evolution, there are potentially revolutionary changes: the acceptance of healthy exercise as a weapon in the armoury of the 'preventative' wings of the Department of Health and National Health Service; and, linkages between children's and youth service delivery and recreational opportunities to children and young people.
- The potential links between OS, S&R opportunities and the various health, children, youth and green space agendas that figure so prominently in national policy and in the Sustainable Community Strategy for the city
- There are ample opportunities for external support and funding for policies and initiatives arising out of this study. Pre-eminent among these is the opportunity to generate major contributions from developers for the development and maintenance of open space, sports and recreation. However, there may well be other sources of funding so long as initiatives arising from this study and the proposed Green Space Strategy are used to achieve relevant policy agendas.
- The need for new, locally relevant and justified planning and management standards to cover all manner of OS, S&R that might legitimately be funded by developers. It has also highlighted the way in which existing recreational spaces are treated within the Local Plan, as a starting point for consideration of whether there is justification for reviewing the Local Plan designations affecting open spaces to better reflect their distinctive value for recreation in the LDF.

## 4. EXISTING PROVISION

### GENERAL

This section describes overall provision and distribution of open space and other community recreation facilities within the City. It should be read in conjunction with the Area Profiles in Part 2, which provide more detailed consideration of the adequacy or otherwise of provision of open space based on the defined areas. (See Section 2).

#### **Open space: general note**

Generally, this study has looked at the following types of publicly accessible green space:

- Parks and Gardens
- Natural and semi natural green space
- Green corridors
- Informal/amenity open space
- Allotments
- Outdoor sports facilities and 'recreation grounds'
- Play provision for children and young people
- Built sports facilities
- Small community halls.

These reflect the typology of open spaces identified in PPG17 and its companion guide. Although the above are varied in their nature, the great majority share a characteristic of being generally open to community use, either freely (as in the case of Parks), or on a managed basis (such as with allotments and some kinds of outdoor sports facility).

#### **Identification and assessment of sites**

Sites have been identified through desk research as well as site visits and inspections. Quality assessments for the most significant sites have been undertaken, using a variety of forms, depending on the different criteria assessed (available separately). At this stage acknowledgment must be recorded of the assistance provided by Norwich City Council in providing much of the initial audit of open space sites throughout Norwich, which formed the basis of this study.

Each identified site has been given a Unique Reference Label. These labels are shown on the GIS maps and database supplied separately, but their use on illustrations in this report would clutter up the maps. A list of all sites is included under the relevant typology below or in the appendices.

Sites have been assessed for their quality, and placed into 10% bands based on a percentage of the maximum score available to that category of open space. The criteria used in all different typologies is set out in Appendix 2

#### **Other general comments**

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

- Some of the larger spaces (such as the parks) may clearly serve more than one function. For example, a large park may include children's play facilities, sports pitches, natural areas and more. On the other hand, many large spaces may serve

predominantly one function. It may also be difficult to differentiate between different types of informal recreation space, as local people do not necessarily draw a distinction between (for example) a 'recreation ground', a park, and a large area of informal open space- all are capable of meeting local need for informal activity and enjoyment. This demonstrates the need for flexibility in the perception of and planning for open space, which should have implications for the development and application of new local standards for open space.

- Within the limitations of time and resources available to this study, some of the identified sites have been broken down as appropriate to reflect the above diversity of use. However, some sites have not been broken down as such and they are categorised (and shown on the maps) according to their identified primary use. Such spaces may also serve other secondary purposes.
- Much of the open space considered in this report is 'free and open to use'. Access is not generally monitored for most sites considered and is often possible from a variety of points and directions. This makes it difficult to quantify with any precision the levels of use of different open spaces. However, as is seen in Section 5, local consultation has identified clearly the desire of residents to have access to such spaces for informal recreation opportunities.

This report and audit have attempted to address these issues by:

- As far as possible and within resources available, breaking large sites down so as to better reflect key elements/uses that would otherwise be overlooked. For example a park or a recreation ground may host areas for sport and play, and it is important that these uses and facilities are not overlooked through considering the primary use alone of sites.
- Elsewhere in the report recommending standards and a revised development plan typology of open space, which better reflect their distinctive recreation values, and the willingness of people to travel to use attractive major spaces.

## **PARKS AND GARDENS**

Norwich has a number of traditional and high quality urban parks, some of which have been placed on the national 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest' compiled and maintained by English Heritage. The role of public parks and gardens in terms of enhancing general quality of life and the urban realm has been 'rediscovered' in recent years at national level through government-supported campaigns and the work of organisations like CABI Space.

Public parks and gardens take on many forms, and may embrace a wide range of functions, including:

- Informal recreation
- Outdoor sport
- Play space of many kinds (including for teenagers and children's play)
- Providing attractive walks to work
- Offering landscape and amenity features
- Providing areas for 'events'
- Providing habitats for wildlife.
- Providing passive recreation and quiet enjoyment in tranquil spaces for relaxation and stress relief.

Parks are more than simply recreational space - they are a composite of features, the combined value of which is greater than their constituent parts

Identified parks and gardens in the City are shown on the following map and accompanying table.

### Existing provision

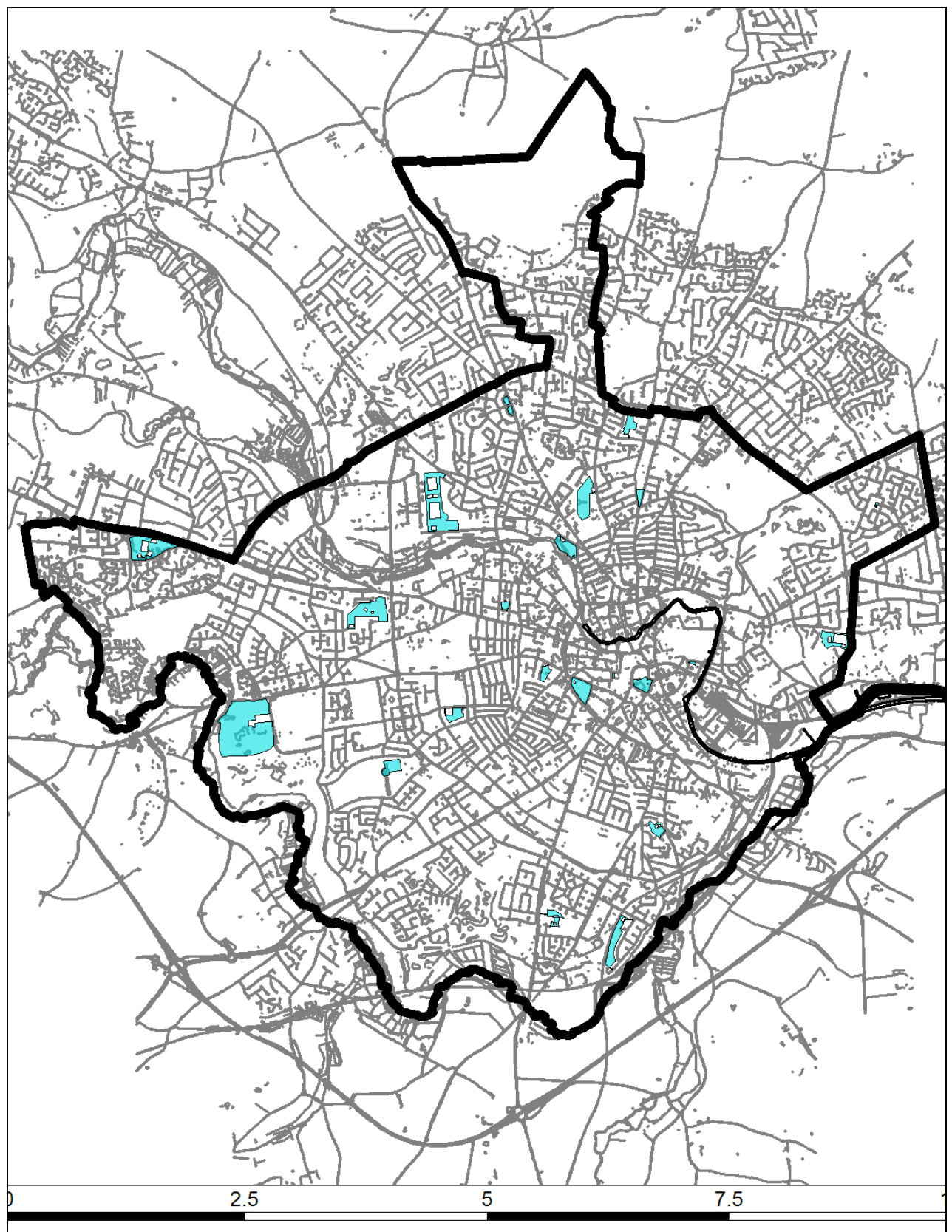
The following sites have been classified by the study as within the category "Parks and Gardens". It is accepted many of these sites might be considered to fulfil other functions. Further consideration of these sites is contained in the various area profiles in Part 2.

| Table 3 Parks and Gardens |                                 |               |            |           |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|------------|-----------|
| URL                       | LOCATION                        | WARD          | SIZE IN HA | QUALITY % |
| B13                       | BOWTHORPE PARK                  | BOWTHORPE     | 7.55       | 62.2      |
| CG33                      | ST CLEMENTS PARK                | CATTON GROVE  | 1.67       | 54.8      |
| CR01                      | ALDERMAN WALKER                 | CROME         | 0.11       | 62.7      |
| CR33                      | WOODROW PILLING PARK            | CROME         | 2.31       | 56.1      |
| E29                       | EATON PARK                      | EATON         | 2.32       | 72.5      |
| L09                       | HARFORD PARK                    | LAKENHAM      | 1.36       | 69.6      |
| L19                       | JUBILEE PARK                    | LAKENHAM      | 1.51       | 68.8      |
| L36                       | LEA BRIDGES PARK                | LAKENHAM      | 3.79       | 68.8      |
| M11                       | CASTLE GARDENS/GREEN            | MANCROFT      | 2.01       | 83.5      |
| M14                       | CHAPELFIELD GARDENS             | MANCROFT      | 3.22       | 71.0      |
| M37                       | MEMORIAL GARDENS                | MANCROFT      | 0.07       | 57.1      |
| M86                       | WEST END STREET GARDENS         | MANCROFT      | 0.63       | 76.2      |
| MC20                      | MILE CROSS GARDENS              | MILE CROSS    | 0.40       | 71.2      |
| MC20A                     | MILE CROSS GARDENS              | MILE CROSS    | 0.41       | 71.2      |
| MC31                      | SLOUGHBOTTOM PARK               | MILE CROSS    | 8.63       | 64.5      |
| MC44                      | WATERLOO PARK                   | MILE CROSS    | 4.88       | 84.1      |
| MC47                      | WENSUM PARK                     | MILE CROSS    | 2.96       | 71.1      |
| N12                       | HEIGHAM PARK                    | NELSON        | 1.70       | 87.1      |
| N17                       | PLANTATION GARDENS              | NELSON        | 1.18       | 87.0      |
| S16                       | SEWELL PARK                     | SEWELL        | 0.78       | 73.5      |
| TH24                      | JAMES STUART GARDENS            | THORPE HAMLET | 0.19       | 77.6      |
| U09                       | EARLHAM PARK                    | UNIVERSITY    | 26.79      | 68.1      |
| W04                       | BOWTHORPE SCHOOL COMMUNITY PARK | WENSUM        | 6.35       | xxx       |

URL refers to unique site reference number in database

The total area of open space in use as parks and gardens in the City is about 81 hectares. This is the equivalent of about 0.62 has per 1000 population. This excludes land in the above parks that are allocated to a separate primary typology – if these are included, open space in parks and gardens totals about 135 has.

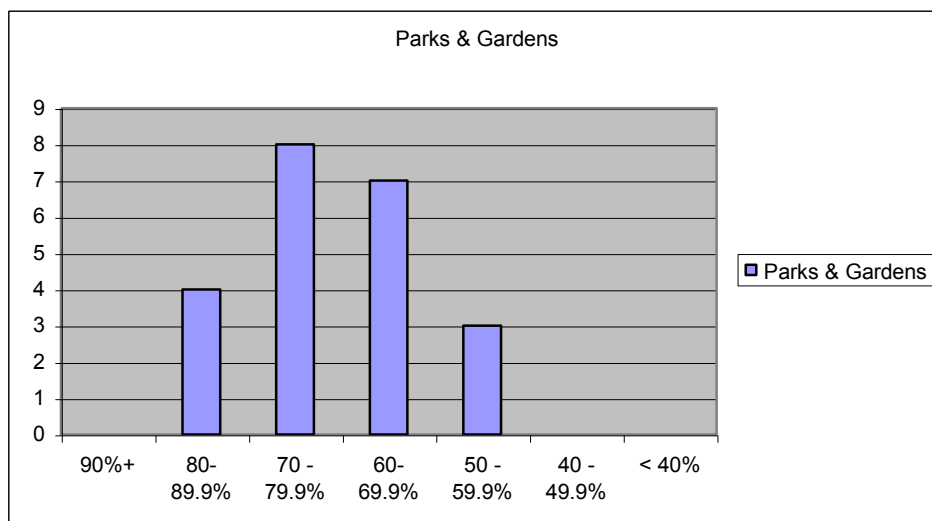




**Map 2 Parks and Gardens**

### Quality assessment

A quality assessment of parks and gardens was undertaken using the criteria set out in Appendix 2. The overall percentage quality scores varied between 55% and 87% (average 71.2%) and were distributed as follows:



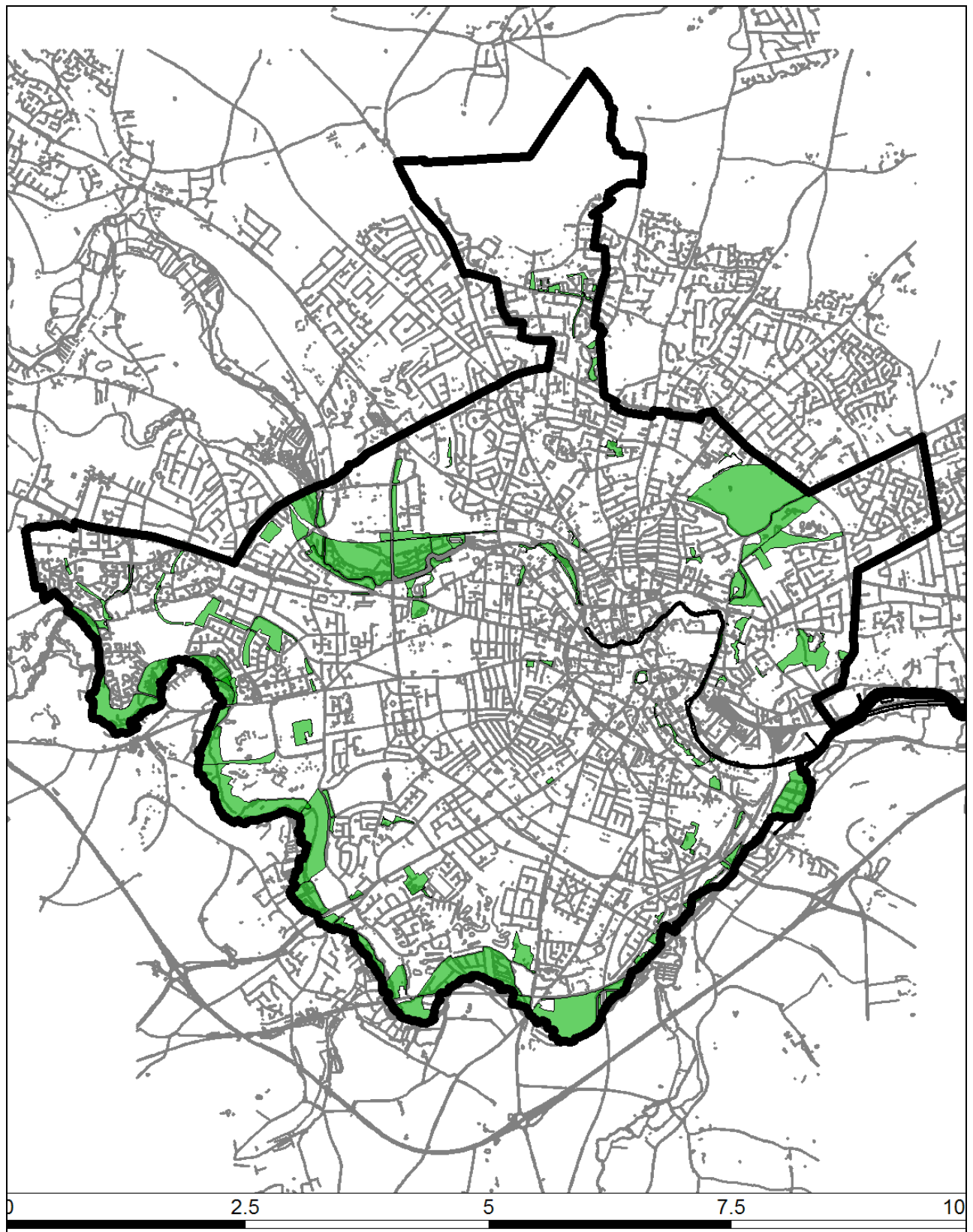
Generally parks and gardens are of a good quality, with a consistency around the middle scores, and no facilities were rated at the extremes. The lowest individual ratings were for toilets, where these exist (in 8 parks). Disabled access was poor in 5 parks. Trees, biodiversity and lighting rates were generally highly, and parking and the quality of existing buildings were good. Overall the best parks and gardens were Heigham Park and Plantation Gardens, and the poorest St Clements Park.

### NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL GREEN SPACE

For the purpose of this study Natural and Semi-natural Green Space covers a variety of spaces including meadows, river floodplain, woodland, and copse, all of which are managed primarily for wildlife value but which are also available for public use and enjoyment. Research elsewhere and, more importantly, the local consultation for this study, have identified the value attached to such space for recreation and emotional well-being. A sense of 'closeness to nature' with its attendant benefits for people is something that is all too easily lost in urban areas. Accessible natural green spaces should be viewed as important a component of community infrastructure in planning for new development as other forms of open space or 'built' recreation facilities. Accessible natural green spaces can make important contributions towards local biodiversity targets and have particular value in helping to raise awareness of natural habitats.

#### Existing provision

The following map (and accompanying table set out in Appendix 3) shows the general location of identified areas of natural and semi natural green space within the City (excluding open countryside). Some of the space identified is not 'accessible' in the sense that it can be entered and used by the general community, but all this space can be at the very least appreciated from close quarters even if there is no general access.



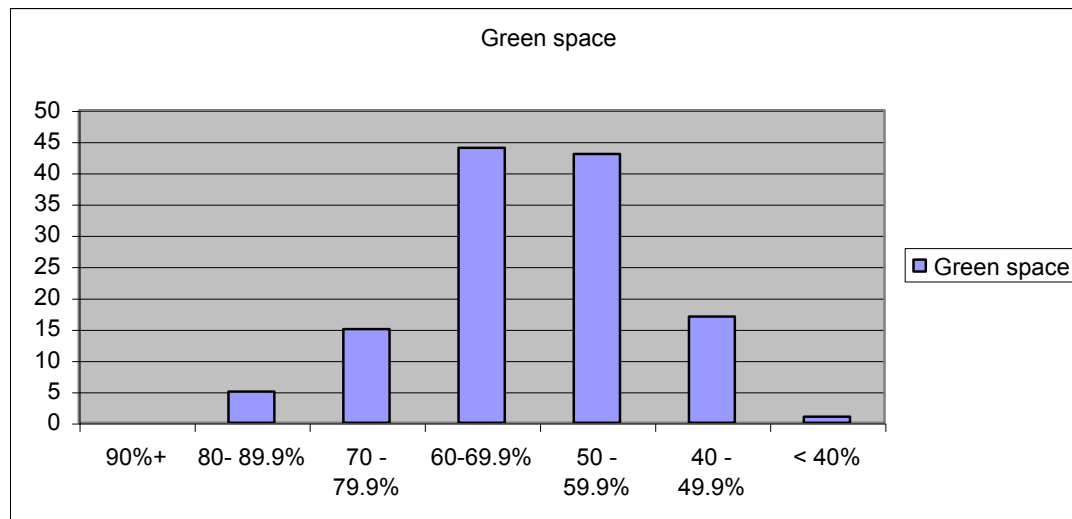
**Map 3 Natural and Semi-natural Green Spaces**

The total area of natural and semi natural green space is about 430 ha, of which 293 ha are in public ownership and a further 137 ha in private ownership, but with potential public access. 'Public' land is the equivalent of 2.24ha per 1000 population, with an overall ratio of 3.29 ha per

1000 population. This very high proportion of natural and semi natural green space for an urban area results largely from the fact that Mousehold Heath and extensive areas of river valley are within the city boundary.

### Quality assessment

The criteria adopted for the quality assessment for natural and semi natural green space are more limited than for parks and gardens, by virtue of the nature of the space, and are set out in Appendix 2. The overall percentage scores varied between 39% and 87% (average 66.4%) and are shown in the graph below.



Most natural and semi natural green space is rated as average compared with parks and gardens. The best scores were achieved for paths, parking and signage (where these exist) and cleanliness and biodiversity (unsurprising considering the typology), and the worst for disabled access (again not unexpected given the informal nature of such spaces). The best green space in public ownership was Blackdale Plantation, in private ownership The Willows (Dereham Road) and the worst Sweet Briar Road Tree Belt and Bevan Close (Bowthorpe).

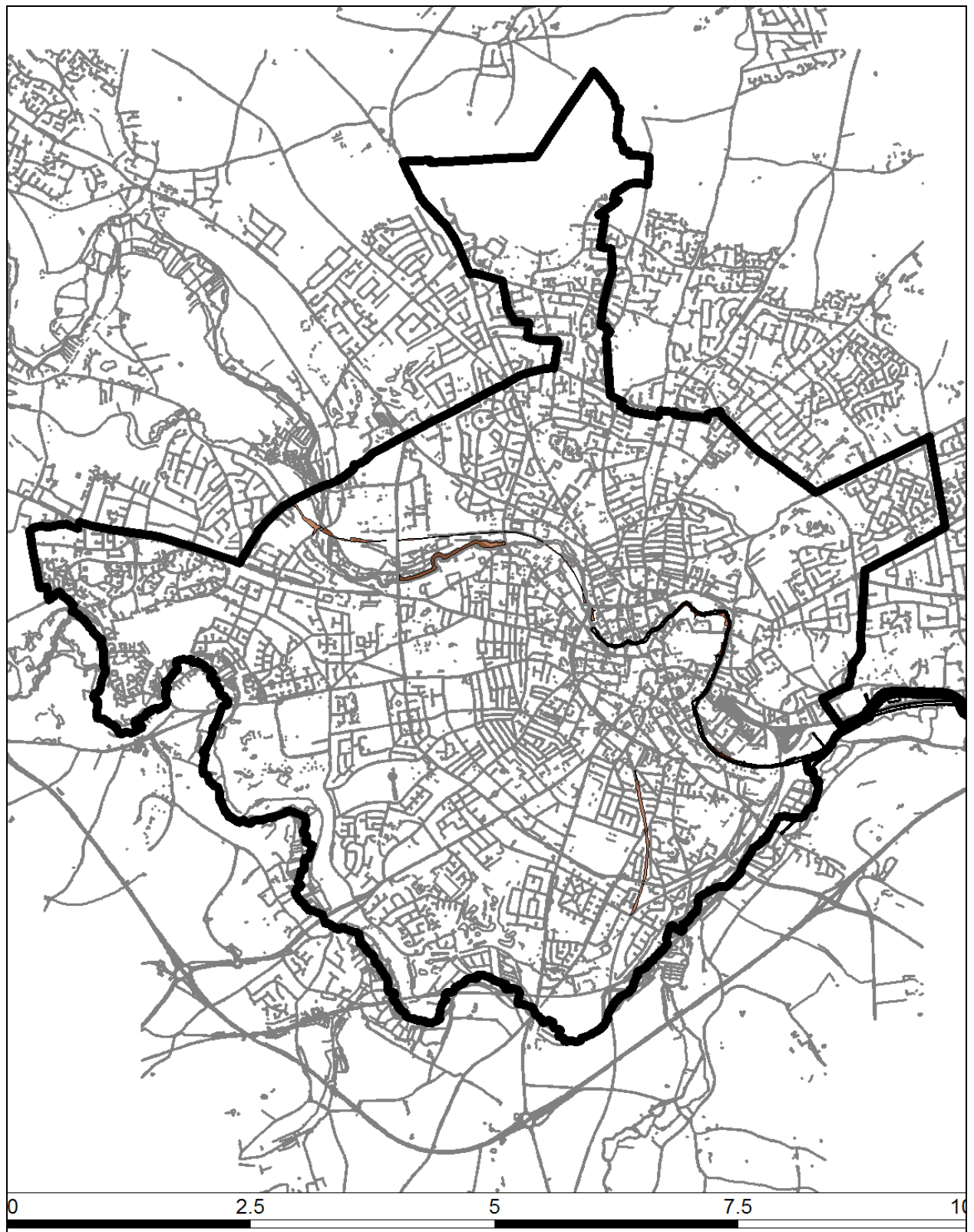
Natural and semi natural green space is considered further in the Area Profiles in Part 2.

### GREEN CORRIDORS

The following map shows important 'green corridors', which can be used as recreation routes. Walking and cycling are continually identified by national surveys as major recreation activities in their own right, but are also essential to everyday 'healthy living' (such as walking or cycling to work, the shops, or school). As activities they should be encouraged as a means of making both recreation and utility trips. Green recreational corridors will also include:

- The local public Rights of Way network
- Promoted long distance footpaths and cycleways
- Permissive routes.





**Map 4 Green Corridors**

It is also recognised that some of these routes (especially in urban areas) will also serve as utility routes and can also be of significant ecological value.

Links between City and countryside are important for accessing the wider rights of way network and quiet lanes, and can help to reduce car usage. Norwich has taken a long-term policy

approach to promoting green links, including Riverside Walks, and has developed a relatively extensive network.

| <b>Table 4 Green Corridors</b> |   |                  |           |                  |
|--------------------------------|---|------------------|-----------|------------------|
| <b>URL</b>                     | <b>LOCATION</b>                                   | <b>WARD</b>      | <b>HA</b> | <b>QUALITY %</b> |
| E52                            | YARE VALLEY WALK                                  | EATON/UNIVERSITY | 3.43      | 64.2             |
| L34                            | LAKENHAM WAY                                      | LAKENHAM         | 1.22      | 71.4             |
| L35                            | LAKENHAM WAY                                      | LAKENHAM         | 0.81      | 71.4             |
| M36                            | MARRIOTS WAY A - BARN ROAD-DOLPHIN BRIDGE         | MANCROFT         | 0.67      | 81.5             |
| M47                            | RIVERSIDE WALK - COSLANY ST-NEW MILLS             | MANCROFT         | 0.12      | 57.1             |
| M48                            | RIVERSIDE WALK - DUKE ST - COSLANY ST             | MANCROFT         | 0.05      | 48.7             |
| M49                            | RIVERSIDE WALK - NEW MILLS - ST CRISPIN'S         | MANCROFT         | 0.25      | 71.7             |
| MC18                           | MARRIOTS WAY B DOLPHIN ST - MILE CROSS RD         | MILE CROSS       | 0.39      | 70.8             |
| MC19                           | MARRIOTS WAY C - MILE CROSS RD - SWEET BRIAR RD   | MILE CROSS       | 0.80      | 81.4             |
| MC50                           | WENSUM VALLEY WALK                                | MILE CROSS       | 4.60      | 73.3             |
| TH42                           | RIVERSIDE WALK - BISHOPS BRIDGE - ST HELENS WHARF | THORPE HAMLET    | 0.90      | 84.0             |
| TH43                           | RIVERSIDE WALK - CARROW BRIDGE                    | THORPE HAMLET    | 0.49      | 58.6             |
| TH45                           | RIVERSIDE WALK - CARROW BRIDGE - FOUNDRY BRIDGE   | THORPE HAMLET    | 0.68      | 76.7             |
| TH46                           | RIVERSIDE WALK - FOUNDRY BRIDGE - BISHOPS BRIDGE  | THORPE HAMLET    | 0.29      | 80.0             |
| TH46A                          | RIVERSIDE WALK - FOUNDRY BRIDGE - BISHOPS BRIDGE  | THORPE HAMLET    | 0.24      | 80.0             |
| TH47                           | RIVERSIDE WALK - FYE BRIDGE ST - ST GEORGES ST    | THORPE HAMLET    | 0.04      | 61.5             |
| TH48                           | RIVERSIDE WALK - ST HELENS WHARF - WHITEFRIARS    | THORPE HAMLET    | 0.34      | 75.5             |
| TH49                           | RIVERSIDE WALK - WHITEFRIARS - FYE BRIDGE STREET  | THORPE HAMLET    | 0.16      | 64.5             |
| TC13                           | LAKENHAM WAY                                      | TOWN CLOSE       | 1.60      | 71.4             |
| U29                            | YARE VALLEY WALK                                  | UNIVERSITY/EATON | 9.05      | 64.2             |
| W28                            | MARRIOTS WAY D - SWEETBRIAR RD - HELLESDON RD     | WENSUM           | 1.56      | 76.4             |
| W29                            | MARRIOTS WAY E - HELLESDON RD - CITY BOUNDARY     | WENSUM           | 1.43      | 64.7             |

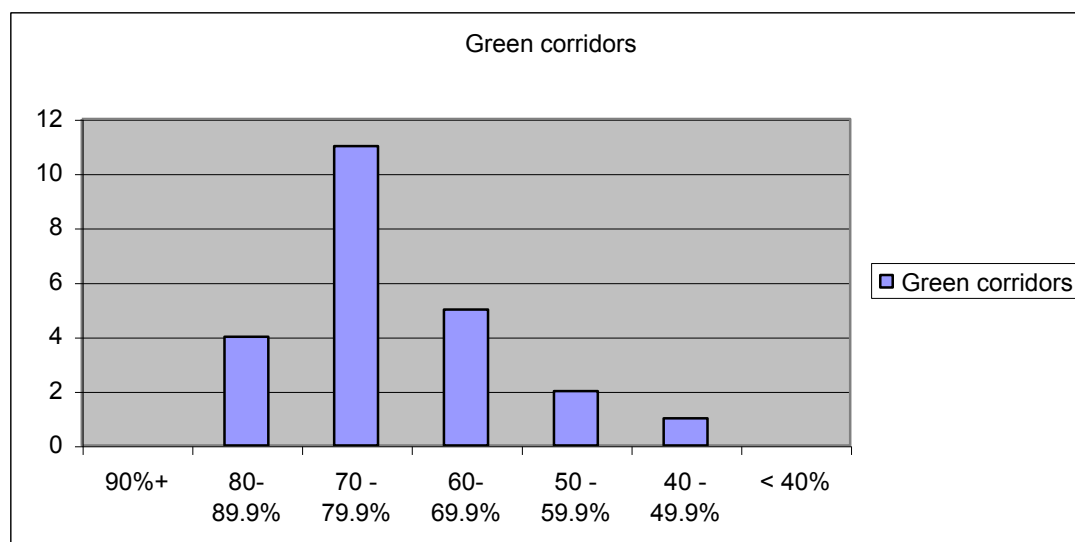
URL refers to unique site reference number in database

The green corridor network in Norwich is primarily concentrated on routes following the two main rivers, the Yare and Wensum, together with linear routes along disused railway lines such as Marriotts Way and Lakenham Way. These links are important in joining existing areas of open space in the city with the surrounding countryside, but the network is relatively limited at present.

While by definition primarily linear in nature, existing provision of green corridors in Norwich is about 29 ha or the equivalent of 0.22 ha/1000 population.

### Quality assessment

Criteria use to assess quality were similar to natural and semi natural green spaces (see Appendix 2). Scores varied between 84% and 49% (average 70.1%) and were distributed as follows.



Two thirds of green corridors scored at least 70% signifying a generally high quality. Most aspects scored highly, though the number of bins, quality and number of trees and seats were considered relatively poor. The Riverside Walk section from Bishopgate Bridge to St Helen's Wharf was considered the best green corridor, and ironically the section of the same route from Duke St to Coslany St the worst. In general Marriotts Way was rated the highest.

## INFORMAL AMENITY OPEN SPACE

It is difficult to offer a practical definition of informal amenity open space compared with other types of open space covered by this study. The category is considered to include those spaces open to free and spontaneous use by the public, but neither laid out and or managed for a specific function such as a park, public playing field or recreation ground; nor managed as a natural or semi-natural habitat. These areas of open space will be of varied size, but are likely to share the following characteristics:

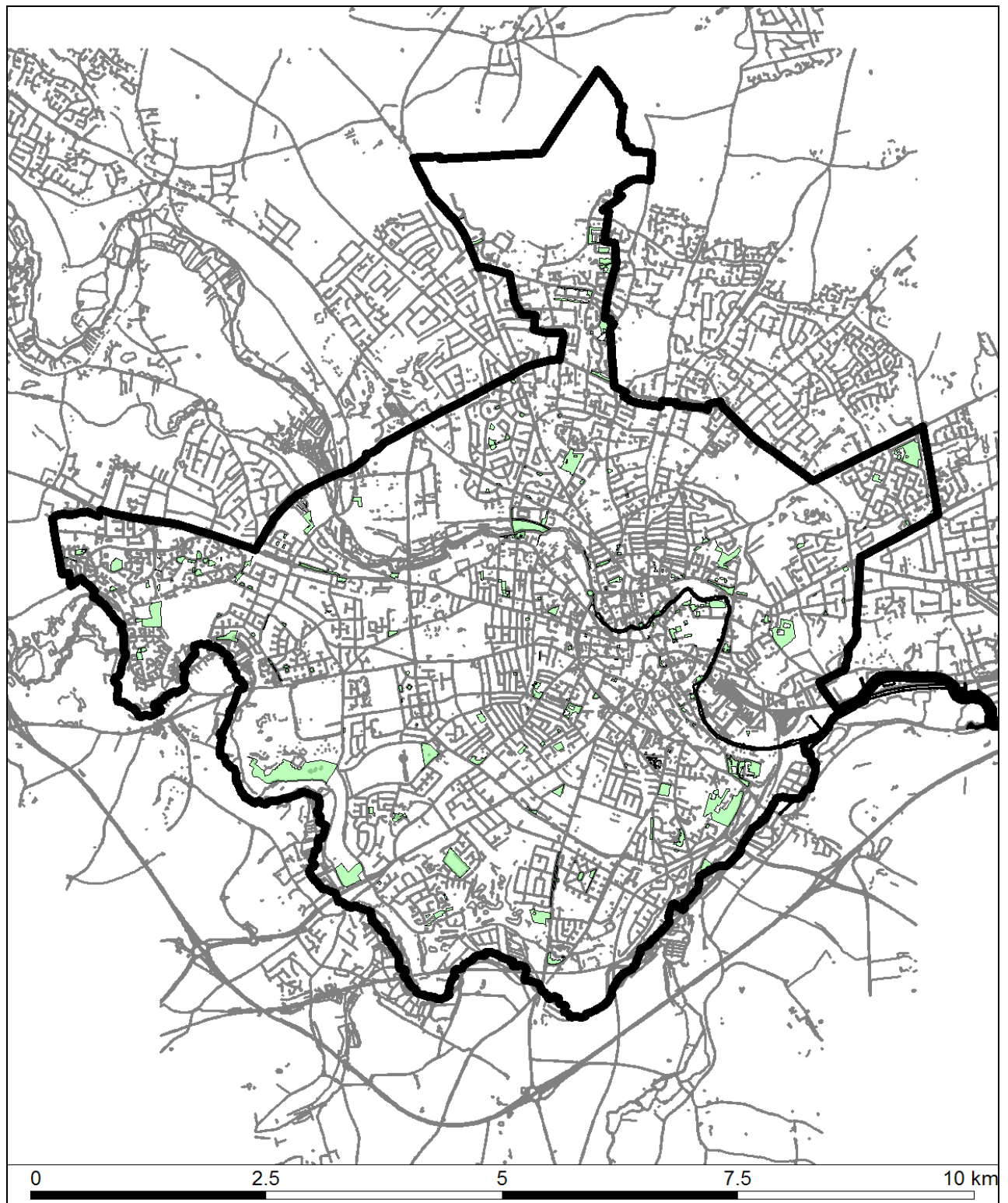
- Unlikely to be physically demarcated by walls or fences.
- Predominantly laid out to mown grass.
- Unlikely to have identifiable entrance points (unlike parks).
- Unlikely to have planted flowerbeds or other formal planted layouts, although they may have shrub and tree planting.
- Generally no other recreational facilities and fixtures (such as play equipment or ball courts), although there may be items such as litter bins and benches.

Examples might include both small and larger informal grassed areas in housing estates, kickabout areas with no formal facilities and general recreation spaces. They can serve a variety of functions dependent on their size, shape, location and topography. Some may be used for informal recreation activities, whilst others by themselves, or else collectively, contribute to the overall visual amenity and design of an area. However, as a general rule such spaces will not include highway verges and other incidental open space that does not fall within the definition of recreational open space contained within Section 1.

For the purposes of this study, churchyards and cemeteries are included within this category for their important visual and amenity function, though some sites have characteristics of formal green space, whilst others have developed a 'natural' character.

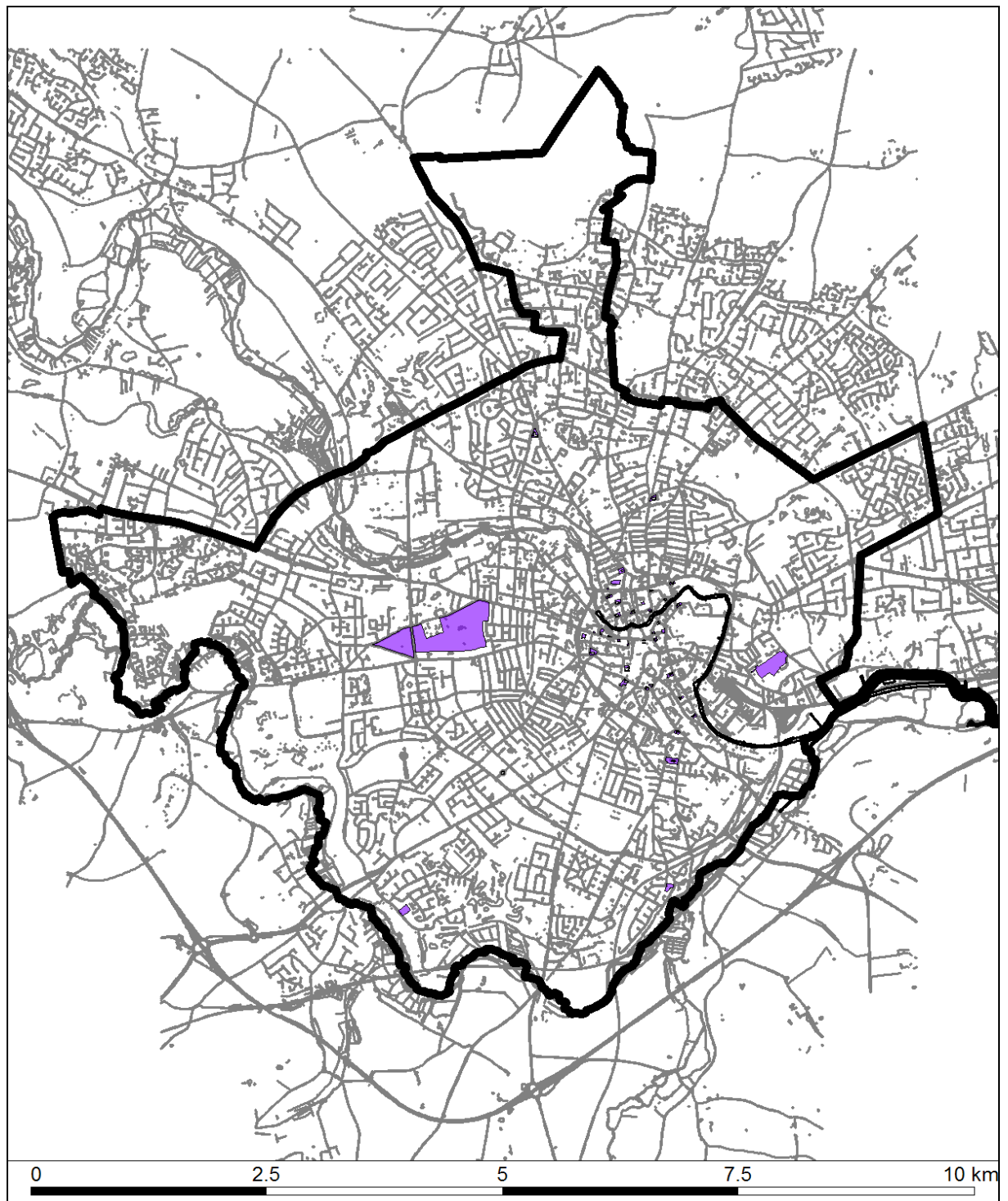
### Existing provision

The maps below show the general location of identified informal amenity green space within the City, and churchyards and cemeteries. Because of the size of most sites, it is difficult to pick out detail, and reference should be made to larger scale maps supplied separately.



**Map 5 Informal Amenity Open Space**



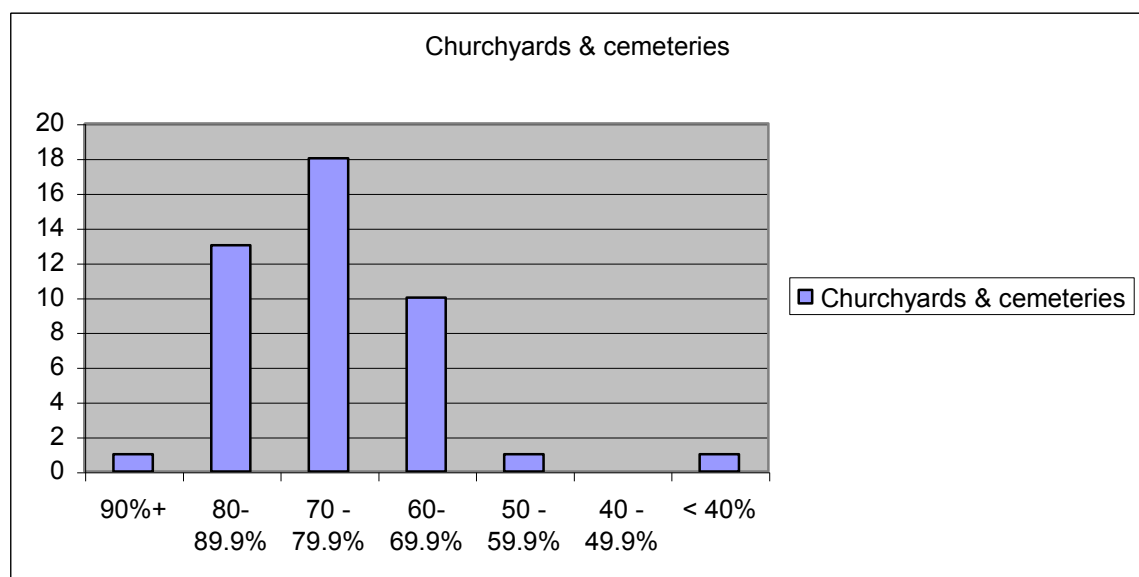
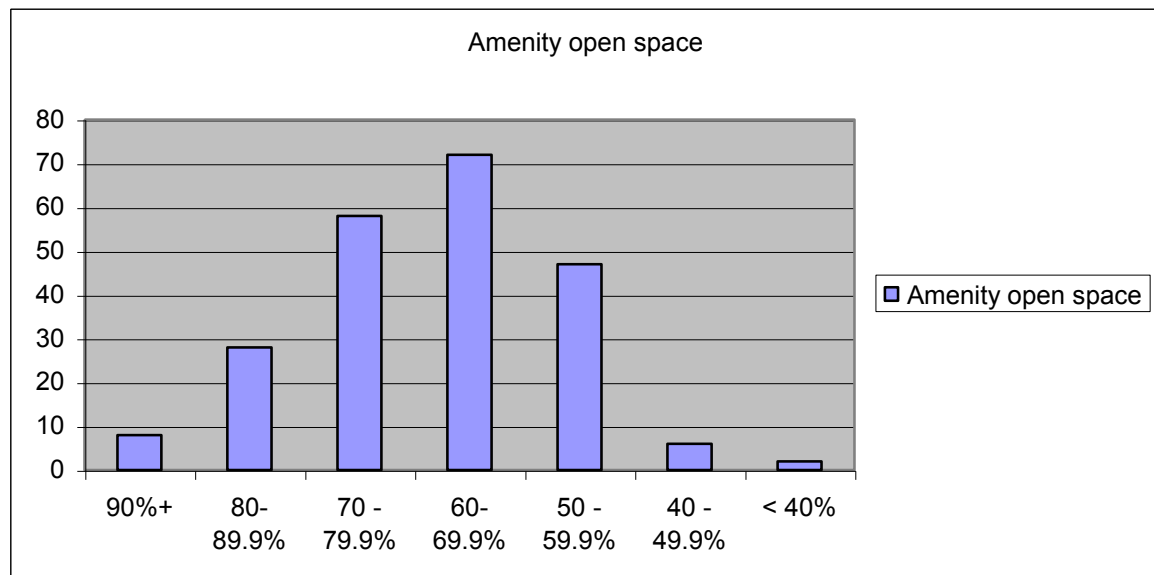


**Map 6 Churchyards and cemeteries**

Individual sites are set out in Appendices 4 and 5. There are about 58 ha (0.44 ha per 1000) of informal amenity open space in public ownership within the City, and an additional 62 ha (0.48 ha per 1000) in private ownership, but with potential for public access. Overall this equates to 0.92 ha per 1000 population. In addition there are about 46 ha of churchyards and cemeteries, the equivalent of 0.35 ha per 1000 population. Overall current provision therefore stands at about 1.27 ha per 1000 population.

### Quality assessment

Quality criteria are set out in Appendix 2. Scores varied between 93% and 36% for public open space (average 65.6%), 94% and 48% for private open space (average 73.9%), 93% and 37% for churchyards (average 74.0%), and 78% and 69% for cemeteries (average 74.8%). Overall two thirds of sites scored higher than 60%.



Amenity space scored highly for cleanliness, quality of grass areas, boundaries and paths, seats and structures (where available), and entrances. Poor scores were recorded for disabled access, and the amount and quality of trees. Churchyards and cemeteries were considered good for entrances, paths, boundaries, trees and ancillary facilities, as expected given their managed character, but poor for biodiversity and disabled access. The best and worst facilities in each category were:

| Table 5 Informal Open Space Quality |                          |                             |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
|                                     | Best                     | Worst                       |
| Open space public                   | Lakenham Baths Camp Site | Drury Close, Bowthorpe      |
| Open space private                  | Carrow House             | Civil Service Sports Ground |
| Churchyards                         | St Giles                 | Christchurch (New Catton)   |
| Cemeteries                          | Rosary                   | Friends Burial Ground       |

There is further consideration of Informal open space in Area Profiles in Part 2.

## ALLOTMENTS

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

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

*"An allotment not exceeding 40 poles<sup>1</sup> in extent which is wholly or mainly cultivated by the occupier for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for consumption by himself or his family"*

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

### Existing provision

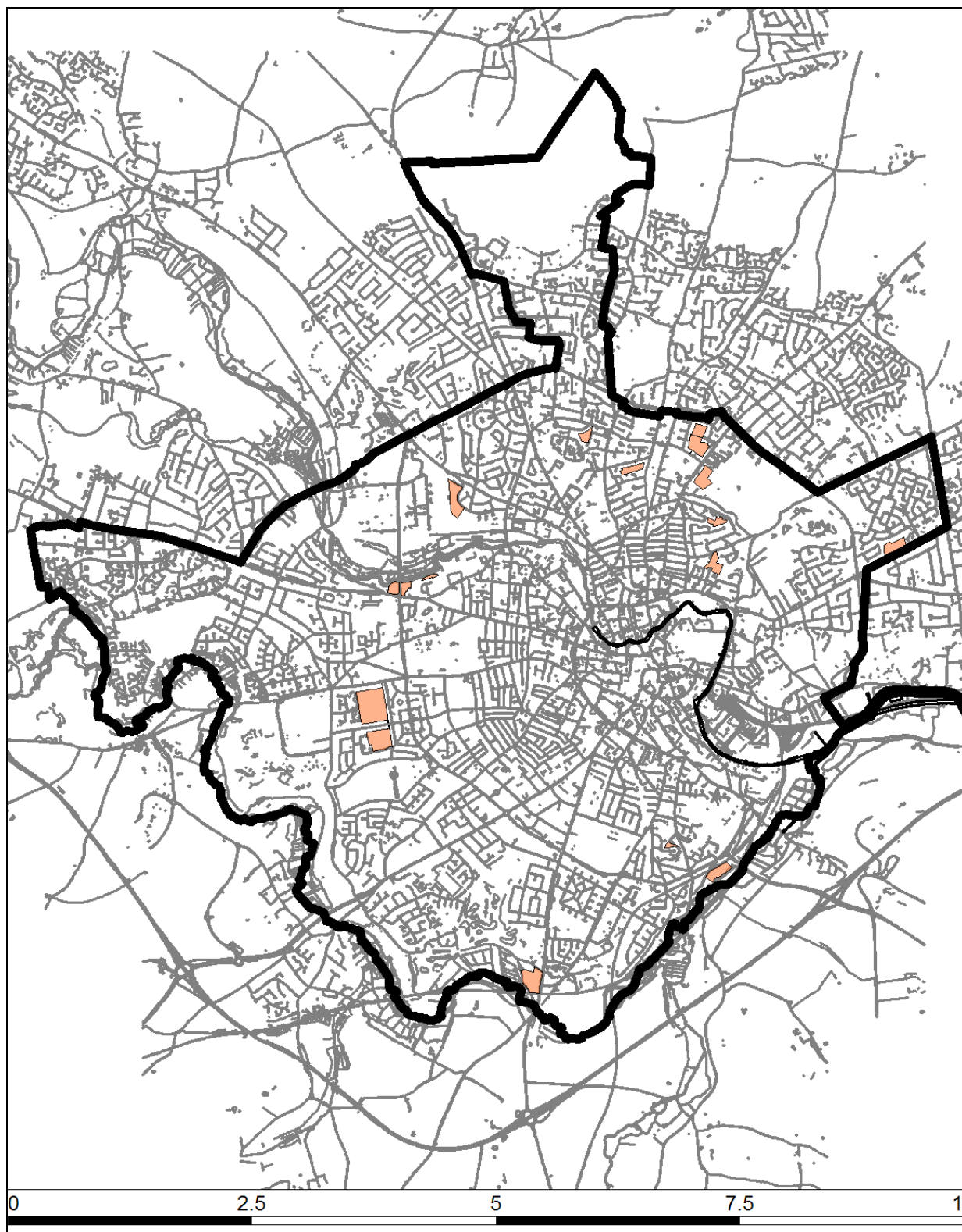
The following map and accompanying table indicates the provision of all known allotment sites throughout the City. The large majority of these are managed by the City Council.

| Table 6 Allotments |                            |               |      |           |
|--------------------|----------------------------|---------------|------|-----------|
| URL                | LOCATION                   | WARD          | Ha   | QUALITY % |
| CG02               | BRICKFIELDS                | CATTON GROVE  | 1.49 | 66.6      |
| CG05               | CATTON GROVE               | CATTON GROVE  | 1.16 | 57.5      |
| CG18               | HILLFARM                   | CATTON GROVE  | 2.67 | 69.4      |
| CG36               | WALL ROAD                  | CATTON GROVE  | 2.98 | 74.0      |
| CR08               | COTTAGE FARM               | CROME         | 2.82 | 80.0      |
| E37                | HARFORD HILLS/MARSTON LANE | EATON         | 4.10 | 80.0      |
| L22                | LAKENHAM                   | LAKENHAM      | 0.41 | 59.2      |
| L23                | LAKENHAM BATHS             | LAKENHAM      | 2.43 | 66.6      |
| MC43               | VALPY AVENUE               | MILE CROSS    | 3.55 | 66.6      |
| S07                | ELM GROVE LANE             | SEWELL        | 1.54 | 59.2      |
| S15                | MOUSEHOLD NORTH            | SEWELL        | 1.15 | 74.0      |
| TH36               | MOUSEHOLD SOUTH            | THORPE HAMLET | 2.13 | 66.6      |
| U03                | BLUEBELL NORTH             | UNIVERSITY    | 9.32 | 66.6      |

<sup>1</sup> 40 poles is equivalent to 1,210 square yards or 1,012 square metres. A 'pole' can also be known as a 'rod' or 'perch'

|     |                   |            |      |      |
|-----|-------------------|------------|------|------|
| U05 | BLUEBELL SOUTH    | UNIVERSITY | 4.53 | 66.6 |
| W03 | BELLACRE          | WENSUM     | 1.28 | 78.7 |
| W38 | SYCAMORE CRESCENT | WENSUM     | 0.45 | 57.1 |
| W52 | WOODLANDS         | WENSUM     | 1.08 | 72.7 |

URL refers to unique site reference number in database

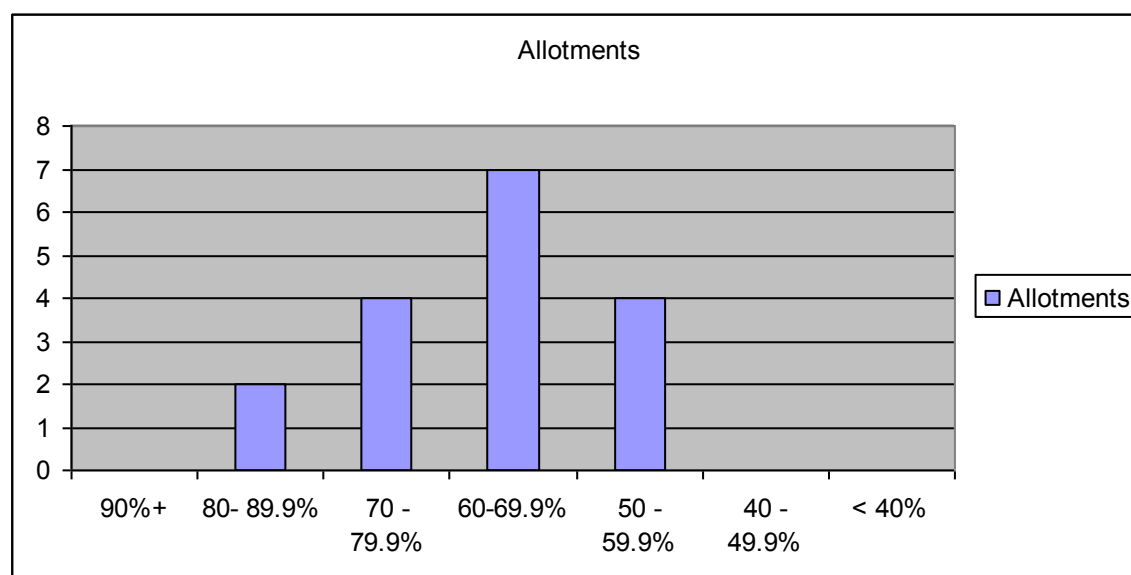


Map 7 Allotments

The total number of allotment plots available in these sites in mid June 2007 was 1484. There are a total of 43 ha of allotment space in the City managed by either the City Council or a local allotments society, which works out at 0.33 ha per 1000 people.

### Quality assessment

Quality criteria were limited to 12 aspects, reflecting the mainly managed and cultivated operation of allotments (see Appendix 2). Scores varied between 83% and 57% (average 69.0%) as follows. Three quarters scored better than 60%.



Allotments were generally clean with good entrances and boundaries. Disabled access and signage were considered poor. The best scores were recorded at Harford Hills and the lowest at Sycamore Crescent.

Further consideration of allotments is provided in the Area profiles in Part 2.

## OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND RECREATION GROUNDS

The provision of outdoor sports pitches and similar facilities covers a variety of sports, as reviewed below. There is some evidence that pitches are less well used than previously in Norwich for a variety of reasons – cost, condition, maintenance, etc, and that there is significant usage of facilities in the neighbouring parishes in Broadland and South Norfolk. As the whole area is more relevant to consideration of supply of and demand for pitches, the following analysis takes into account similar facilities within this wider Norwich area.

### Synthetic Turf Pitches (STPs)

STPs are a requirement for competitive hockey but are also a very important training resource for football and other sports. Sand based and dressed surfaces can be used for local club hockey and training/small-sided activity for football in particular. Water based surfaces are the required medium for higher level competitive hockey, though the development of a water-free turf is an important consideration for hockey as a world wide sport, as it recognises environmental concerns about water usage. Recent technological developments have also produced a third generation 'tufted' STP that is on the verge of being accepted by the FA for competitive play at various levels (although this surface is not

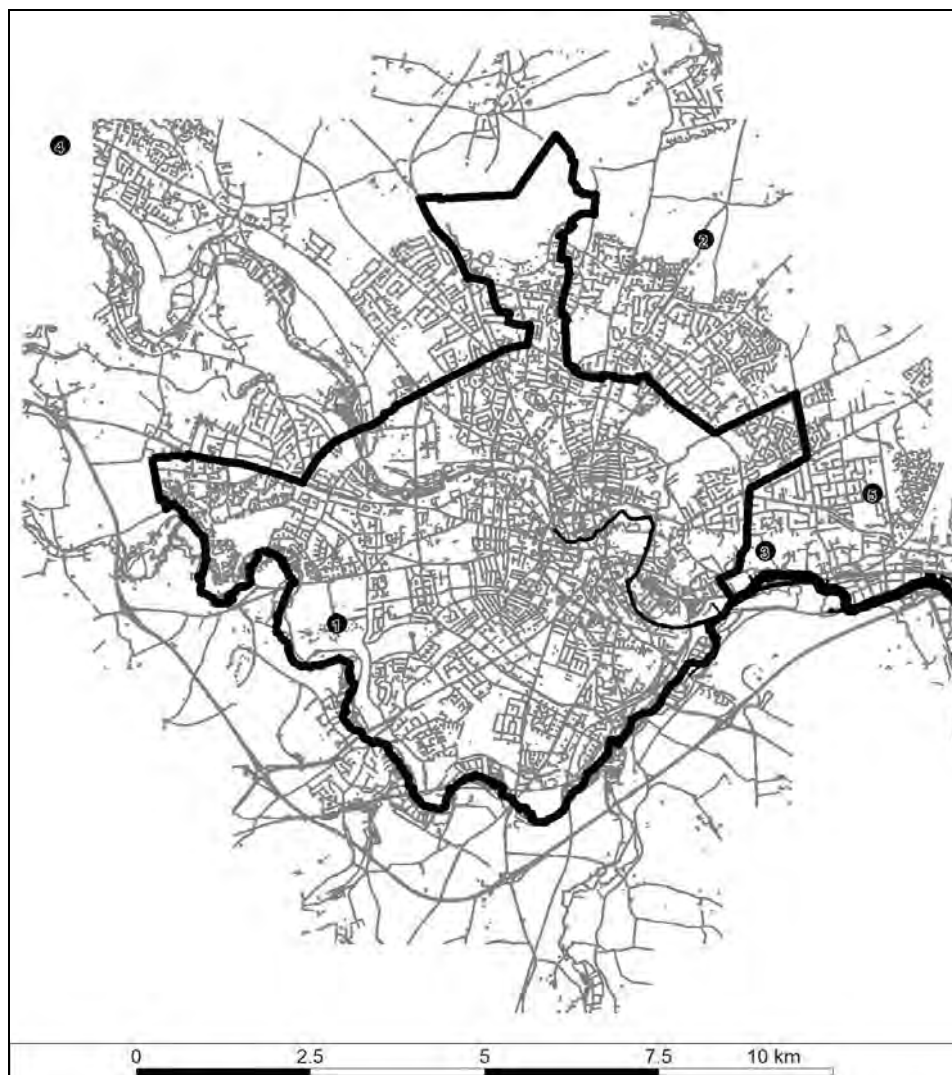
acceptable for competitive hockey). The following map and table identifies existing known provision of 'full sized' STPs in the wider Norwich area that have some level of community use.

| <b>Table 7 Synthetic Turf Pitches</b> |             |           |                         |              |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------------------|--------------|
| <b>LOCATION</b>                       | <b>WARD</b> | <b>NO</b> | <b>TYPE OF USE</b>      | <b>BUILT</b> |
| SPORTSPARK (1)                        | UNIVERSITY  | 2         | UNIVERSITY PAY AND PLAY | 1994         |
| NORWICH SCHOOL, REDMAYNE FIELD (2)    | BROADLAND   | 1         | SCHOOL CLUB USE         |              |
| NORWICH UNION (3)                     | BROADLAND   | 1         | COMMERCIAL PAY AND PLAY | 1992         |
| TAVERHAM HS (4)                       | BROADLAND   | 1         | SCHOOL PAY AND PLAY     | 1996         |
| THORPE ST ANDREW HS (5)               | BROADLAND   | 1         | SCHOOL PAY AND PLAY     | 2007         |

Numbers refer to the halls shown on Map 8

In addition there are 3 smaller (i.e. less than full size) facilities with a synthetic surface, at Carrow Park (football), Bowthorpe Park (5 a side football) and UEA (5/7 a side recently constructed).

Over the wider Norwich area, the ratio of provision works out at 1 full size pitch per 34,300 people.



**Map 8 Synthetic Turf Pitches**

### Other outdoor sports including grass pitches

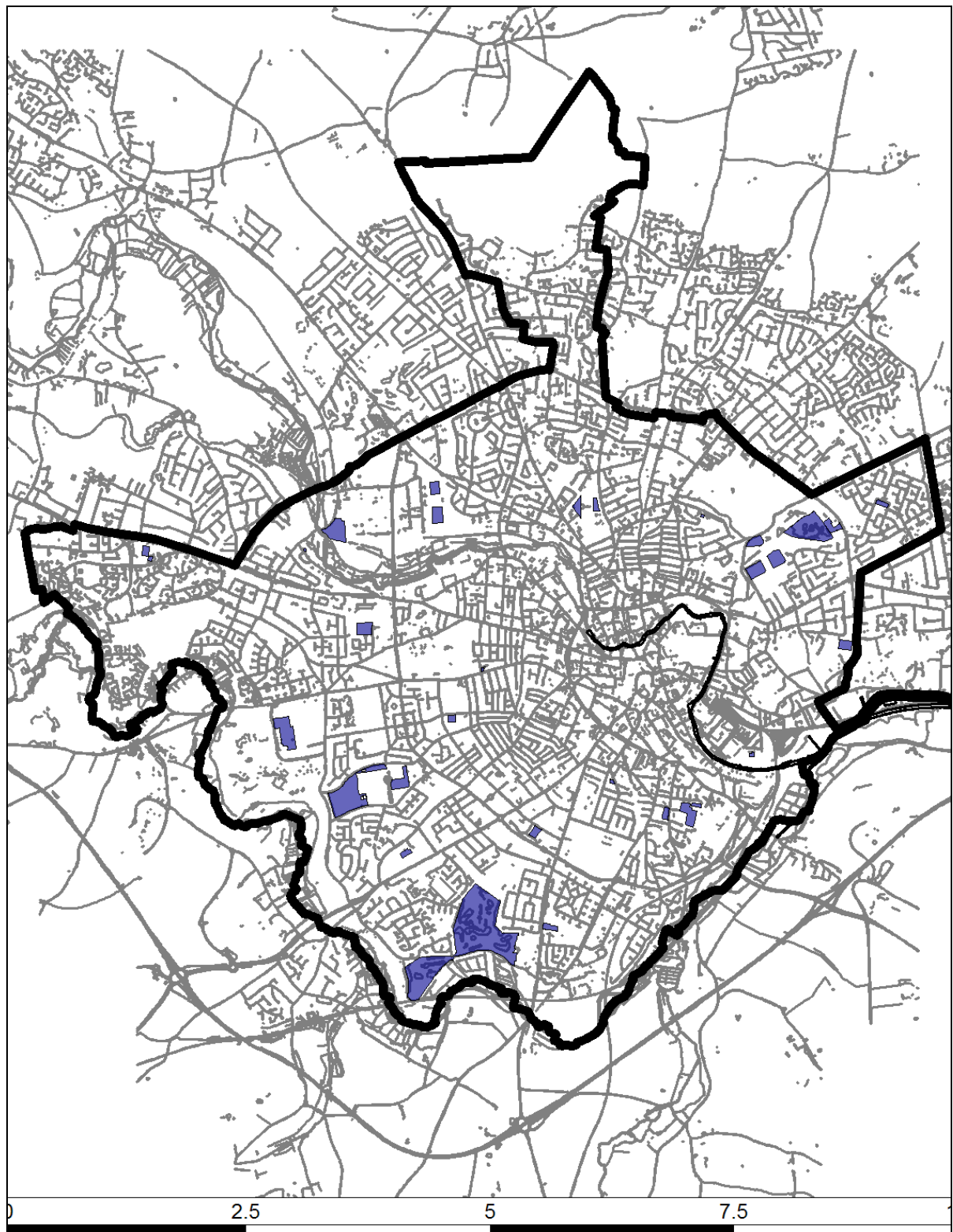
Other outdoor sports locations in the city, including City Council, other local authority and private facilities, and across a range of different sports, are set out below (this table refers to the Norwich area only, as the quality assessment was restricted to the City)

| Table 8 Outdoor Sports Facilities |                                      |               |       |           |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------|-----------|
| URL                               | LOCATION                             | WARD          | HA    | QUALITY % |
| B15                               | BOWTHORPE PARK                       | BOWTHORPE     | 0.92  | 62.2      |
| CR02                              | ALDERMAN WALKER                      | CROME         | 0.63  | 62.7      |
| CR06                              | BRITANNIA BARRACKS                   | CROME         | 2.18  | 63.1      |
| CR09                              | FOUNTAIN SPORTS GROUND               | CROME         | 1.42  | 66.7      |
| CR22                              | MOUNT ZION CHURCH (HEARTSEASE LANE)  | CROME         | 1.35  | 61.2      |
| CR24                              | MOUSEHOLD HEATH PITCH & PUTT         | CROME         | 8.53  | 71.4      |
| CR26                              | NORWICH PRISON                       | CROME         | 2.12  | NK        |
| CR37                              | WOODROW PILLING PARK                 | CROME         | 1.23  | 56.1      |
| E22                               | EATON GOLF COURSE                    | EATON         | 42.84 | 84.2      |
| E30                               | EATON PARK                           | EATON         | 10.70 | 68.1      |
| E30A                              | EATON PARK                           | EATON         | 2.24  | 68.1      |
| E43                               | N & N BOWLS CLUB                     | EATON         | 0.61  | 83.7      |
| L10                               | HARFORD PARK                         | LAKENHAM      | 0.85  | 69.6      |
| L26                               | LAKENHAM CRICKET GROUND (NOW CLOSED) | LAKENHAM      | 2.37  | 52.9      |
| L26A                              | LAKENHAM SPORT AND LEISURE (CLOSED)  | LAKENHAM      | 0.38  | 52.9      |
| L32                               | LAKENHAM REC                         | LAKENHAM      | 0.72  | 57.9      |
| MC32                              | SLOUGHBOTTOM PARK                    | MILE CROSS    | 1.72  | 64.5      |
| MC32A                             | SLOUGHBOTTOM PARK                    | MILE CROSS    | 1.17  | 64.5      |
| MC45                              | WATERLOO PARK                        | MILE CROSS    | 1.05  | 84.1      |
| MC45A                             | WATERLOO PARK                        | MILE CROSS    | 0.67  | 84.1      |
| N13                               | HEIGHAM PARK                         | NELSON        | 0.53  | 87.1      |
| N15                               | MITRE PH BOWLS GREEN (EDINBURGH RD)  | NELSON        | 0.11  | 84.7      |
| S11                               | HEATH HOUSE PH                       | SEWELL        | 0.07  | 84.7      |
| TH10                              | CARROW PARK                          | THORPE HAMLET | 0.22  | 100.0     |
| TC20                              | EAST ANGLIAN TENNIS & SQUASH CLUB    | TOWN CLOSE    | 0.90  | 85.7      |
| TC24                              | TRAFFORD ROAD BOWLS GREEN            | TOWN CLOSE    | 0.18  | 87.7      |
| U26                               | UEA                                  | UNIVERSITY    | 4.68  | 83.6      |
| W02                               | BAYER SPORTS GROUND (HELLESDON RD)   | WENSUM        | 4.24  | 66.6      |
| W04A                              | BOWTHORPE SCHOOL COMMUNITY PARK      | WENSUM        | 1.87  | NK        |
| W25                               | MARLPIT PH (HELLESDON RD)            | WENSUM        | 0.07  | 77.7      |

URL refers to unique site reference number in database

It is estimated that there are 97 ha of sports grounds in Norwich, the equivalent of 0.74 ha per 1000 population, though this includes Eaton Golf Course. Excluding the golf course, the total is about 54 ha (0.41 ha per 1000 population).





**Map 9 Outdoor Sports**

Grass pitches remain the surface of choice for most pitch sports at the community level. A study was undertaken in 2003 by consultants on behalf of the Council to examine the supply of and demand for grass pitches within the City. Additional reference to this study is made elsewhere in this report. The data in this previous report has been used as the basis for the current study.



The City Council is one of a number of providers of community outdoor sports facilities within the City, including public, education, voluntary and private sectors.

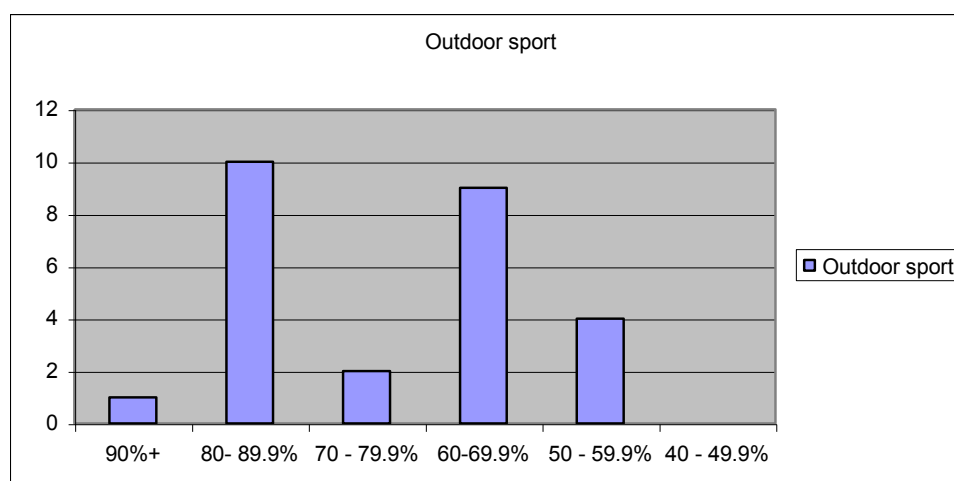
A survey has been undertaken to estimate the current number of individual pitches (and bowls greens, tennis courts and similar facilities) and this is summarised below (the full table is in Appendix 6). This also takes into account similar facilities in the fringe parishes surrounding the city, for the reasons explained above. The table differentiates between pitches that are in community use (CU), mainly local authority and club pitches, and those on other sites including schools where long term availability is not necessarily assured

| Table 12 Sports Pitches       |       |       |      |              |       |         |        |     |       |         |          |     |         |          |          |           |          |
|-------------------------------|-------|-------|------|--------------|-------|---------|--------|-----|-------|---------|----------|-----|---------|----------|----------|-----------|----------|
|                               | SEN F | JUN F | MINI | SEN INFORMAL | RUGBY | CRICKET | HOCKEY | STP | BOWLS | CROQUET | PETANQUE | P&P | PUTTING | TENNIS G | TENNIS H | ATHLETICS | PAVILION |
| TOTAL CU NORWICH              | 16    | 2     | 2    | 2            | 0     | 3       | 0      | 5   | 22    | 1       | 2        | 2   | 2       | 19       | 43       | 1         |          |
| TOTAL SCHOOL NORWICH          | 25    | 14    | 3    | 0            | 8     | 8       | 5      | 0   | 0     | 0       | 0        | 0   | 0       | 3        | 55       | 0         | 0        |
| TOTAL NORWICH                 | 41    | 16    | 5    | 2            | 8     | 11      | 5      | 5   | 22    | 1       | 2        | 2   | 2       | 22       | 98       | 1         | 0        |
|                               |       |       |      |              |       |         |        |     |       |         |          |     |         |          |          |           |          |
| TOTAL CU BROADLAND FRINGE     | 23    | 10    | 6    | 0            | 5     | 9       | 1      | 2   | 8     | 0       | 0        | 0   | 0       | 8        | 33       | 0         | 0        |
| TOTAL SCHOOL BROADLAND FRINGE | 2     | 7     | 7    | 0            | 1     | 3       | 1      | 1   | 0     | 0       | 0        | 0   | 0       | 0        | 11       | 0         | 0        |
| TOTAL BROADLAND FRINGE        | 25    | 17    | 13   | 0            | 6     | 12      | 2      | 3   | 8     | 0       | 0        | 0   | 0       | 8        | 44       | 0         | 0        |
|                               |       |       |      |              |       |         |        |     |       |         |          |     |         |          |          |           |          |
| TOTAL CU SN                   | 10    | 0     | 0    | 0            | 2     | 4       | 1      | 0   | 1     | 0       | 0        | 0   | 0       | 2        | 6        | 0         | 0        |
| TOTAL SN FRINGE               | 10    | 0     | 0    | 0            | 2     | 4       | 1      | 0   | 1     | 0       | 0        | 0   | 0       | 2        | 6        | 0         | 0        |
|                               |       |       |      |              |       |         |        |     |       |         |          |     |         |          |          |           |          |
| TOTAL CU SN & BRDLAND         | 33    | 10    | 6    | 0            | 7     | 13      | 2      | 2   | 9     | 0       | 0        | 0   | 0       | 10       | 39       | 0         | 0        |
| TOTAL SCHOOL SN & BRDLAND     | 2     | 7     | 7    | 0            | 1     | 3       | 1      | 1   | 0     | 0       | 0        | 0   | 0       | 0        | 11       | 0         | 0        |
| TOTAL SN & BRDLAND            | 35    | 17    | 13   | 0            | 8     | 16      | 3      | 3   | 9     | 0       | 0        | 0   | 0       | 10       | 50       | 0         | 0        |
|                               |       |       |      |              |       |         |        |     |       |         |          |     |         |          |          |           |          |
| GRAND TOTAL CU                | 49    | 12    | 8    | 2            | 7     | 16      | 2      | 7   | 31    | 1       | 1        | 2   | 2       | 29       | 82       | 1         | 0        |
| GRAND TOTAL SCHOOL            | 27    | 21    | 10   | 0            | 9     | 11      | 6      | 1   | 0     | 0       | 0        | 0   | 0       | 3        | 66       | 0         | 0        |
| OVERALL TOTAL                 | 76    | 33    | 18   | 2            | 16    | 27      | 8      | 8   | 31    | 1       | 2        | 2   | 2       | 32       | 148      | 1         | 0        |

There is a wide variety of pitches in Norwich and the wider area if all possible locations are taken into account. However the facilities which offer the main potential for use by teams and others in the area are those where there is secured community use, either because the pitch is owned and managed by a public authority, or by a sports club, or there is a formal agreement on school pitches that there is assured access to the facility over a period of time such as a full season. In Norwich, of the 242 pitches, courts and greens in total only half (121) are in community use. Over the wider area the equivalent figures are 406 in total but only 252 in community use.

### Quality assessment

**General assessment** - a general assessment of the overall quality of sites used for outdoor sport was undertaken, using the criteria included in Appendix 2. Scores varied between 100% and 53% (average 73.1%), with the distribution as follows.



There was a variation between good facilities (about one third) and average facilities (about one third) but overall 90% of outdoor sports facilities were rated better than 60%. The best sites were Carrow Park synthetic pitch and the poorest Lakenham Cricket Ground (which is now closed) and Woodrow Pilling Park.

**Individual pitch assessments** – all pitches, courts and greens in Norwich City Council ownership and management were assessed using a methodology similar to that advocated by Sport England in 'Towards a Level Playing Field', which takes into account criteria such as ground condition, slope, grass cover, equipment, cleanliness and line markings.

The results of these assessments were as follows:

| Table 10 Outdoor Sports Quality |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Football                        | senior 81% to 89% (average 87.8%), best pitch Sloughbottom Park |
|                                 | junior 92%  |
|                                 | mini 93% - 96% (95.2%), best pitch Eaton Park                   |
| Cricket                         | 78% to 83% (average 81.3%), best pitch Eaton Park               |
| Bowls                           | 61% to 95% (average 76.7%), best green Heigham Park             |
| Croquet                         | (1 court) 75%   |
| Tennis (grass)                  | 71% to 92% (average 84.1%), best court Heigham Park             |
| Tennis (hard)                   | 65% to 91% (average 74.1%), best court Lakenham Rec             |
| Petanque                        | (1 court) 72%   |
| Putting                         | 75% to 90% (average 81.9%), best course Eaton Park              |

Pitches, courts and greens in Norwich parks were therefore considered to be of generally good quality, across most aspects, including grass cover, slope, equipment etc, though drainage was not considered as part of the assessment.

Ancillary facilities such as changing rooms were also assessed with overall scores varying between 74% and 43% (average 57%). The best changing was at Eaton Park, the poorest at the Fountain Ground. Woodrow Pilling Park has no changing facilities at all. A variety of issues scored lowly, including disabled access, external access, the size and cleanliness of showers and the cleanliness of referees' accommodation. At best changing facilities on Norwich parks are considered to be average.

## PLAY PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

It is important at the outset to establish the scope of the audit in terms of this kind of space. Children and young people will play/'hang out' in almost all publicly accessible "space" ranging from the street, shopping centres and squares, parks, playing fields, "amenity" grassed areas etc as well as the more recognisable play and youth facility areas such as equipped playgrounds, youth shelters, BMX and skateboard parks, Multi-use Games Areas (MUGAs), etc. Clearly many of the other types of open space covered by this study will therefore provide informal play opportunities.

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

The study has recorded the following:

- Equipped children's space (for pre-teens)
- Provision for teenagers, including skateboarding, BMX, MUGAs and cycle speedway.

The former comprises equipped areas of play that cater for the needs of children up to and around 12 years. The latter comprises informal recreation opportunities for, broadly, the 13 to 16/17 age group, and which might include facilities like skateboard parks, basketball courts and 'free access' MUGAs. In practice there will always be some blurring around the edges in terms of younger children using equipment aimed for older persons and vice versa.

### Existing provision

The identified sites are listed in Appendix 7, as well as the supporting Area Profiles in Part 2. They are generally too small in size to be shown on the scale of map used in this section.

In total children's play facilities occupy an area of 12.77 has (0.1 has/1000 population) and teenagers' facilities 3.17 has (0.02 has/1000), giving a total for overall play provision for children and young people of 15.94 ha or 0.12 has per 1000 population.

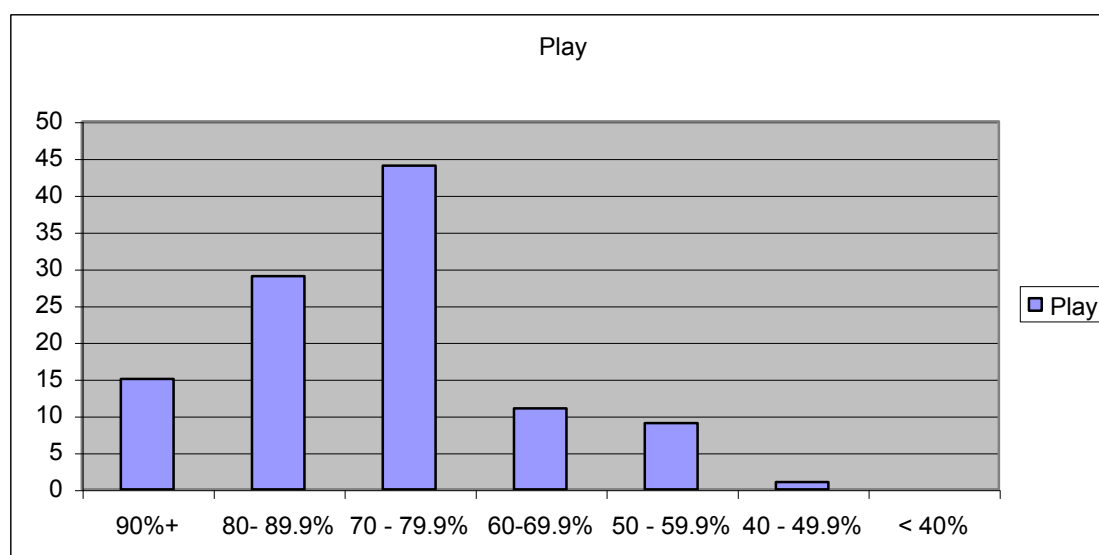
### Quality assessment

Quality criteria are set out in Appendix 2, and include an assessment of equipment, surfacing and fencing necessary for health and safety purposes. Scores varied between 98% and 44% (average 76.4%) for play, and 100% and 55% (average 78.1%) for teenagers' play. 80% of facilities scored higher than 70%, and provision for children's and teenagers' play are therefore considered to be good, and relatively the best of any category.

The best facilities in each category were:

Children's play – best Music House Lane, poorest Wensum Community Centre play area

Teenagers' – best Carrow MUGA, poorest Eaton Park Skateboard Park



## BUILT SPORTS FACILITIES

For the purpose of this study 'built sports facilities' include indoor covered venues to accommodate sports and recreational activities for the community. At one end of the spectrum the definition can include large leisure centres, but it will also include smaller community venues that can be used for a variety of recreation and leisure activities. Ancillary buildings such as standalone pavilions and changing blocks are not included in this definition. The assessment has again been undertaken to include the fringe parishes around Norwich to represent the wider catchment area for sports facilities.

### Sports Halls

Sports halls host a variety of formal sport and active recreational activities. National research indicates that although they tend to attract use by a quite limited section of the population, this use tends to be regular.

| Table 11 Sports Halls       |              |              |        |                     |            |        |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------|---------------------|------------|--------|
| SITE NAME                   | WARD         | NO OF COURTS | SIZE   | TYPE OF USE         | YEAR BUILT | REFURB |
| BLYTH JEX SPORTS CENTRE (1) | SEWELL       | 4            | 33x18M | SCHOOL PAY AND PLAY | 1996       | -      |
| BLYTH JEX SPORTS CENTRE     | SEWELL       | -            | 18x10M | SCHOOL PAY AND PLAY | 1996       | -      |
| CATTON GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL | CATTON GROVE | 3            | 27x17M | SCHOOL CLUB USE     | 2007       |        |
| CITY OF NORWICH SCHOOL      | EATON        | 1            | 18x10M | SCHOOL CLUB USE     | 1910       | -      |
| CITY OF NORWICH SCHOOL (2)  | EATON        | 4            | 33x18M | SCHOOL CLUB USE     | 1970       | -      |
| EARLHAM HIGH SCHOOL         | UNIVERSITY   | 1            | 18x10M | SCHOOL CLUB USE     | 1960       | -      |
| EARLHAM HIGH SCHOOL         | UNIVERSITY   | 1            | 18x10M | SCHOOL CLUB USE     | 1960       | -      |

|  |               |    |                     |                         |      |      |
|--|---------------|----|---------------------|-------------------------|------|------|
| HEARTSEASE HIGH SCHOOL                     | CROME         | 1  | 18x10M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1995 | -    |
| HEARTSEASE HIGH SCHOOL (3)                 | CROME         | 4  | 33x17M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1995 | -    |
| HEWETT SCHOOL                              | TOWN CLOSE    | 1  | 18x10M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1960 | -    |
| NORMAN COMMUNITY CENTRE                    | MILE CROSS    | 1  | 18x10M              | LA PAY AND PLAY         | 1976 | 2000 |
| NORWICH HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS CENTRE (4)      | TOWN CLOSE    | 4  | 33x18M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 2000 | -    |
| NORWICH SCHOOL (5)                         | MANCROFT      | 4  | 33x17M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 2001 | -    |
| NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL                     | MANCROFT      | 1  | 18x10M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1984 | -    |
| NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL (6)                 | MANCROFT      | 4  | 33x17M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1984 | 2004 |
| RECREATION ROAD SPORTS CENTRE              | NELSON        | 3  | 27x17M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         |      |      |
| SPORTSPARK (7)                             | UNIVERSITY    | 12 | 54x34M              | UNIVERSITY PAY AND PLAY | 2000 | -    |
| WENSUM LODGE SPORTS HALL & SQUASH CLUB (8) | MANCROFT      | 5  | 810M <sup>2</sup>   | LA PAY AND PLAY         | 1975 | -    |
| YMCA (NORWICH)                             | MANCROFT      | 2  | NK                  | OTHER PRIVATE           | 1960 | -    |
|  |               |    |                     | OTHER PAY AND PLAY      |      |      |
| BOB CARTER CENTRE (9)                      | BROADLAND     | 4  | 33x18M              | OTHER PAY AND PLAY      | 1979 | 2002 |
| HELLESDON HIGH SCHOOL                      | BROADLAND     | 1  | 18x10M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1970 | -    |
| HELLESDON HIGH SCHOOL                      | BROADLAND     | 1  | 18x10M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1970 | -    |
| NORWICH UNION                              | BROADLAND     | 1  | 18x10M              | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1992 | -    |
| NORWICH UNION                              | BROADLAND     | 1  | 18x10M              | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1992 | -    |
| SPROWSTON SPORTS HALL & SWIMMING POOL (10) | BROADLAND     | 4  | 33x17M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1960 | -    |
| SPROWSTON SPORTS HALL & SWIMMING POOL      | BROADLAND     | 1  | 18x10M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1960 | 2004 |
| TAVERHAM HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS HALL (11)      | BROADLAND     | 5  | 34x17M <sup>2</sup> | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 2007 | -    |
| THORPE ST ANDREW SCHOOL                    | BROADLAND     | 1  | 18x10M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1987 | -    |
| THORPE ST ANDREW SCHOOL                    | BROADLAND     | 1  | 18x10M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1987 | -    |
| THORPE ST ANDREW SCHOOL                    | BROADLAND     | 1  | 18x10M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1987 | -    |
|  |               |    |                     |                         |      |      |
| COSTESSEY HIGH SCHOOL                      | SOUTH NORFOLK | 1  | 18x10M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1960 | -    |
| COSTESSEY HIGH SCHOOL                      | SOUTH NORFOLK | 3  | 27x17M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1960 | -    |
| COSTESSEY HIGH SCHOOL                      | SOUTH NORFOLK | 1  | 18x10M              | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1960 | 2001 |
| YMCA (TROWSE)                              | SOUTH NORFOLK | 2  | 324M <sup>2</sup>   | OTHER CLUB USE          | -    | -    |

Numbers refer to the halls shown on Map 10

In addition there are facilities planned at the Sportspark (8 court, 34 x 34m), for which a planning application has recently been submitted (September 2007) and longer term plans for 4 court halls at Hellesdon High School and the Hewett School, as well as a smaller hall at Bowthorpe Community Park/Gurney Centre. A 1-court hall has recently closed at Lakenham.



**Map 10 Sports Halls with more than 4 courts**

There are 8 halls in Norwich, including the major facility at the Sportspark, with 4 courts or more, and thus able to offer a full range of activities, together with a further 3 in the fringe parishes. Of these only 4 (3 in Norwich and 1 in the fringe) are considered to offer pay and play opportunities for the local community, the remainder being primarily available on a club or prior booking basis, or solely in private use, and these comprise a total of 33 courts. The Sportspark has almost 50% of the available pay and play courts in the city and wider area. The

ratio of provision of 4 court community hall equivalents (the normal benchmark for this) is 1 hall per 25,000 people in Norwich, or 33,000 in the wider Norwich area.

**Quality assessment** - In Norwich the main sports centre at the Sportspark at UAE is recently constructed and being funded partly through the Lottery is built to high Sport England specifications, and remains in excellent condition, with high standards of maintenance. The other public facility in Norwich at Wensum Lodge is now relatively old, of an unusual shape and design for sport and in need of refurbishment. Schools halls are for the most part designed mainly for that purpose, and have little in the way of community facilities (specific changing, refreshment areas or foyer), and therefore offer limited opportunity for wider, and particularly casual, use by the community. While some school halls have been built in the last 10 years, about half date from the 1970s and earlier. In general therefore, with the exception of the 'public' hall at the Sportspark, it is considered that the quality of sports halls in Norwich, combined with current management arrangements, means that community usage is constrained.

### Swimming Pools

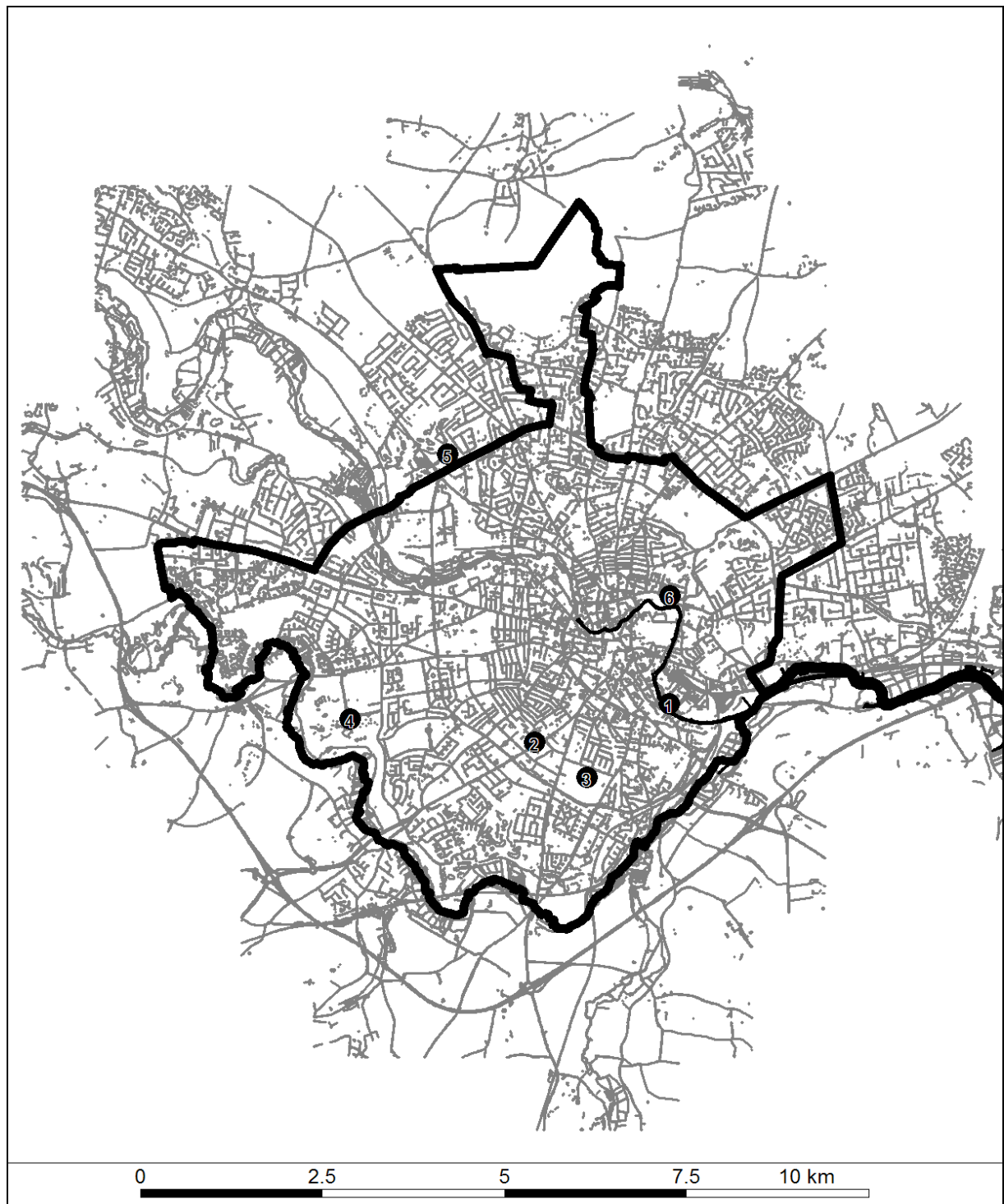
Swimming pools attract both casual and competitive activity, and swimming continues to be one of the most popular leisure pursuits. Usage is similar to sports halls in that facilities attract people from a relatively wide catchment. Pools have traditionally been provided by local authorities and as part of school facilities, but there is increasing provision in the private sector as the result of the growth new health and fitness centres. Existing provision in the Norwich area is set out below.

| Table 12 Swimming Pools                    |               |                 |         |                         |            |        |
|--|---------------|-----------------|---------|-------------------------|------------|--------|
| SITE NAME                                  | WARD          | NUMBER OF LANES | SIZE    | TYPE OF USE             | YEAR BUILT | REFURB |
| <b>MAIN POOLS</b>                          |               |                 |         |                         |            |        |
| GREENS HEALTH & FITNESS (NORWICH) (6)      | MOUSEHOLD     | 2               | 25x10M  | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 2001       | -      |
| HEWETT SCHOOL (3)                          | TOWN CLOSE    | 6               | 25x10M  | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1960       | -      |
| NORWICH HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS CENTRE (2)      | TOWN CLOSE    | 4               | 25x10M  | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 2000       | -      |
| RIVERSIDE SWIMMING CENTRE (NORWICH) (1)    | THORPE HAMLET | 6               | 25x13M  | LA PAY AND PLAY         | 2003       | -      |
| SPORTSPARK (4)                             | UNIVERSITY    | 8               | 50x17M  | UNIVERSITY PAY AND PLAY | 2000       | -      |
| COLEMAN JS                                 | EATON         |                 | 15 x 6M | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1975       |        |
| EATON PS                                   | EATON         |                 | 12 x 8M | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1975       |        |
| NELSON IS                                  | WENSUM        |                 | 10 x 8M | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1962       |        |
| HEARTSEASE PS                              | CROME         |                 | 15 x 6M | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1980       |        |
| TOWN CLOSE SCHOOL                          | TOWN CLOSE    |                 | 17 x 8M | SCHOOL CLUB USE         |            |        |
| EARLHAM HS                                 | UNIVERSITY    |                 | 18 x 5M | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1980       |        |
| RECREATION ROAD IS                         | NELSON        |                 | 18 x 5M | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1980       |        |
| BANNATYNES HEALTH & RACQUET CLUB (NORWICH) | BROADLAND     | 1               | 20x8M   | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1999       | -      |
| EXPERT FITNESS                             | BROADLAND     | -               | 15x5M   | COMMERCIAL PAY AND PLAY | 1999       | -      |
| HELLESDON HIGH SCHOOL                      | BROADLAND     | 4               | 17x8M   | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1970       | 2002   |

|   |               |   |           |                         |      |      |
|---|---------------|---|-----------|-------------------------|------|------|
| ESPORTA (5)                                   | BROADLAND     | 6 | 25x13M    | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 2006 | -    |
| OASIS SPORTS & LEISURE CLUB (THORPE)          | BROADLAND     | - | 15x5M     | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1982 | 2006 |
| SPROWSTON SPORTS HALL & SWIMMING POOL         | BROADLAND     | 4 | 15x9M     | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1960 | -    |
| THORPE ST ANDREW SCHOOL                       | BROADLAND     | 6 | 20x10M    | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1987 | -    |
| THORPE HOUSE SCHOOL                           | BROADLAND     | 3 | 16x6M     | SCHOOL USE ONLY         |      |      |
| DRAYTON JS                                    | BROADLAND     | 2 | 12x5M     | SCHOOL CLUB USE         |      |      |
|   |               |   |           |                         |      |      |
| CARREFOUR HEALTH & BEAUTY (NORWICH)           | SOUTH NORFOLK | 2 | 17x5M     | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 2000 | -    |
| COSTESSEY HIGH SCHOOL                         | SOUTH NORFOLK | 4 | 20x8M     | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 1960 | -    |
| <b>ANCILLARY POOLS</b>                        |               |   |           |                         |      |      |
| POOLSIDE LEISURE CLUB (NORWICH)               | MILE CROSS    | - | 10x6.5M   | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1991 | -    |
| QUALITY LIVING HEALTH CLUB (NORWICH)          | BOWTHORPE     | - | 10.5x5M   | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1989 | -    |
| RIVERSIDE SWIMMING CENTRE (NORWICH)           | THORPE HAMLET | - | 13.5x7.5M | LA PAY AND PLAY         | 2003 | -    |
| SPIRIT HEALTH & FITNESS (NORWICH)             | TOWN CLOSE    | - | 13x8M     | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1986 | 2003 |
| TRIANGLE HEALTH AND FITNESS (NORWICH)         | CATTON GROVE  | - | 13x7M     | COMMERCIAL PAY AND PLAY | 1990 | 2005 |
|   |               |   |           |                         |      |      |
| OASIS SPORTS & LEISURE CLUB (THORPE)          | BROADLAND     | - | 12x5M     | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1982 | 2006 |
| WENSUM VALLEY HOTEL GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB       | BROADLAND     | 4 | 12.5x9.5M | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1990 | -    |
| <b>LEISURE POOLS</b>                          |               |   |           |                         |      |      |
| MARRIOTT SPROWSTON MANOR HOTEL & COUNTRY CLUB | BROADLAND     | - | 15x13M    | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1991 | 2004 |
| ESPORTA                                       | BROADLAND     | - | 20x17M    | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 2006 | -    |
| <b>LIDOS</b>                                  |               |   |           |                         |      |      |
| ESPORTA                                       | BROADLAND     | 3 | NK        | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 2006 | -    |

Numbers refer to the halls shown on Map 11





**Map 11 Swimming Pools 25m length and above**

In addition there are initial plans for an additional 25m pool at the Sportspark in the future.

Of the multitude of water space in the area, there are only 6 pools of 25m in length or more (including the 50m pool at the Sportspark) allowing the full range of activities, including competitive swimming, 5 in Norwich and 1 in the fringe. Of these only Riverside and Sportspark are open to the community on a pay and play basis, with a total water space of 1175m<sup>2</sup>. The remainder are used for training and teaching purposes (mainly school sites) or as part of health and fitness clubs mainly in the commercial sector. The ratio of 4-lane 25m

community pools (the normal benchmark) is 1:25,000 people in Norwich or 1:39,000 in the wider area.

**Quality assessment** - As with sports halls, there is a contrast between the quality and condition of pools in various forms of management. The 2 'public' pools at Sportspark and Riverside were both funded with the help of Lottery grants within the last 7 years, and are built and broadly maintained to a high standard, which meets the needs of the community. More recent pools have been established in commercial health and fitness clubs in the city and beyond, and retain high standards of design and maintenance. Most of the school pools, like halls, were built primarily for students' use and community access (outside clubs and lessons) is constrained by the lack of ancillary facilities. With one exception school pools date from the 1960s to 1980, and suffer from outdated plant, layout and design. In general therefore the overall quality of existing pools means that only the 2 main facilities make a significant contribution to the needs of the wider community, at least for casual access.

### Health and Fitness

With the movement towards individual leisure pursuits and forms of physical activity, and the increasing influence of the commercial leisure sector, health and fitness centres have become established in the past 15 years. As well as containing pools as set out above, these have a range of fitness stations and other facilities. The data below sets out the number of stations.

| Table 13 Health and Fitness Centres          |               |                    |                         |            |             |
|--|---------------|--------------------|-------------------------|------------|-------------|
| SITE NAME                                    | WARD          | NUMBER OF STATIONS | TYPE OF USE             | YEAR BUILT | REFURBISHED |
| BLYTH JEX SPORTS CENTRE (7)                  | SEWELL        | 20                 | SCHOOL PAY AND PLAY     | 1996       | -           |
| BODY TONIC (3)                               | MANCROFT      | 57                 | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1996       | -           |
| FITNESS FIRST (NORWICH) (9)                  | THORPE HAMLET | 91                 | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 2001       | -           |
| GREENS HEALTH & FITNESS (NORWICH) (21)       | MOUSEHOLD     | 90                 | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 2001       | 2005        |
| NORMAN COMMUNITY CENTRE (5)                  | MILE CROSS    | 32                 | LA PAY AND PLAY         | 1976       | 2005        |
| NORWICH GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS CENTRE (10) | TOWN CLOSE    | 8                  | SCHOOL CLUB USE         | 2000       | -           |
| NORWICH SCHOOL                               | MANCROFT      | NK                 | SCHOOL PRIVATE          | 2001       | -           |
| NOTRE DAME HIGH SCHOOL (4)                   | MANCROFT      | 6                  | SCHOOL PRIVATE          | 1984       | -           |
| NR FITNESS (EARLHAM HS) (13)                 | UNIVERSITY    | 25                 | SCHOOL PAY AND PLAY     | 2007       |             |
| POOLSIDE LEISURE CLUB (NORWICH) (6)          | MILE CROSS    | 9                  | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1991       | -           |
| QUALITY LIVING HEALTH CLUB (NORWICH) (1)     | BOWTHORPE     | 15                 | COMMERCIAL PAY AND PLAY | 1989       | -           |
| RIVERSIDE SWIMMING CENTRE (NORWICH) (8)      | THORPE HAMLET | 70                 | LA PAY AND PLAY         | 2003       | -           |
| SPIRIT HEALTH & FITNESS (NORWICH) (11)       | TOWN CLOSE    | 18                 | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1986       | 2005        |
| SPORTSPARK (12)                              | UNIVERSITY    | 80                 | UNIVERSITY PAY AND PLAY | 2000       | -           |

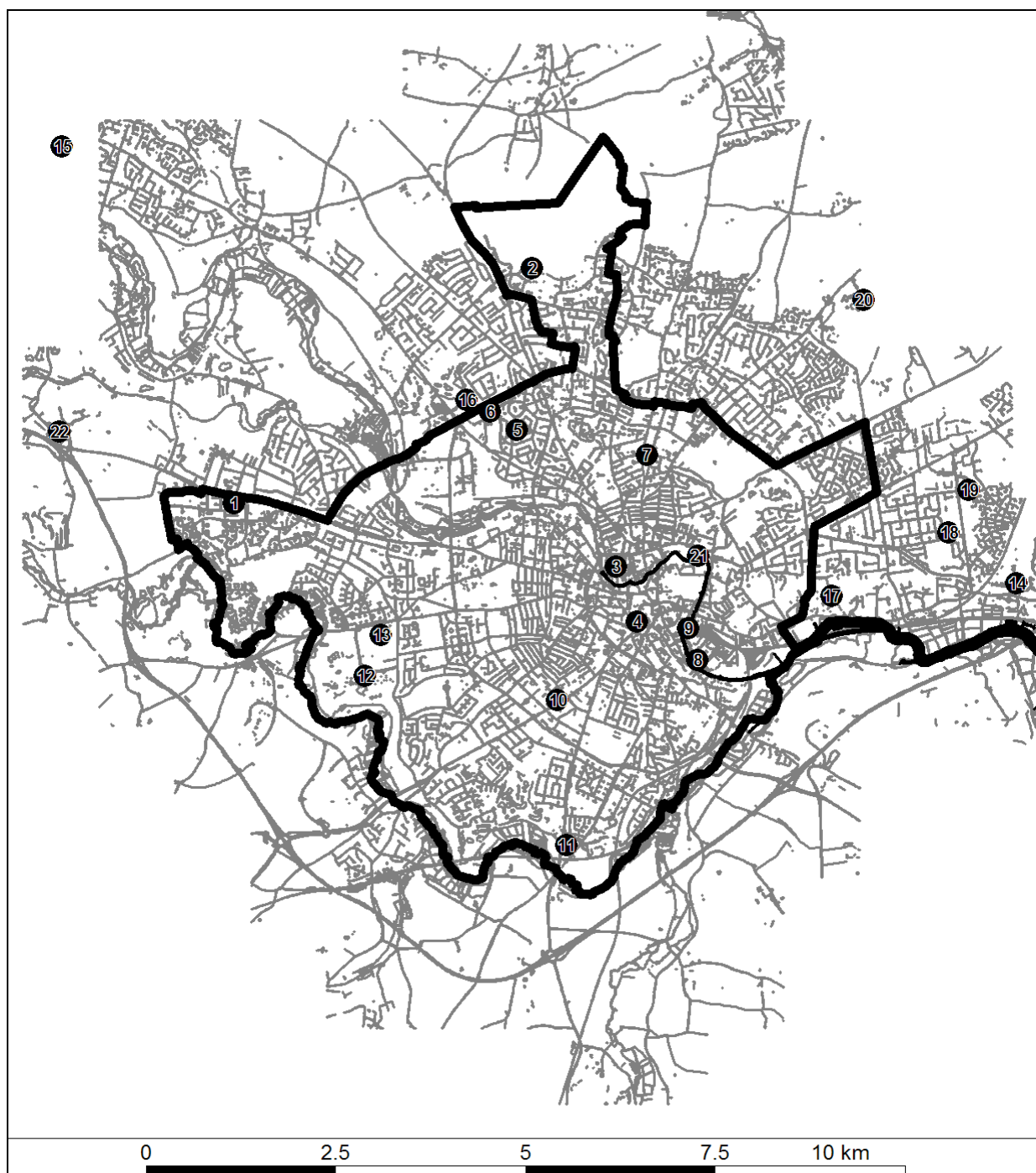
|  |               |     |                         |      |      |
|--|---------------|-----|-------------------------|------|------|
| THAI WELL BEING                                    | MANCROFT      | 18  | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   |      |      |
| TRIANGLE HEALTH AND FITNESS (NORWICH) (2)          | CATTON GROVE  | 31  | COMMERCIAL PAY AND PLAY | 1990 | 2005 |
| BANNATYNES HEALTH & RACQUET CLUB (NORWICH) (14)    | BROADLAND     | 100 | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1999 | 2004 |
| MARRIOTT SPROWSTON MANOR HOTEL & COUNTRY CLUB (20) | BROADLAND     | 21  | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1991 | 2004 |
| ESPORTA (16)                                       | BROADLAND     | 60  | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 2006 | -    |
| NORWICH UNION (17)                                 | BROADLAND     | 24  | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1992 | 2006 |
| OASIS SPORTS & LEISURE CLUB (THORPE) (19)          | BROADLAND     | 60  | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1982 | 2004 |
| THORPE ST ANDREW SCHOOL (18)                       | BROADLAND     | 20  | SCHOOL PAY AND PLAY     | 1987 | -    |
| WENSUM VALLEY HOTEL GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB (15)       | BROADLAND     | 65  | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 1990 | 2003 |
| CARREFOUR HEALTH & BEAUTY (NORWICH) (22)           | SOUTH NORFOLK | 95  | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP   | 2000 | 2006 |
| COSTESSEY HIGH SCHOOL                              | SOUTH NORFOLK | 10  | SCHOOL PRIVATE          | 1999 | -    |

Numbers refer to the halls shown on Map 12

Lakenham Sports and Leisure Centre, a commercial pay and play facility with 60 stations, and a number of other facilities have recently closed.

Of the total of 1045 stations, about 303 are available to the wider community on a pay and use basis, the remainder usually through subscription to commercial facilities. Overall the ratio of stations per 1000 population (the normal benchmark) is 4.4 in Norwich, and 5.1 over the wider area.

**Quality assessment** - The quality of existing health and fitness facilities in Norwich is not considered to be a constraint on their availability for wider community use, most having been built over the last 10 years, with refurbishment and regular replacement of equipment. Their contribution in each case to meeting the wider needs of the community is affected by the form of management, which in broad terms varies between private commercial health club membership and casual pay and play access.



**Map 12 Health and Fitness Centres**

### Indoor Bowls

PPG17 requires an assessment of indoor bowls provision. Indoor bowls centres allow the mainly outdoor game to be played all year round, and the activity is particularly favoured by more mature participants, though in fact at elite level bowls is still a young person's sport.

| Table 14 Indoor Bowls Centres |       |                 |                           |            |             |
|-------------------------------|-------|-----------------|---------------------------|------------|-------------|
| SITE NAME                     | WARD  | NUMBER OF RINKS | TYPE OF USE               | YEAR BUILT | REFURBISHED |
| NORFOLK BOWLING CLUB (1)      | EATON | 7               | SPORTS CLUB<br>MEMBERSHIP | 1968       | 2005        |

|                                   |            |   |                              |      |      |
|-----------------------------------|------------|---|------------------------------|------|------|
| NORMAN COMMUNITY CENTRE (2)       | MILE CROSS | 4 | LOCAL AUTHORITY PAY AND PLAY | 1984 | 2004 |
| COUNTY ARTS INDOOR BOWLS CLUB (3) | BROADLAND  | 6 | SPORTS CLUB MEMBERSHIP       | 1962 | 2001 |
| ROUNDWOOD INDOOR BOWLS CLUB (4)   | BROADLAND  | 6 | SPORTS CLUB PAY AND PLAY     | 1989 | 2006 |

Numbers refer to the halls shown on Map 13

Most indoor bowls is based at private clubs, though there is local authority provision at the Norman Centre. Norwich provision is the equivalent of 0.08 rinks per 1000 population, and the wider Norwich area figure is 0.11.



**Map 13 Indoor Bowls**

## Indoor tennis

| Table 15 Indoor Tennis Centres                 |           |                  |                       |            |             |
|--|-----------|------------------|-----------------------|------------|-------------|
| SITE NAME                                      | WARD      | NUMBER OF COURTS | TYPE OF USE           | YEAR BUILT | REFURBISHED |
| BANNATYNES HEALTH & RACQUET CLUB (NORWICH) (1) | BROADLAND | 3                | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP | 1999       | -           |
| ESPORTA (2)                                    | BROADLAND | 6                | COMMERCIAL MEMBERSHIP | 2006       | -           |

Numbers refer to the halls shown on Map 14

With the recent closure of the Lakenham Tennis Centre (with 4 indoor courts available on a commercial pay and play basis), there are no facilities for indoor tennis in Norwich, though the wider area accommodates 9 courts (and it is understood that the County Tennis Centre previously accommodated at Lakenham may shortly be relocated just outside the Norwich area at Easton College). All existing provision is based at private clubs. The ratio of provision in the wider Norwich area is 0.04 courts per 1000 population.



**Map14 Indoor Tennis**

## Ice Rinks

There are no facilities for ice-skating in the Norwich area, with the exception of a small rink at Esporta in Broadland and the temporary facility each winter on Millennium Plain.

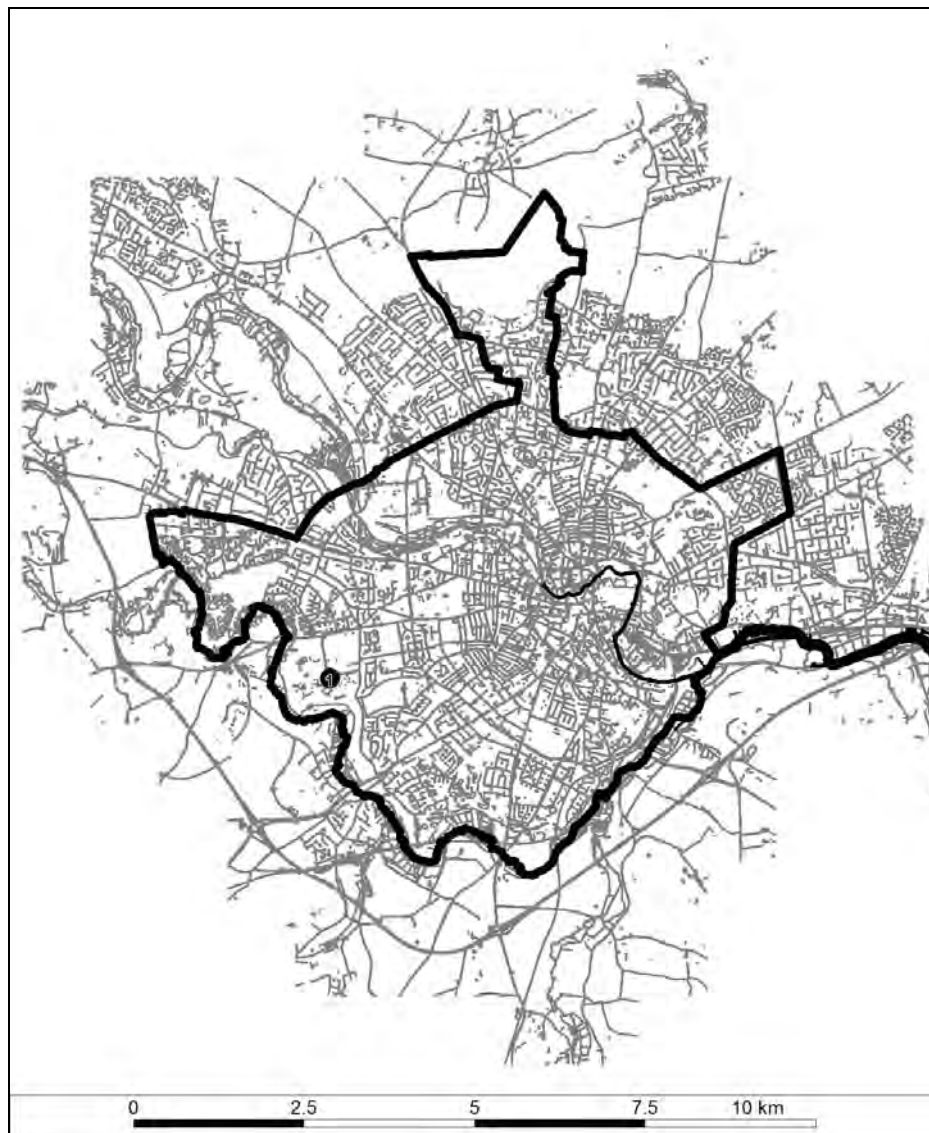
## Athletics

**Table 16 Athletics Tracks**

| SITE NAME      | WARD       | NUMBER OF LANES | TYPE OF USE             | YEAR BUILT |
|----------------|------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------|
| SPORTSPARK (1) | UNIVERSITY | 8               | UNIVERSITY PAY AND PLAY | 2000       |

Numbers refer to the halls shown on Map 15

With the closure of the cinder track at Hewett School on the construction of the Sportspark synthetic track in 2000, there is one existing athletics facility in the Norwich area. Athletics tracks tend to be strategically located, and the ratio of lanes to population in the area (0.04 lanes per 1000 population) is about the national and regional average.



**Map 15 Athletics Tracks**

## Golf

| Table 17 Golf Courses                         |               |            |                         |       |
|---|---------------|------------|-------------------------|-------|
| COURSE  | WARD          | HOLES      | TYPE OF ACCESS          | BUILT |
| EATON GOLF CLUB                               | EATON         | 18         | PRIVATE SPORTS CLUB     | 1910  |
| MARRIOTT SPROWSTON MANOR HOTEL & COUNTRY CLUB | BROADLAND     | 18         | COMMERCIAL PAY AND PLAY | 2003  |
| ROYAL NORWICH GOLF CLUB                       | BROADLAND     | 18         | PRIVATE SPORTS CLUB     | 1893  |
| WENSUM VALLEY HOTEL GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB       | BROADLAND     | 2 x 18/GDR | COMMERCIAL PAY AND PLAY | 1990  |
| BAWBURGH GOLF CLUB                            | SOUTH NORFOLK | 18/GDR     | COMMERCIAL PAY AND PLAY | 1994  |
| COSTESSEY PARK GOLF CLUB                      | SOUTH NORFOLK | 18         | COMMERCIAL PAY AND PLAY | 1980  |
| MARRIOTT SPROWSTON MANOR HOTEL & COUNTRY CLUB | BROADLAND     | 27 BAY GDR | COMMERCIAL PAY AND PLAY | 1994  |

There are seven 18-hole golf courses in the Norwich area, together with three golf driving ranges. Two are established club based courses, while the remaining 5 courses are broadly available on a pay and play basis, though in each case a club is attached to the course. The ratio of holes per 1000 population in Norwich is 0.14, and over the wider area 0.61, compared with the national average of 0.67.

## Ski slopes

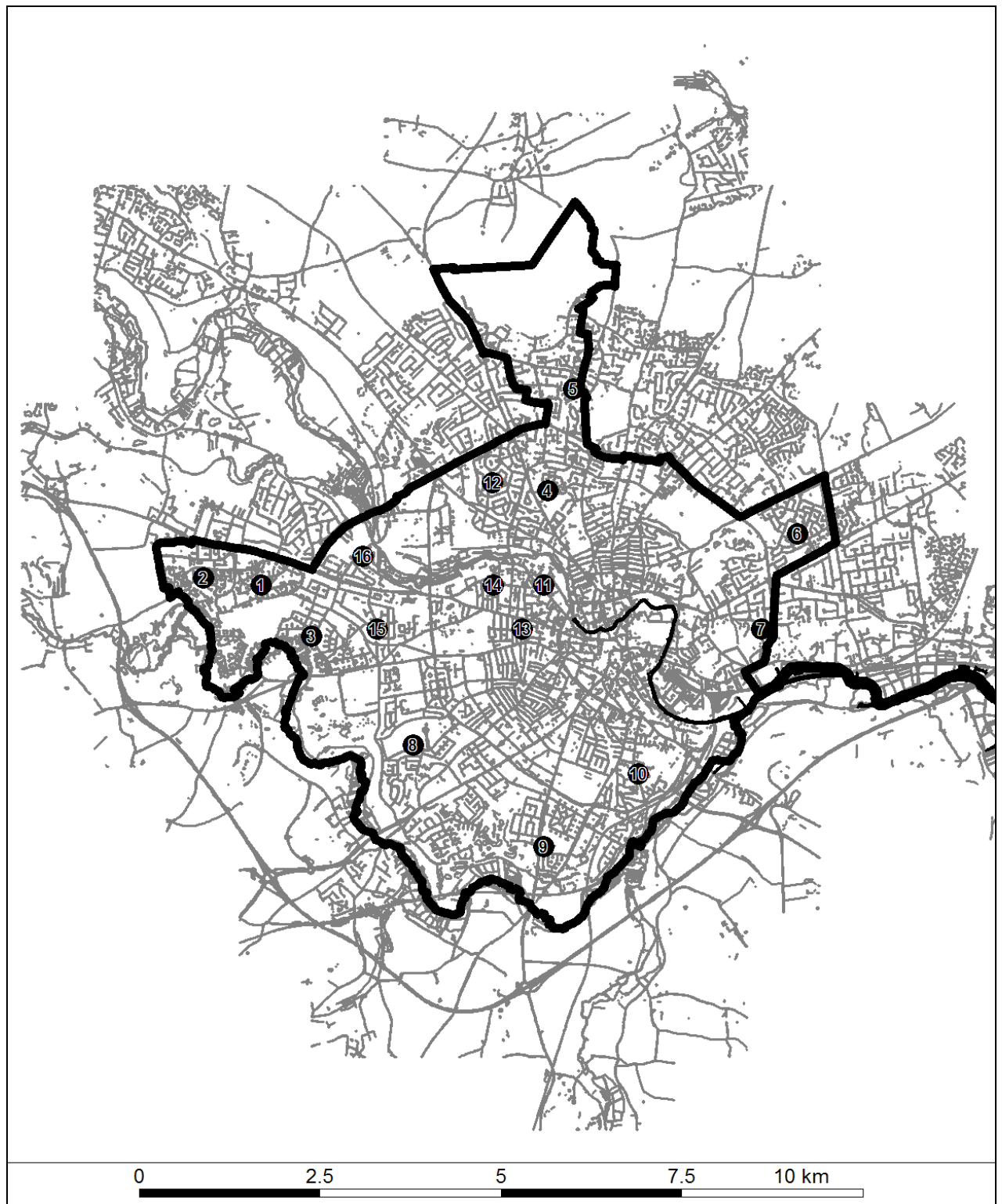
There are 6 locations in the East region with outdoor ski slopes, comprising 24 individual slopes. One of these is located in the Norwich area in Trowse in South Norfolk, and this has 5 slopes. Because of the relative sparsity of such facilities in the region and nationally, it is not realistic to compare levels of provision. The Norwich slope is managed and run by a local club, and access to the facility is by registered membership on a commercial basis.

## COMMUNITY CENTRES

Small halls and community venues (such as community centres) host a variety of recreation and social/community activities. These venues come in all shapes and sizes, and whilst some may not be suited to hosting any formal sports activity, they can provide important local venues for social contact, meetings, crèches, keep fit and other such activities satisfying important local needs.

The following map shows the location of identified small halls and community venues within the City. In the absence of easy access to larger leisure centres, they may provide the only accessible and local covered recreation provision. This assessment is restricted to community centres currently managed by the City Council, and does not include the whole range of other similar facilities, such as youth clubs, scout huts and other halls owned and managed by voluntary groups and similar, for which information is not readily available. However it is considered appropriate to restrict attention to the main community centres, as it is this aspect of community development which has been subject to developer contributions elsewhere.





**Map 16 Community Centres**

**Table 18 Community Centres**

| Venue                             | Ward         |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|
| BELVEDERE COMMUNITY CENTRE (13)   | NELSON       |
| CADGE ROAD COMMUNITY CENTRE (15)  | WENSUM       |
| CATTON GROVE COMMUNITY CENTRE (4) | CATTON GROVE |
| CHAPEL BREAK COMMUNITY CENTRE (2) | BOWTHORPE    |

|                                      |              |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| CLOVER HILL COMMUNITY CENTRE (1)     | BOWTHORPE    |
| EATON PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE (8)      | EATON        |
| FRERE ROAD COMMUNITY CENTRE (6)      | CROME        |
| GREENFIELDS COMMUNITY CENTRE (5)     | CATTON GROVE |
| HARFORD COMMUNITY CENTRE (9)         | LAKENHAM     |
| JUBILEE COMMUNITY CENTRE (10)        | LAKENHAM     |
| MARLPIT COMMUNITY CENTRE (16)        | WENSUM       |
| NORMAN CENTRE (12)                   | MILE CROSS   |
| PILLING PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE (7)    | CROME        |
| RUSSELL STREET COMMUNITY CENTRE (11) | MANCROFT     |
| WENSUM (14)                          | WENSUM       |
| WEST EARLHAM COMMUNITY CENTRE (3)    | BOWTHORPE    |

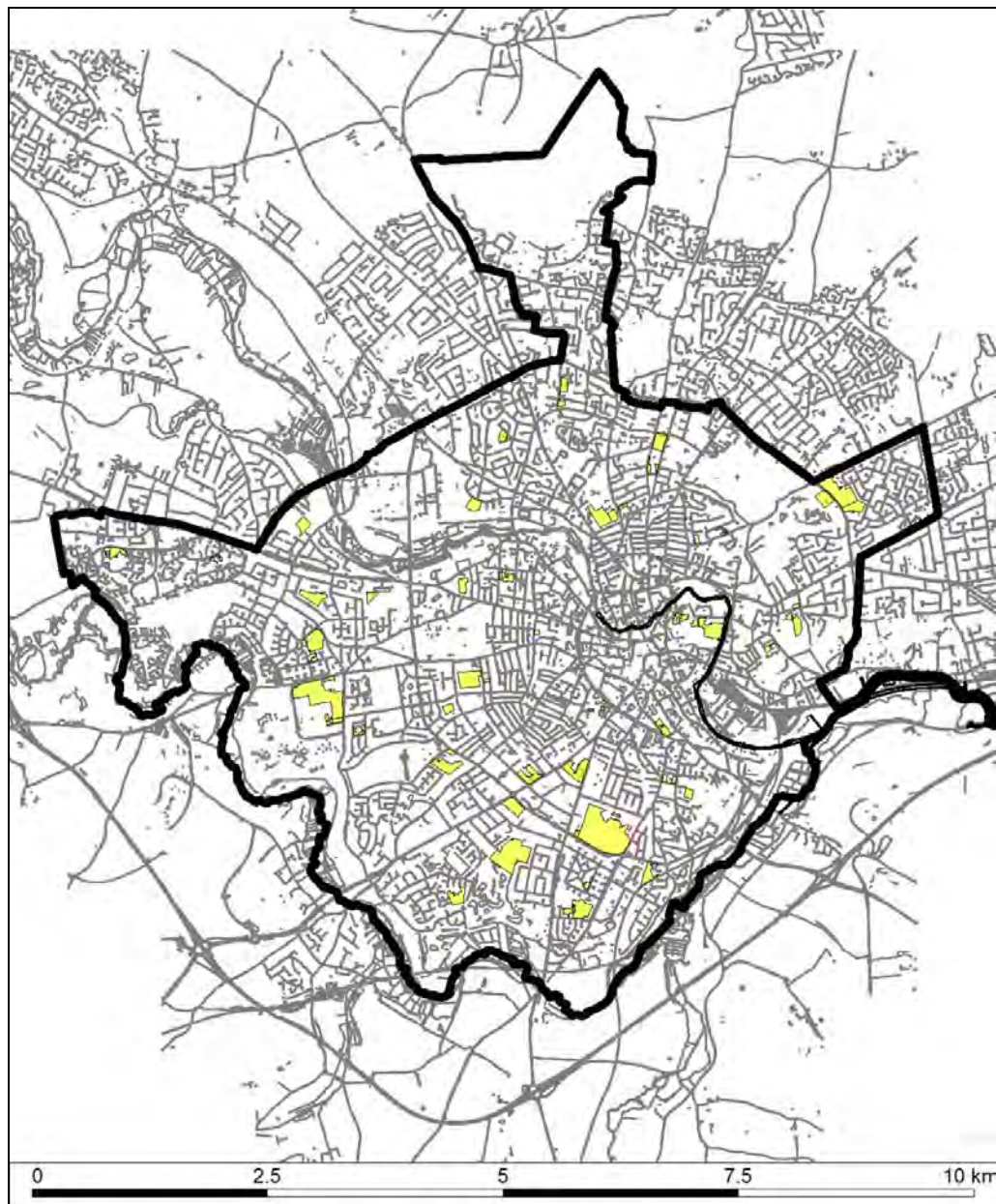
Numbers refer to the halls shown on Map 16

There are 16 such venues that have been identified (which do not include day centres.) This gives a ratio of 1 small community venue per 8200 people in Norwich.

### SCHOOL GROUNDS

There are estimated to be 111 ha of open space on school grounds throughout the city, some of which are available for wider public use (for example as sports pitches), either de facto or through more formal arrangements, but mostly primarily used for school purposes. These are set out in Appendix 8.

There has been a significant reorganisation of schools for the under 11s in Norwich this year, resulting in rationalisation, amalgamation and some closures. A number of school sites have been (or will shortly be) relinquished, including some with extensive playing fields and sports facilities, and the future of these will need to be considered as part of the overall open space needs assessment and the policies which emanate from it.



**Map 17 School Grounds**

## **5. LOCAL DEMAND**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This section examines identified local demand for various types of open space, sports and recreation opportunity. It has drawn upon a range of survey and analytical techniques to seek the views of the community, together with local assessments of demand for sports facilities, allotments and play.

The initial part of the section sets out in detail the community consultation exercises that have been undertaken as part of the study. The extent of the consultation reflects the breadth and diversity of the study and a consequent need to engage with as wide a cross section of the community as possible. Two questionnaire surveys were undertaken and this report details where the useful and relevant information that was received:

- Household community survey
- Young people and schools survey

In addition to the above focus group meetings/consultation sessions also were undertaken as below:

- Sports groups within the city
- Various community groups
- Green spaces groups
- Officers of the planning section of the City Council
- Officers of the Green Spaces Section of the City Council

The result of this consultation and other analyses has helped amongst other things to inform the content of the recommended local standards as well as possible priorities and actions for inclusion in action plans and the green space strategy. Crucially it has also helped the study to understand local people's appreciation of open space and recreation facilities, and the values attached by the community to such provision. This appreciation should have implications for the way in which open spaces are treated and designated in the revised development plan.

### **HOUSEHOLD COMMUNITY SURVEY**

A questionnaire was posted out to 2000 households within Norwich and also placed on the Council's website. Of the total number distributed 270 completed questionnaires were returned. The full report of the community survey is included as Appendix 9. The respondents were biased towards the older age groups, females and parents of under 12s. This stresses the need to include the additional survey of young people (see below) and other groups to ensure that a rounded picture is achieved.

### **YOUNG PEOPLE SURVEY**

Questionnaires were distributed to 15 schools and around 195 completed questionnaires were returned, from 9 schools. The children and young people involved came from most parts of the city (and beyond) and represented a wide age range from 6-16 and a fairly even gender split.

## **SUMMARY OF COMMENTS**

The consultation has highlighted a very wide range of interesting points and issues of value both to this study as well as any future green space strategy.

However, in terms of this particular study, the following key general points are felt to be important:

- The local importance attached to the provision of a range of open spaces and facilities.
- The value attached to both informal and formal open spaces.
- The concern for the quality of some facilities
- The need when planning for all types of recreation opportunity to take into account people's preparedness to travel, and requirement for different types of space. For children and young people this means easy access by foot/cycle, although this should be a universal aspiration in planning and locating all local community open spaces and recreation opportunities.

The following more specific issues were highlighted by the consultation exercises carried out:

## **COMMUNITY SURVEY**

### **Types of open space**

- The most frequently used spaces are parks, cycle paths, footpaths and riverside walks and paved areas for walking and sitting.
- The least frequently used spaces are outdoor facilities for teenagers, allotments, artificial turf pitches and golf courses.
- Sports centres and swimming pools and local play areas are also used at least weekly by over 10% of the population.
- Most spaces and facilities are visited all year round, but outdoor water recreation facilities, golf courses, tennis and netball facilities are used mainly in the summer.

### **Community views on local spaces**

- More than half of people travel less than 800m to their most used local space and over 70% less than 1600m. The majority of people travel less than 10 minutes to such spaces and very few people over 20 minutes. 65% of people travel to their most used space by foot, the car is the second most popular mode and is used by 19% of people.
- 61% of people visit their most used local space about once or twice a week. Around a quarter of people visit such spaces once a month or less.
- Walking, enjoying the natural environment and to sit and relax are the most common reasons for using people's most frequently used local area of open space.

### **Travel times and mode**

- There was a broad range of times that people were prepared to travel to different types of open space and sports facilities, and various travel modes. The details are set out in Appendix 9 and reflected in the recommended standards.

### **General community views on open space**

- By far the most important issue in relation to open space is that it should be safe and secure for people using them. The most significant issues other than safety are

cleanliness and being free of litter and graffiti, easy access for all members of community and adequate control of dogs and being free from dog fouling.

- Making improvements to access, quality and quantity of spaces would lead to greater use of Norwich's open spaces. Improving existing facilities like toilets, cafes, parking and seating would have the biggest effect on encouraging greater use of open spaces in the City. Improving safety and security with things like better lighting and CCTV would also promote greater use of facilities, as would more information on available facilities.
- The majority of residents think local parks and recreation grounds are good or very good and over 40% think footpaths, riverside walks, Mousehold Heath and paved areas for walking and sitting are at least good.
- The majority of those with an opinion think outdoor teenage facilities are poor or very poor and cycle paths are rated average to very poor by a majority.
- A majority of people think that formal planting displays, shrubs and flowerbeds are good or very good. The variety of types and sizes of open spaces and provision of special events and festivals are rated good or better by over 40% of people.
- Areas and bins for dog fouling are the lowest rated aspect of open space, followed by provision of shelters and signposting and information.

### **Children and young people's views (CYP)**

- Both informal and informal open spaces can draw CYP from different locations across an area like Norwich. CYP do not just meet up to play/hang out in designated parks and play areas, they also use the street and smaller areas of spare grass or other open spaces.
- Just under half of CYP reach their most used local open space in under 5 minutes and around two thirds under 10 minutes. Almost a fifth of CYP travel over 15 minutes to their most used space.
- By far the majority of CYP walk or cycle to their most used open space, but 1/5th are driven, most go with friends or family and only a small number go alone.
- The majority of CYP visit such spaces at least once or twice a week and almost a 1/3 most days. Peak use of open spaces is during the summer, but they still have a significant number of visits in the winter.
- The main reason that CYP visit their local open space is to meet up with friends. Playing in play areas with friends and family and cycling are also popular.
- CYP think that safety and security and freedom from litter and graffiti are the most important things about open spaces. CYP also think access and dog management are important issues too.
- Around a two thirds of male and female CYP from age 6-16 think that it is OK for a 10 to 13 year old to travel to a play area or sports facility without an adult.
- Around 1/3 of CYP think there should be more open spaces and outdoor facilities where they live and would in particular like to see more places for YP to meet up outdoors, as well as informal kick-about areas and shelters.
- CYP recognise the conflicting pressures on open spaces, such as the need to provide places to meet up with friends, but also the need to control anti-social behaviour. They want more facilities, but recognise that there needs to be equipment for all ages and people with disabilities.
- The findings of the consultation on use of and access to open spaces and other facilities will be used to inform the development of local standards of provision, as discussed in the next section.

## FOCUS GROUPS AND OTHER DISCUSSIONS

Structured questionnaire surveys (such as the above household survey) are a very useful means of collecting comments and views in a systematic way that is conducive to analyses. However, such surveys do not allow for more in depth dialogue and are therefore 'closed' to the potentially creative ideas of respondents that may not be covered within the questionnaires.

For this reason a series of discussion groups were held to augment the findings of the various questionnaire surveys. They were not intended to be statistically representative, but were done when opportunities arose. The focus of the discussion groups was on the most important themes addressed by the study.

The discussions held were with the following:

- Representatives of sports clubs in the city including football, cycle speedway, athletics and BMX
- Representatives of greenspaces groups including Chapelfield Gardens and Fiddlewood
- Community groups in Fiddlewood, Catton Grove and Lakenham

The 'external' consultations followed the same simple format in that those attending were asked through discussion to respond to a number of questions:

Which local open spaces and parks do you use?

What are the 'good things' about open space, sport and recreation in the City?

What are the bad things about open space, sport and recreation in the City?

In what ways can things be 'improved' in the abovementioned?

The discussions were both interesting and wide ranging, with many comments and suggestions being made. The following summarises the most common points made:

### Focus Groups - summary of points

- **Sport.** The local BMX club is thriving and has the use of a major track in Sloughbottom, which is being refurbished for serious use. Demand will grow because BMX is an Olympic sport. There is a need for up to 10 other tracks in the city to encourage more participation at recreational level. Cycle speedway, once an important sport in the area is declining, and membership of the remaining club is low (but fluctuating). Additional tracks are unlikely to be required. The only track and field athletics club in the city is based at UEA, and has thriving membership. Despite being quite new the track is in relatively poor condition, with surface and some ancillary facilities requiring renovation. Home club events are not possible, and development of the club is constrained. Generally there was some concern about the quality of facilities for sport in Norwich, if not a lack of facilities to meet demand. Car parking is considered inadequate at some parks, especially Eaton Park.
- **Green spaces.** Parks, gardens and other open spaces such as Chapelfield, Lion Wood and Fiddlewood are essential features of the Norwich landscape and must be retained broadly in their current form at all costs. There is a reluctance to see significant change, though it is acknowledged that some parks are poorly managed, and facilities are often lacking or in poor condition. Chapelfield in particular is considered to be lacking in care, with poor facilities and an absence of good management, and a feeling that S106 money collected from nearby development had

not been spent to improve or provide facilities in the immediate area. In general there was considered to be a need for proper strategic plans for Norwich's parks and green spaces with one department responsible for planning, management and trouble shooting, and overall better coordination of all open and green spaces, so that the various demands on them could be considered in the round. There was considered to be a lack of facilities for younger people in the parks, though at the same time a reluctance to accommodate any such provision in existing areas. It was considered ironic that the existing open space at Greenfields was under imminent threat from housing development at a time when the Council was considering this open space needs assessment.

- **Community groups.** Local communities tend to use parks that are very local to them, and generally within a 15-minute walk, which is the main form of access. The need for local parks was emphasised by the reluctance of most to allow children to go off to the park by themselves before they are 13-14. Groups are keen to retain areas of open space, and prevent their development for other purposes, particularly as housing densities are increasing with smaller gardens and private space. The good aspects of local parks included easy access, the need for local areas of green space and their usage by a variety of people for many different purposes. However, there was a strong feeling in some areas that existing open space has its problems, in particular anti-social behaviour, leading to feelings of insecurity and vandalism. Other problems include fly tipping, lack of facilities and poor condition of some facilities including play equipment. Improvements to parks should include:
  - better surveillance (including the re-employment of park keepers or community wardens;
  - safe routes to and within parks, especially for disabled people;
  - better design of parks to restrict access, particularly for motorcycles;
  - improved fencing and gates;
  - better education for dog owners to prevent dog fouling;
  - more and better play equipment and facilities for informal and organised sport (e.g. MUGAs which could be booked).

More specifically it was stated that allotments would continue to be in demand, as private gardens no longer provide space to grow vegetables and fruit.

## SPORTS SPECIFIC CONSULTATIONS

Broad discussions were held with Active Norfolk, the County Sports Partnership, which covers local authorities and other partner organisations with the aim of promoting participation in sport and active recreation within the county (which includes the City). The organisation therefore represents and seeks to promote a wide range of sports within the City (and elsewhere). The summary of these discussions was as follows:

- There is a mix of indoor sports facilities within the City that serve the general public and split between those that are formally operated (e.g. sports halls mostly requiring payment) and those that are unsupervised and free to access (play / multi use games areas on park facilities). However there is a relative shortage of purpose built facilities available to the wider community.
- Existing sports halls on school sites provide the main access for sports clubs, with use dependent on both price and locality by those playing..
- Many facilities are outdated and in need of modernisation or replacement. Encouraging participation in sport and physical activity is assisted by provision of facilities that are



located in close proximity to residential areas. 'Travel' is a recognised barrier to participation to sport and physical activity. Greater emphasis should be placed on maximising (by replacement or upgrade) those facilities that are central to existing or proposed new developments.

- The provision of sports facilities that cater for a number of sports at the same time and on a formal and informal basis within a community are important. There should be encouragement of new provision to include floodlit or non-floodlit MUGAs that are accessible to the whole community. These kind of facilities can help to firstly, create a focus for the community as well as secondly, provide a range of sports development opportunities and thirdly, access to physical activity opportunities promoting health and well-being. These facilities should not stand in isolation within a new development but they should be adjacent to/ link up to other new community facilities.
- There should be informal grass kickabout areas that are properly maintained close to people's homes - really important in the light of the obesity issue for children and young people in particular. We should also be promoting the provision of cycle routes and pathways to encourage more physical activity from children and young people.
- 'Building Schools for The Future' programme will have an impact on community sports provision within the city over the next 10 years but it is unlikely to accommodate smaller open access play and "kick about areas"
- Most sports specific sports development officers with whom Active Norfolk liaises generally agree that there is need to increase the number of facilities for their sport across the City to meet the demand and provide capacity for increased participation in the future. This also applies to swimming.
- Developer contributions have an important role to play in ensuring that facilities for sport and physical activity are provided in conjunction with new development, particularly as other sources of funding are no longer so plentiful.

The above comments provide a good overview of some of the issues that should be addressed in the planning of new sport facilities within the City, and the extent to which they should be considered through the overall planning and development process.

## DEMAND FOR OUTDOOR SPORTS

A full outdoor sport and playing pitch assessment was not part of the current study, and information on the demand for outdoor sports facilities therefore draws largely from existing information. There is significant evidence that over the years, outdoor sport has moved out of Norwich itself and into the fringe areas, for a variety of reasons – availability, quality, price, accessibility and others. For this reason, and for the purposes of this aspect of the needs assessment, the fringe areas of Norwich have been included within the study area to form one unit. The wider Norwich area therefore comprise the whole of the built up area, including Norwich City and the neighbouring parishes of Cringleford, Colney, Costessey and Trowse with Newton (in South Norfolk) and Thorpe St Andrew, Sprowston, Old Catton, Hellesdon, Drayton and Taverham (in Broadland). For the purposes of estimating demand and developing a standard for future provision, the Norwich area has a population of 206,000, compared with the city's of 131,000.

### General

Evidence of the changing nature of sports provision in the Norwich area is provided by reference to bookings and usage statistics from the Green Spaces section of Norwich City Council for outdoor sports facilities within the city. Seasonal and pre booked facilities are set out in the table below.

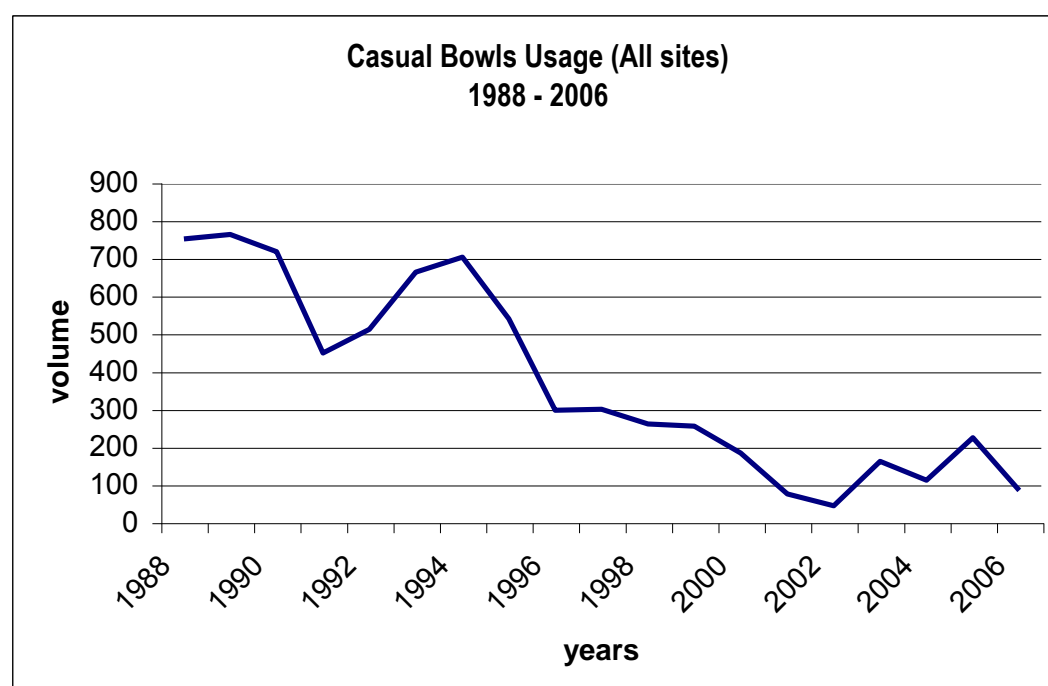
**Table 19 Sports Facility Bookings**

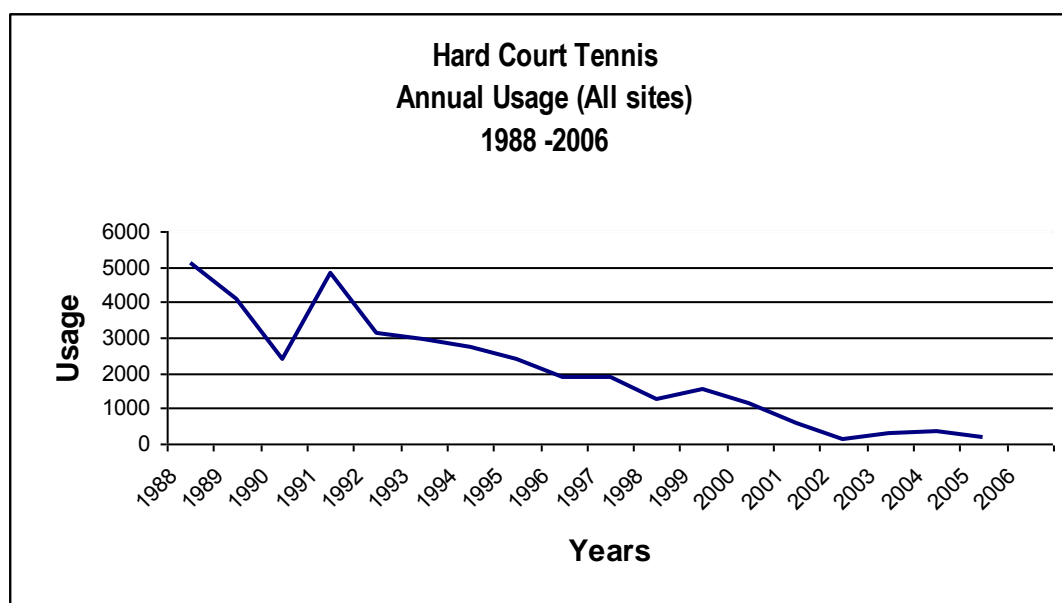
|              |        | Pitches/greens/courts    | Games | Games as % of capacity |
|--------------|--------|--------------------------|-------|------------------------|
| Football     | 1993/4 | 18                       | 741   | 42%                    |
|              | 2000/1 | 11                       | 422   | 39%                    |
|              | 2006/7 | 14 (incl 2 mini/2 junior | 774   | 42%                    |
| Cricket      | 1993/4 | 15                       | 289   | 40%                    |
|              | 2000/1 | 6                        | 179   | 62%                    |
|              | 2006/7 | 3                        | 162   | 57%                    |
| Hockey       | 1993/4 | 4                        | 73    | 33%                    |
|              | 2000/1 | -                        | -     | -                      |
|              | 2006/7 | -                        | -     | -                      |
| Bowls        | 1993/4 | 19                       | 1973  | 44%                    |
|              | 2000/1 | 14                       | 1515  | 46%                    |
|              | 2006/7 | 13                       | 893   | 29%                    |
| Grass tennis | 1993/4 | 63                       | 793   | 14%                    |
|              | 2000/1 | 19                       | 561   | 33%                    |
|              | 2006/7 | 19                       | 636   | 38%                    |

Casual usage of bowls, tennis and pitch and putt facilities demonstrates similar trends.

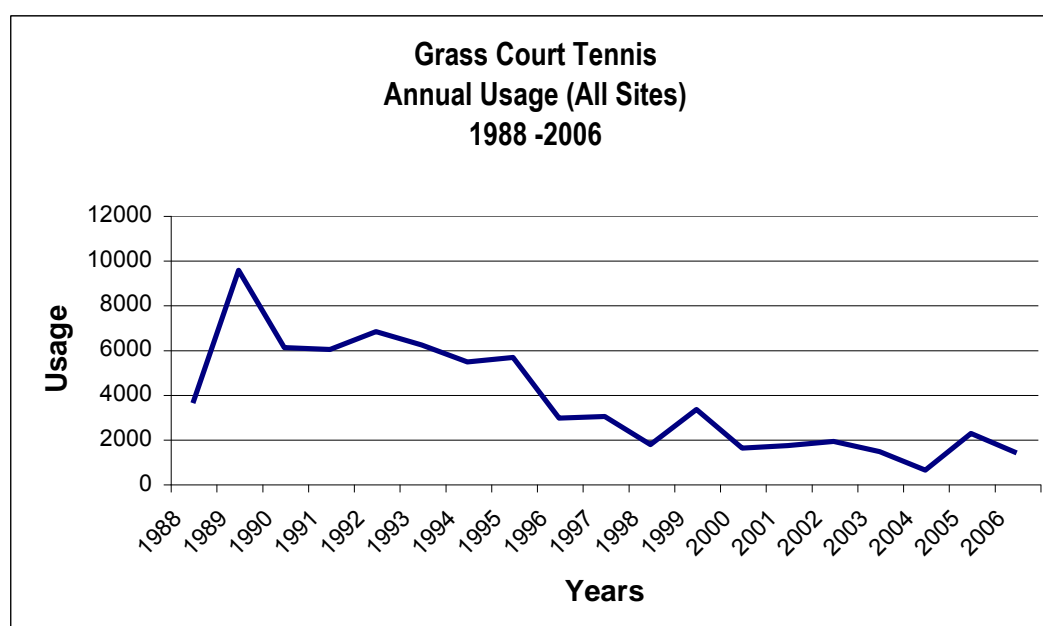
**Table 20 Sports Facility Casual Usage**

| Bookings | Bowls Bookings | Grass tennis | Hard tennis |
|----------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| 1988     | 751            | 3594         | 5076        |
| 1997     | 300            | 3001         | 1858        |
| 2006     | 85             | 1376         | 187 (2005)  |





These figures refer to bookings for which payment was made, and some facilities are now used more on a casual informal basis, so the actual figures should be treated with extreme caution. However, it is clear that there has been a steady but significant decline in the use of pitches, courts and greens in Norwich over a long period, and this forms the background to the assessment of demand over the wider area considered below.



| Table 21 Pitch and Putt/Putting Bookings |                 |                  |                    |                       |
|--|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Pitch & Putt /putting                    | P & P Mousehold | P & P Eaton Park | Putting Eaton Park | Putting Waterloo Park |
| 1988/9                                   | 29295           | 44080            | 7476               | 7953                  |
| 1997/8                                   | 24918           | 24708            | 3840               | 3525                  |
| 2005/6                                   | 18315           | 23158            | 2121 (2006)        | 705 (2006)            |

## Football

In their 2003 study for the three local authorities in the Norwich area, 'Norwich Policy Area Playing Pitch Assessment and Open Space Policy', Strategic Leisure identified the following teams playing football.

| <b>Table 22 Football Teams (2003)</b> |                |                      |                  |                     |     |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------------|-----|
|                                       | <b>Norwich</b> | <b>South Norfolk</b> | <b>Broadland</b> | <b>Norwich area</b> |     |
| Midweek                               | 2              | 1                    | 2                | 5                   | 2%  |
| Sat am                                | 1              | 22                   | 21               | 44                  | 14% |
| Sat pm                                | 15             | 19                   | 35               | 69                  | 22% |
| Sun am                                | 42             | 42                   | 52               | 136                 | 43% |
| Sun pm                                | 24             | 8                    | 27               | 59                  | 18% |
| Total                                 | 84             | 92                   | 137              | 313                 |     |

The area of study included a much wider area than currently being considered as part of this study, including Mulbarton, Hethersett, Blofield, Brundall and other villages where football is played but outside the Norwich built up area. In 2003 there was a total of 313 football teams.

More recent research has been undertaken in connection with this study. Time has not permitted a full and detailed assessment of the number of current teams, and reliance has been placed on information provided by the Norfolk FA, which has a comprehensive database of clubs, generation rates and population ratios per team. This has been supplemented by information from handbooks and the like. Based on the most recent (2006) information, the number of football teams in the wider study area is calculated as follows:

| <b>Table 23 Football Teams (2006)</b> |                |                      |                  |                     |
|---------------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------------|
|                                       | <b>Norwich</b> | <b>South Norfolk</b> | <b>Broadland</b> | <b>Norwich area</b> |
| Adult 11 a side                       |                |                      |                  |                     |
| Male                                  | 83             | 11                   | 54               | 148                 |
| Female                                | 3              | 1                    | 1                | 5                   |
| Youth 11 a side                       |                |                      |                  |                     |
| Male                                  | 47             | 10                   | 46               | 103                 |
| Female                                | 8              | 1                    | 8                | 17                  |
| Mini                                  | 22             | 7                    | 33               | 62                  |
| Small sided                           | 197            | 0                    | 0                | 197                 |
|                                       | 363            | 30                   | 142              | 532                 |

The total number of teams in the Norwich area is therefore estimated as 532, but this includes 197 currently playing small-sided football, mainly on STPs and artificial grass. The total number of teams playing on grass pitches is therefore estimated as 335. This is broadly compatible with the 2003 statistics, though there are some variations in the study area used and the distribution of teams in Norwich and Broadland differs. However the total number of teams is considered to be an accurate reflection of current demand.

Based on the pattern and time of play in 2003, updated from handbooks and websites, it is estimated that the temporal demand from these teams and therefore the need for pitches is set out below. The demand for pitches is currently expressed as follows

|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| Mid week | 1%  |
| Sat am   | 18% |
| Sat pm   | 16% |
| Sun am   | 45% |
| Sun pm   | 20% |

| Table 24 Football Pitch Demand |            |                   |
|--------------------------------|------------|-------------------|
| Teams                          | Day played | Peak pitch demand |
| Senior male                    | Mid week   | 3                 |
|                                | Sat am     | 9                 |
|                                | Sat pm     | 48                |
|                                | Sun am     | 88                |
| Senior female                  | Sun pm     | 5                 |
|                                |            |                   |
| Youth male                     | Sat am     | 19                |
|                                | Sat pm     | 5                 |
|                                | Sun am     | 38                |
|                                | Sun pm     | 41                |
| Youth female                   | Sat am     | 16                |
|                                | Sun pm     | 1                 |
|                                |            |                   |
| Mini                           | Sat am     | 17                |
|                                | Sun pm     | 25                |
|                                | Sun pm     | 20                |

The method of calculating pitch requirements is based on Sport England's model in 'Towards a Level Playing Field', and the above table is explained as follows:

- It is assumed that, in order to maintain the quality of pitches each pitch is capable of no more than 2 matches per week, though mini pitches have a greater capacity,
- All teams need to play at home every other week
- Senior football – peak demand is on Sun am for 44 pitches, which can also accommodate Saturday demand
- Junior football – peak demand is on Sun pm for 21 pitches, but this is insufficient to allow Sun am and pm use within pitch capacities, so 30 pitches are required
- Mini – peak demand is on Sun am, but is spread fairly evenly over the weekend. Mini pitches are capable of greater use, so 13 pitches are sufficient to meet current demand

Future space requirements are calculated as follows:

- 0.9 ha for a senior pitch including run-off, 0.7 ha for a junior pitch and 0.3 ha for mini, the current requirement
- Site multiplier of 10% to accommodate changing and other ancillary facilities
- Factor of 14% to reflect Sport England targets to increase participation by 1% per year (to 2021)
- Contingency of 10% to cover unforeseen circumstances

The future pitch requirement therefore is for 90 ha, which equates to 0.44 ha per 1000 population.

## Cricket

In the 2003 study, Strategic Leisure identified the following teams playing cricket in the Norwich area

| Table 25 Cricket Teams (2003) |         |               |           |              |
|-------------------------------|---------|---------------|-----------|--------------|
|                               | Norwich | South Norfolk | Broadland | Norwich area |
| Midweek                       | 1       | 12            | 4         | 17 21%       |
| Sat                           | 6       | 12            | 19        | 37 46%       |
| Sun                           | 5       | 12            | 10        | 27 33%       |
| Total                         | 12      | 36            | 33        | 81           |

As with football, the area of study included a much wider area than currently being considered as part of this study. There was then a total of 81 teams.

Current research using Norfolk Cricket Board handbooks, league websites and other information suggests that in 2007, the following number of clubs is playing in the wider Norwich area.

| Table 26 Cricket Teams (2007) |         |        |     |               |     |           |     |       |        |     |
|-------------------------------|---------|--------|-----|---------------|-----|-----------|-----|-------|--------|-----|
|                               | Norwich |        |     | South Norfolk |     | Broadland |     | Total |        |     |
|                               | Sen     | Casual | Jun | Sen           | Jun | Sen       | Jun | Sen   | Casual | Jun |
| Midweek                       |         | 5      |     |               |     | 2         | 6   | 2     | 5      | 6   |
| Sat                           | 4       |        |     | 6             |     | 18        |     | 28    |        |     |
| Sun                           | 1       |        |     | 2             | 1   | 6         |     | 9     |        | 1   |
| Total                         | 5       | 5      | 0   | 8             | 1   | 26        | 6   | 39    | 5      | 7   |

The estimated total number of teams playing in the Norwich area is therefore 51, comprising 39 senior teams, 7 junior and 5 casual. There is some evidence from the County Cricket Manager that some teams have folded in the past 4 years, and there are fewer pitches for casual hire in Norwich parks. In the city itself there is little league cricket played, with Pilling Park and Britannia Barracks accommodating some matches and the most senior teams playing on school pitches at CNS.

When estimating the demand for pitches in accordance with Sport England guidance, the following must be borne in mind:

- The peak day demand (in this case Saturday)
- The number of home games played (normally 0.5 per week per team)
- The ability of cricket squares and pitches to accommodate a number of games on different days, because of the number of wickets on each square
- The ability to play junior matches on senior pitches using the same square and shorter boundaries
- The club based nature of cricket in the Norwich area, and therefore the need to meet local demand locally

The peak demand for pitches is on Saturdays for senior cricket (28 teams), but these are spread across the whole of the Norwich area. Bearing in mind the factors above, it is estimated

that there is a current demand for 20 pitches, which will accommodate Saturday peak use, Sunday and midweek use and junior participation. Based on a pitch requirement of 2.0 ha, and similar assumptions as for football, the future pitch requirement therefore is for 55 ha, which equates to 0.27 ha per 1000 population.

## Rugby

In 2003 Strategic Leisure identified the following teams:

| Table 27 Rugby Teams (2003) |         |               |           |              |
|-----------------------------|---------|---------------|-----------|--------------|
|                             | Norwich | South Norfolk | Broadland | Norwich area |
| Midweek                     | 0       | 2             | 1         | 3 15%        |
| Sat                         | 3       | 7             | 7         | 17 85%       |
| Sun                         | 0       | 0             | 0         | 0            |
| Total                       | 3       | 9             | 8         | 20           |

As with the other sports, the study area was wider. Further research in connection with this study has identified only 2 clubs playing in the Norwich area used in this study (Crusaders, Norwich Medics and Lakenham Hewett play outside the boundaries used here) and there are no clubs playing in the city. The 2 clubs currently playing are as follows:

| Table 28 Rugby Teams (2007) |        |        |      |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|------|
|                             | Senior | Junior | Mini |
| Norwich RFC                 | 5      | 5      | 7    |
| Norwich Union RFC           | 2      |        |      |
| Total                       | 7      | 5      | 7    |

Using a similar method as before, it is calculated that current pitch demand is for 4 senior, 3 junior and 4 mini pitches. While these could share the same spaces (e.g. mini pitches could be laid out across larger pitches), it is recommended that separate pitches are required to reduce wear and tear and optimise suitability for play by various groups.

With the same assumptions as before, including a pitch size of 1.5 ha for senior, 0.7 ha for junior and 0.5ha for mini, the future pitch requirement for rugby is 14 ha, or the equivalent of 0.07 ha per 1000 population.

## Hockey

Strategic Leisure's 2003 study identified the following teams:

| Table 29 Hockey Teams (2003) |              |     |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----|
|                              | Norwich area |     |
| Wed pm                       | 7            | 20% |
| Sat                          | 26           | 74% |
| Sun                          | 2            | 6%  |

The current, with reference to handbooks and websites, has identified the following teams.

**Table 30 Hockey Teams (2007)**

|                        | Venue                 | Men's teams | Women's teams | Colts              | Juniors |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------|---------|
| Norwich City HC        | Taverham/UEA          | 6           | 3             | 2                  | x       |
| Norfolk Nomads HC      | UEA                   | 2           |               |                    |         |
| Broadland HC           | Taverham/Redmayne     | 1           | 2             |                    |         |
| Sprowston Valkyries HC | Redmayne/Sprowston CC |             | 2             |                    |         |
| UEA HC                 | UEA                   | 3           | 3             |                    |         |
| Norwich Union HC       | Pinebanks             | 4           | 4             | Mini summer league |         |
| Total                  |                       | 16          | 14            | 2                  | x       |

There are therefore 30 senior teams, 2 colts' teams and various junior teams, the majority of which play on Saturday. There are currently 5 STPs (on which most competitive hockey now takes place), and on the basis that 3 home games can be played consecutively on a Saturday (i.e. 15 in total per week), this number of pitches is considered sufficient. There is some concern about the lack of availability at some venues and Sprowston Valkyries play on grass at Sprowston CC. Overall however current demand is assumed to be met.

On the basis of a pitch requirement of 0.9 ha, and using the same assumptions as before, the future pitch requirement for hockey is 5.6 ha or 0.03 ha per 1000 population. However as hockey relies on STPs almost exclusively, this standard is not included in the grass pitch standard for all pitches (see below), and a requirement for STPs is considered elsewhere in the report.

### Tennis

There are 14 tennis clubs and other bodies in the Norwich area affiliated to the Norfolk LTA as follows:

**Table 31 Tennis Clubs**

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| East Anglia Tennis and Squash Club      | Town Close    |
| Heigham TC                              | Nelson        |
| Lakenham Sports and Leisure             | Lakenham      |
| Lakenham Tennis Academy                 | Lakenham      |
| Norwich Community Tennis Club           |               |
| Bannatyne's LTC                         | Broadland     |
| Esporta TC                              | Broadland     |
| Norwich Union LTC                       | Broadland     |
| Oasis TC                                | Broadland     |
| Old Catton LTC                          | Broadland     |
| Stanmore LTC                            | Broadland     |
| Thorpe Community TC, Thorpe St Andrew S | Broadland     |
| Taverham TC                             | Broadland     |
| Cringleford                             | South Norfolk |

The clubs formerly based at Lakenham have recently closed

In addition Norwich City Council's sports club directory lists the following clubs:



**Table 32 Other Tennis Clubs**

|                     |
|---------------------|
| Avenue MS TC        |
| Carrow Exiles TC    |
| Colman MS TC        |
| Drifters TC         |
| Earlham TC          |
| Gothic TC           |
| Robert Stevenson TC |
| Sovereign TC        |

Most of these play on parks courts at Lakenham Rec, Heigham Park and Waterloo Park.

To meet the demand for tennis, the following courts currently exist in the Norwich area (a fuller list is set out in Appendix 6). Some of these are in local parks and serve a very local catchment.

**Table 33 Tennis Courts**

|               |             | Grass | Hard |
|---------------|-------------|-------|------|
| Norwich       | Clubs       | 0     | 20   |
|               | LA / public | 19    | 12   |
| Broadland     | Clubs       | 8     | 16   |
|               | LA / public | 0     | 17   |
| South Norfolk | LA / public | 2     | 6    |
| Total         |             | 29    | 71   |

11 courts have recently closed down at Lakenham. In addition there are a further 69 courts at schools throughout the area, primarily for teaching purposes, but sometimes available to the community.

There has been a decline in the number of public courts available in Norwich in recent years – for example, in 1993/4 there were 63 grass courts compared with 19 at present, and this is in line with trends elsewhere for public courts. The development of tennis is primarily club based and the LTA has a major programme of encouraging participation, though there is some development on public courts as part of sports development programmes, including the City Tennis Initiative. The closure of courts at Lakenham has produced a shortfall in meeting the needs of tennis development and coaching, although there are measures in place to seek a replacement facility elsewhere nearby. The current number of ‘public’ courts is likely to meet the anticipated need for casual and recreational tennis.

For the purposes of establishing a standard for future provision, the current supply of 111 courts (including those recently relinquished at Lakenham) is considered sufficient to meet demand. This equates to 1 court per 1850 people in the Norwich area, or 0.54 courts per 1000 population. On the basis of normal court size, and including the same assumptions as used with the pitch sports, the future recommended standard of provision is therefore 0.07 ha per 1000 population.

## Bowls

It is estimated that there are 28 bowls clubs in Norwich with a further 10 in the wider area. Many of these field more than one team (when they compete) including men’s, women’s and mixed teams. Most existing bowls green are located in the Norwich parks, but there are also

facilities provided by Parish Councils, private clubs and others. The demand for bowls has declined over the years, particularly in Norwich parks – in 1993 nearly 2000 regular bookings were taken, compared with 900 last year, while casual bookings declined from 750 to 100 over the same period. A number of private greens have also closed in recent years, particularly on pub sites. At the same time the main bowling clubs in the area are known to be prospering, and bowls is acknowledged as an important and popular sport locally and throughout the county.

To meet current demand, it is estimated that there are 31 greens in the whole area, mainly in Norwich (22) but also in Broadland (8) and South Norfolk (1). For the purposes of developing a future standard, it is recommended that the number of greens currently in use is sufficient to meet demand. This therefore equates to 1 court per 6000 people in Norwich, or 1:6600 over the wider Norwich area. This is broadly in line with an historic Sport England standard of 10 greens per 60,000 population ('Planning for Sport' 1970). It is appropriate to use the higher ratio of greens in Norwich itself, and this is therefore 0.16 greens per 1000 population. On the same basis as other outdoor sports considered above, the future space requirement for bowls is therefore 0.04 ha per 1000 population.

### Other informal outdoor sports facilities

There is good provision for pitch and putt and putting in Norwich, and despite the falling usage of existing facilities they are considered to provide a continuing opportunity for sport and physical activity at a casual and non-competitive level.

Existing levels of provision comprise the following:

| Table 34 Pitch and Putt/Putting Facilities |         |
|--|---------|
| Eaton Park P & P                           | 10.7 ha |
| Mousehold P & P                            | 8.53 ha |
| Eaton Park putting                         | 0.7 ha  |
| Waterloo Park putting                      | 0.2     |
| Total                                      | 20.13   |

Existing levels of provision are considered to represent a future standard and the recommended standard is therefore 0.15 ha per 1000 population.

### Overall Playing Pitch and Other Outdoor Sports Standards

The overall recommended quantitative standard for future provision of outdoor sports facilities in Norwich, based where appropriate on the needs expressed over the wider area, are as follows:

|                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Football                    | 0.44 ha per 1000 population |
| Cricket                     | 0.27 ha                     |
| Rugby                       | 0.07 ha                     |
| (Hockey)                    | 0.03 ha)                    |
| Tennis                      | 0.07 ha                     |
| Bowls                       | 0.04 ha                     |
| Other (pitch and putt, etc) | <u>0.12 ha</u>              |
| Total                       | 1.01 ha per 1000 population |

## DEMAND FOR ALLOTMENTS

According to information provided by the City Council in June 2007, there were 1484 plots available on 18 allotment sites within the city. 1392 of these were occupied by individuals, 61% males and 39% females. 299 plots were let to individuals living more than 1 mile away (21.4%), but only 4% of allotment holders came from outside the city. 16% of allotment holders had more than 1 plot, normally 2. In addition 48 plots were let to the Assist Trust or the Sustainable Living Initiative. At the time, 44 plots were vacant a rate of 3%. No site was less than 90% occupied.

At the same time, there was a waiting list for allotments of 1153 individuals, split almost equally between men and women (some of these may have been from the same individuals as each has a choice of 3 sites, so some double counting may have occurred). Most of these (1034) had joined the waiting list in 2005/6, and there was a significant number who had requested a particular plot (138) or who already had an allotment (82). New plots let varied from 104 in 2005 to 270 in 2006 and 73 in 2007 (to June). There is thus a significant turnover. Waiting lists are not necessarily the best means of identifying latent demand, but there is clearly a high level of demand for allotments in the city, particularly when considering the low vacancy rates. However this is mitigated to some degree by the number of unworked plots, information on which was not available.

The long terms trends in allotment use are not available, but current levels of use suggest a continuing demand for plots. With the increasing trend towards higher density housing, particularly in Norwich, and a renewed move towards self sufficiency and local produce, it is reasonable to assume that the demand for allotments in the city will increase over the period of the study.

For the purposes of developing a standard for the provision of allotments in the future therefore, a requirement for the provision of a total of 2000 plots in the city is considered reasonable, representing an increase of 500 plots or about 33%. Current provision equates to about 0.33 ha per 1000 population, and the new standard should therefore be 0.44 ha of allotments per 1000 population.

## DEMAND FOR PLAY

Current provision for children's play as set out in Norwich City Council's Play Strategy suggests that there is a requirement for 89 toddlers play areas (compared with 68 currently provided) and 60 junior play areas (47 at present). There is thus a 25% shortfall numerically. Existing provision measures about 12.77 ha or 0.16 ha per play area.

MUGAs are important facilities for informal play as well as providing an opportunity for more formal sport including training especially where floodlights are provided. Standards of provision are hard to establish, but current and planned provision elsewhere where similar studies have been undertaken suggest a range between 1 MUGA per 2400 people and 1:7200. The best provision is normally in rural areas where accessibility to facilities is poorest and more courts need to be provided. Provision in Norwich is at the very bottom of this range, and some wards have no such facilities. There is some justification in increasing this level of provision, and a future standard of 1 MUGA per 6000 people would give a requirement for 22 such facilities at the present or a further 4 in total. Current space requirements are for 1.88 ha in total or about 0.1 ha per court.

Demand for other aspects of play – BMX, skateboarding, cycle speedway has not been identified, and some older facilities have been relinquished in recent years.

It is recommended that future provision for children's and young people's play is as follows:

|                                  |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Children's play 12.77 has + 33%. | Total 16.98 ha |
| MUGAs 22 at 0.104 ha             | Total 2.3 ha   |
| Other facilities as current      | Total 1.37 ha  |

Total space requirement for play 20.65 ha

This equates to 0.16 ha per 1000 population

## DEMAND FOR BUILT SPORTS FACILITIES

### Sports Halls

**Facilities Planning Model** - An assessment of the adequacy of sports hall provision in the Norwich area was undertaken through the Regional Sports Facility Strategy in 2006/7. Using the situation in 2007 as the base, the Facilities Planning Model concluded the following (the data relates to the whole of the three districts, as this was not disaggregated further. The figures refer to visits to halls in the peak hours, and unmet demand is defined as that expressed demand which is not able to be satisfied because the halls are full or outside the reasonable catchment of residents. 'Equivalent' means the number of sports hall courts that are required to satisfy the unmet demand).

| Table 35 Sports Hall Need (FPM) |            |               |           |       |
|---------------------------------|------------|---------------|-----------|-------|
|                                 | Norwich    | South Norfolk | Broadland | Total |
| Capacity of halls               | 7900       | 6000          | 2500      | 16400 |
| Demand from population          | 6200       | 5050          | 5300      | 16550 |
| Unmet demand                    | 850        | 1200          | 1150      | 3250  |
| % of demand                     | 14%        | 24%           | 21%       | 20%   |
| Equivalent                      | 4.2 courts | 5.9           | 5.6       | 15.7  |

In Norwich and South Norfolk therefore the capacity of halls slightly exceeds demand from the resident population, although there is an absolute shortfall of halls in Broadland. Overall demand for the three districts exceeds capacity by a small amount. However as demand and capacity do not coincide geographically, the actual unmet demand over the whole area is about 20% of the total demand or the equivalent of about 16 courts or four 4-court sports halls. This does not necessarily mean that this level of additional provision is justified, as the demand is spread over all three districts and may not be in a sufficient concentration in any one location to make the case for an additional hall. However it is likely that additional halls are required for the following reasons:

- Two thirds of the population of the three districts lives in the Norwich area, and therefore demand for halls is greater here
- More importantly, most of the sports halls in the area are on school sites where there is limited community access, especially on a casual basis, and current usage is club and

bookings-based. This applies to many parts of the country, but in the Norwich area only 4 halls with more than 4 courts are available on a pay and play basis, comprising 25 of 56 courts in total (45%). The model therefore overestimates the actual capacity of halls.

There is therefore considered to be an actual shortfall of sports halls in the Norwich area and the city itself, the size of which is investigated further below.

**Active Places Power** - Active Places Power (APP) has been developed by Sport England to enable local assessments of need for built sports facilities to be undertaken using a variety of individual tools.

**Facilities per thousand** – when comparing the number of 4-court halls and above in the Norwich area with other areas in the East region and beyond, and with national average provision, the following picture emerges:

| Table 36 Sports Hall Relative Provision |   |
|---|---|
| England average                         | 49m <sup>2</sup> of sports hall space per 1000 population |
| East region average                     | 47m <sup>2</sup>  |
| Norwich                                 | 55m <sup>2</sup>  |
| South Norfolk                           | 49m <sup>2</sup>  |
| Broadland                               | 22m <sup>2</sup>  |
| Norwich area (estimated)                | 46m <sup>2</sup>  |

The relative provision in Norwich is therefore slightly higher than the national and regional averages, but the figure for the Norwich study area is slightly lower. The ratios apply to all sports halls, and the comments about availability to the wider public of the halls on school sites still apply. This demonstrates that if participation levels are the same in this area as elsewhere in the country, relative provision in the Norwich area is generally below average.

**Local supply and demand** – APP can also compare local authorities in terms of the relationship between supply and demand for halls within an area. The following results apply to all halls perceived to have some community use, but they include schools for which the provisions above apply.

| Table 37 Sports Hall Supply and Demand |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
|  | Percentage of demand met |
| England                                | 122%                     |
| East region                            | 128%                     |
| Norwich                                | 136%                     |
| South Norfolk                          | 124%                     |
| Broadland                              | 62%                      |
| Three districts                        | 108%                     |

Again this implies that there is some spare capacity in Norwich and over the three districts together, but the lack of 'public' facilities means that this area is relatively poorly provided with sports halls.

**Sports Facilities Calculator** The SFC enables an assessment to be made of the demand for facilities based on the population profile of the area, and applying empirical data about participation rates collected from detailed national surveys. The following table demonstrates the current demand for sports halls, based on the existing population and also taking into account an increase in participation in line with Sport England targets of 1% increase in activity per year to 2021.

| Table 38 Sports Hall Need (SFC)                                 |       |        |         |
|---|-------|--------|---------|
|   | Halls | Courts | Cost    |
| Norwich current population                                      | 9.63  | 38.51  | £23.08m |
| Norwich area current population                                 | 15.14 | 60.56  | £36.29m |
| Norwich current population + 15% increase in participation      | 11.07 | 44.29  | £26.54m |
| Norwich area current population + 15% increase in participation | 17.41 | 69.64  | £41.73m |

On the basis of this demand assessment, the future requirement for sports hall provision, fully available to the community including on a pay and play basis, is for one 4-court sports hall per 14000 people at current levels of demand, and 1:12000 people if the higher participation target is considered.

**Conclusions** While there appears from the broad figures to be sufficient sports hall to meet anticipated need, this is largely because much of the supply of halls is located on school sites which are not managed for community purposes, and remain available to the wider public mainly for clubs with regular bookings. It is recommended that consideration be given to a future standard of provision of 1 4-court hall per 12000 population, to take account of targeted increases in participation. Current provision of halls available fully to the community equates to 1 hall per 25000 population in Norwich and 1:33000 over the wider area, and represents only 50% of desirable provision. This shortfall could be met by building new facilities in areas where residents are outside existing catchments, or by enhancing existing school facilities for wider public access.

### Swimming Pools

**FPM** A similar assessment of swimming pool, needs from the Regional Sports Strategy using the FPM has produced the following picture

| Table 39 Swimming Pool Need (FPM) |                   |                  |                   |                   |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
|                                   | Norwich           | South Norfolk    | Broadland         | Total             |
| Capacity of pool                  | 15400             | 9900             | 7400              | 32700             |
| Demand from population            | 7100              | 6300             | 6700              | 21100             |
| Unmet demand                      | 7500              | 750              | 1000              | 2500              |
| % of demand                       | 11%               | 12%              | 15%               | 12%               |
| Equivalent                        | 94 m <sup>2</sup> | 94m <sup>2</sup> | 121m <sup>2</sup> | 309m <sup>2</sup> |

There is an apparent adequacy of swimming pool water space in Norwich and each of the other districts to meet demand, although the facilities meeting need in South Norfolk are outside the Norwich area. Total unmet demand is the equivalent of 309m<sup>2</sup> of additional water or about a 6-

lane pool, though this is unlikely to be sufficiently concentrated in one location to justify a new pool for this reason alone. However this relatively good situation is again mitigated by the type and range of pools in Norwich particularly. Only 2 pools are available for casual use, comprising about 10400 visits per week, or only about one third of the total capacity in the three districts, compared with an estimated demand from the Norwich area of about 11500 visits (i.e. calculating the proportion of total demand in the Norwich area from the total population of the 3 districts). At best therefore there is a small shortfall of 'public' water. Moreover the largest pool in the area at the Sportspark, by virtue of its location on the western edge of Norwich, is relatively accessible to a significant proportion of the population of the area, acknowledging that 25% of usage of pools in general is made by residents waking to a pool. The FPM confirms that in reality there is a shortfall of water space to meet the needs of the residents of Norwich and the wider Norwich area.

**APP - Facilities per thousand** – when comparing the number of pools with lanes in the Norwich area with other areas in the East region and beyond, and with national average provision, the following picture emerges:

| Table 40 Swimming Pool Relative Provision |  |
|---|--|
| England average                           | 18.18m <sup>2</sup> of water per 1000 population |
| East region average                       | 19.31m <sup>2</sup>                              |
| Norwich                                   | 20.1m <sup>2</sup>                               |
| South Norfolk                             | 17.3m <sup>2</sup>                               |
| Broadland                                 | 15.5m <sup>2</sup>                               |
| Norwich area (estimated)                  | 20.8m <sup>2</sup>                               |

The Norwich and study area figures are slightly higher than national and regional averages for pools, but again the majority of the pools are on school sites and in commercial health and fitness clubs. If only the two pools in community use are included, the overall ratio becomes about 6m<sup>2</sup> of water per 1000 population.

**Local supply and demand** – The following results apply to all pools.

| Table 41 Swimming Pool Supply and Demand |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
|  | Percentage of demand met |
| England                                  | 124%                     |
| East region                              | 135%                     |
| Norwich                                  | 185%                     |
| South Norfolk                            | 125%                     |
| Broadland                                | 30%                      |
| Three districts                          | 140%                     |

Again this shows an apparent adequacy of swimming pool space in the three districts to meet demand. However all the South Norfolk water space is well outside the Norwich area, and as above most of the pools in and around Norwich do not meet a community pay and play need.

**Sports Facilities Calculator** The following table demonstrates the current demand for swimming pools, based on the existing population and also taking into account a n increase in participation in line with Sport England targets of 1% increase in activity per year to 2021.

| Table 42 Swimming Pool Need (SFC)                               |       |       |                    |         |
|---|-------|-------|--------------------|---------|
|   | Pools | Lanes | Water space        | Cost    |
| Norwich current population                                      | 6.3   | 25.2  | 1338m <sup>2</sup> | £11.76m |
| Norwich area current population                                 | 9.9   | 39.6  | 2104m <sup>2</sup> | £18.50m |
| Norwich current population + 15% increase in participation      | 7.2   | 29.0  | 1539m <sup>2</sup> | £13.53m |
| Norwich area current population + 15% increase in participation | 11.4  | 45.6  | 2420m <sup>2</sup> | £21.27m |

On the basis of this demand assessment, the future requirement for swimming pool provision, fully available to the community including on a pay and play basis, is for one 4-lane 25m pool per 21000 people at current levels of demand, or 1:18000 people if the higher participation target is considered.

**Conclusions** Most of the indicators suggest that in terms of absolute water space, there are sufficient pools in the Norwich area to meet current demand. However as much of these are on school sites or in commercial health and fitness facilities, the actual supply for community use is only one-third of total capacity, and there is a perceived real shortage. Future provision should be made on the basis of one 4-lane 25m pool per 18000 people, at the higher participation levels, and this could be by means of new pools in accessible locations, or improvements to existing (school) pools to bring them up to community requirement standards.

### Indoor Bowls

**APP - Facilities per 1000** - current provision of indoor bowls facilities in the Norwich area compared with other areas is as follows:

| Table 43 Indoor Bowls Relative Provision |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| England average                          | 0.04 rinks per 1000 population |
| East region average                      | 0.08                           |
| Norwich                                  | 0.08                           |
| South Norfolk                            | 0.15                           |
| Broadland                                | 0.15                           |
| Norwich area (estimated)                 | 0.11                           |
| Best provision in region (Breckland)     | 0.21                           |

Bowls is an important local sport and provision in the wider Norwich area is higher than the national and regional averages. 80% of provision is club based, and the only public facility is at the Norman Centre in Norwich.

**Local supply and demand** - the existing balance between supply and demand in the Norwich area can be compared as follows:

| Table 44 Indoor Bowls Supply and Demand |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
|   | Percentage of demand met |
| England                                 | 58%                      |
| East region                             | 112%                     |
| Norwich                                 | 144%                     |
| South Norfolk                           | 193%                     |



|                 |      |
|-----------------|------|
| Broadland       | 213% |
| Three districts | 186% |

Compared with the regional and national figures significantly more demand for bowls is met in Norwich and the surrounding area. The figures might suggest spare capacity at existing indoor centres but participation rates are very high in Norfolk in general where bowls is an important sporting activity with a long history of participation and achievement. The capacity of centres as suggested above is three times higher than the national average, and there is a balance between capacity and supply when taking into account local activity rates. The only 'community facility' at the Norman Centre represents about one-fifth of total capacity.

**Sports Facilities Calculator** The following table demonstrates the current demand for indoor bowls, based on the existing population and also taking into account a n increase in participation in line with Sport England targets of 1% increase in activity per year to 2021.

| Table 45 Indoor Bowls Need (SFC)                                |         |       |        |
|---|---------|-------|--------|
|   | Centres | Rinks | Cost   |
| Norwich current population                                      | 1.25    | 7.5   | £1.70m |
| Norwich area current population                                 | 1.97    | 11.8  | £2.68m |
| Norwich current population + 15% increase in participation      | 1.44    | 8.6   | £1.96m |
| Norwich area current population + 15% increase in participation | 2.26    | 13.6  | £3.08m |

On the basis of this demand assessment, the future requirement for indoor bowls provision is for one 6-rink centre per 105000 people at current levels of demand, or 1:91000 people if the higher participation target is considered. However these are based on national participation rates, while local activity rates are nearly three times this. The recommended standard for future provision should at least reflect current levels, i.e. 1-six rink centre per 55000 population.

**Conclusion** Existing provision for indoor bowls is high, but this is balanced by very high participation rates in the area. Future provision should be based on the need for 1 6-rink centre per 55000 population, in line with current levels of provision.

### Health and Fitness

**APP - Facilities per 1000** - existing provision for health and fitness facilities can be compared with other areas as follows:

| Table 46 Health and Fitness Relative Provision |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| England average                                | 5.23 stations per 1000 population |
| East region average                            | 5.07                              |
| Norwich  | 4.4                               |
| South Norfolk                                  | 4.58                              |
| Broadland                                      | 3.89                              |
| Norwich area (estimated)                       | 5.1                               |
| Best provision in region                       | 10.85                             |

Membership levels of health and fitness clubs over the country average some 12% of the adult population (BMRB/TGI). Over half of these are known currently to join commercial clubs.

**Conclusion** Norwich area levels of provision broadly correspond with the regional and national average. It is reasonable to suggest therefore that future provision, based on a 1% increase in activity per year by 2021, should be 6 stations per 1000. This equates to one 50-station health and fitness centre per 8300 people.

### Indoor Tennis

**APP - Facilities per 1000** - existing provision is as follows, compared with regional and national averages.

| Table 47 Indoor Tennis Relative Provision |                                 |
|---|---------------------------------|
| England average                           | 0.02 courts per 1000 population |
| East region average                       | 0.03                            |
| Norwich                                   | none                            |
| South Norfolk                             | none                            |
| Broadland                                 | 0.08                            |
| Norwich area (estimated)                  | 0.04                            |
| Best provision in region                  | 0.246                           |

The figures above exclude courts recently closed at Lakenham, for which alternative provision is currently being sought.

**Conclusion** If it is assumed that current demand includes these additional four courts, then a recommended current standard of 0.06 courts per 1000 is recommended, which with the increased participation target for 2021 corresponds to 0.07 courts per 1000. This equates to one 4-court indoor tennis centre per 57000 people.

### Athletics

**APP - Facilities per 1000** - existing provision compared with other areas is as follows:

| Table 48 Athletics Tracks Relative Provision |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| England average                              | 0.05 lanes per 1000 population |
| East region average                          | 0.04                           |
| Norwich                                      | 0.06                           |
| South Norfolk                                | none                           |
| Broadland                                    | none                           |
| Norwich area (estimated)                     | 0.04                           |

These figures are based on the 8-lane track at Sportspark, and exclude the former cinder track at Hewitt School.

**Conclusion** The recommended future standard taking into account the targeted increase in participation and based on the current Norwich standard is 0.07 lanes per 1000 population. This equates to one 8-lane athletics track per 115000 people.

## Synthetic Turf Pitches

**APP - Facilities per 1000** - existing provision compared with other areas is as follows:

| Table 49 STPs Relative Provision |                                  |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| England average                  | 0.03 pitches per 1000 population |
| East region average              | 0.03                             |
| Norwich                          | 0.02                             |
| South Norfolk                    | 0.01                             |
| Broadland                        | 0.03                             |
| Norwich area (estimated)         | 0.03                             |

These figures are based on six facilities currently available in the Norwich area, which are mainly sand based and therefore suitable for hockey and recreational use for other sports, and the new third generation surface at Thorpe St Andrews School which is primarily used for football.

**Conclusion** This level of provision is considered adequate to meet current need in the area, but a future standard should take into account a 1% annual increase in activity, which would produce a standard of 0.033 pitches per 1000 population. This equates to one STP per 30,000 people

## Ice rinks

There are 43 ice rinks in whole country, and only 3 in the East region, the nearest being in Chelmsford and Peterborough, with one additional rink at Hemel Hempstead. The current standard of provision is 1.08 m<sup>2</sup> of ice in England, and 0.67 m<sup>2</sup> in the region. It is normally acknowledged that an ice rink requires a 20 minute catchment (45 minute in rural areas) within which there are no similar facilities, with a large number of young people, which represents the core target market. The normal population within the catchment of existing ice rinks elsewhere is between 200,000 and 600,000, the latter in urban areas. The Norwich area would meet this requirement.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The consultation and the assessment of local demand have highlighted a number of valid points and issues of value to this study, as well as the future green space strategy. The following general points are felt to be important:

- The local importance attached to the provision of a variety of open spaces and facilities.
- The value attached to informal and natural green space.
- The relative popularity (usage) of many local informal spaces in comparison with formal sports facilities. The latter tend to be used by a smaller percentage of the population on a regular basis.
- An appreciation of the value of good levels of maintenance for open spaces in particular, particularly in relation to cleanliness, graffiti, dog fouling etc.
- The importance placed by local people on measures to improve safety and security in both accessing and using facilities.
- The need when planning for all types of recreation opportunity to take into account people's preparedness to travel, and requirement for different types of space. For children and young people this means easy access by foot/cycle, although this should

be a universal aspiration in planning and locating all local community open spaces and recreation opportunities.

- The need for improved provision for children and young people, in particular for the older age range.
- The importance of a good network of footpaths and cycleways.
- Concern over the quality and maintenance of many other spaces.
- The continued strong demands placed on the City's outdoor sports and built facilities.
- The relative lack of built sports facilities, particularly in the public sector
- The need to take into account the needs of the wider Norwich area when considering facilities for which there is a more than local need, particularly sports pitches and built sports facilities

The findings of the consultation with regard to use of and access to open spaces and other facilities, and the assessments of demand for built sports facilities, will be used to inform the development of local standards of provision, as discussed in the next section.

## 6. STANDARDS

### GENERAL: JUSTIFICATION FOR STANDARDS

Standards of provision should be informed by both the assessment of the current quantity, quality, and accessibility of existing open space and recreation provision, and the established needs and aspirations of the community. Standards are one of the major end products of the study.

PPG17 suggests that standards should have three basic components covering: quantity (per capita); quality; and, accessibility.

Standards should also reflect the importance attached to different kinds of open space by the community through the consultation exercise, and if they are adopted for use, the types of open space they cover should be reflected in the revised development plan in terms of the way in which open spaces are treated and designated on the proposals map.

The consultation described in the previous section and the concluding points have implications for the development of local standards considered in this section:

- **Quantity:** The community values local spaces, and this appreciation extends to types of space and recreation opportunity not explicitly recognised by the current Local Plan standards, in particular, the importance of accessible natural green space, sports pitches and provision for teenagers, as well as built sports facilities. These and others should be better embraced in new standards.
- **Quality:** Clean, safe, and high quality maintenance of spaces are seen as very important along within an appropriate range of facilities and opportunities. These considerations need to be reflected in the provision of a diversity of spaces maintained to a high standard.
- **Accessibility:** This needs to reflect the needs of potential user. Spaces likely to be used on a very frequent and regular basis need to be within easy walking distance and safe to access. Other larger opportunities where visits are longer but perhaps less frequent can be further away.

These comments in relation to the existing Local Plan standards can be summarised as in the following table.

| Table 50 Comments in relation to existing Local Plan standards |   |   |                              |                                  |
|--|---|---|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| OS type  | General comment                                     | Quantity  | Quality                      | Access                           |
| Parks and gardens  | Consultation shows these to be valued and well used | Not provided for in standard  | Not provided for in standard | Not provided for in standard     |
| Natural and semi natural green space                           | Consultation shows this to be valued and well used  | Provided for in current standard as nature conservation site or site for natural play | Not provided for in standard | Provided for in current standard |
| Green corridors  | Consultation shows these to be valued and           | Not provided for in standard  | Not provided for in standard | Not provided for in standard     |

|  |   |   |                              |                                   |
|--|---|---|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
|  | well used   |   |                              |                                   |
| Informal amenity open space                        | Consultation shows this to be valued and well used  | Provided for in current standard                                | Not provided for in standard | Provided for in current standard  |
| Allotments   | Use generally confined to a small section of the community, but used regularly by those people  | Not provided for in standard                                    | Not provided for in standard | Not provided for in standard      |
| Outdoor sports facilities and 'recreation grounds' | Only used (for sport) by a section of the community, but used regularly by those people that do play sport.   | Outdoor sports space provided for in current standard           | Not provided for in standard | Not provided for in standard      |
| Play provision for children and young people       | Although use is confined to a section of the community, the consultation does suggest a strong desire for good local facilities, within easy walking distance | Provided for in current standard, including needs of teenagers. | Not provided for in standard | Provided for in current standard, |
| Built sports facilities                            | Well used by certain sections of the population, mainly younger   | Not provided for in standard                                    | Not provided for in standard | Not provided for in standard      |
| Small community halls                              | Well used by certain sections of the population   | Not provided for in standard                                    | Not provided for in standard | Not provided for in standard      |

The existing Local Plan standards focus very much on provision space for outdoor sport, equipped children's play and informal open space, and overlook other needs that have been articulated through the community consultation. Beyond considerations of open space, the Local Plan does not provide guidance on meeting requirements for important built facilities, such as leisure centres, and community buildings.

It is therefore considered that the existing Local Plan standards covering open space, sport and recreation are lacking in several respects in terms of reflecting community aspirations with regard to the provision of open space, sport and recreational opportunities:

- They do not reflect the range of opportunities that the local community suggests it would like to see, either in terms of open space or built facilities.
- They are considered to be deficient in terms of providing guidance on the required quality of provision.
- They are also considered to be deficient in terms of the guidance they provide concerning accessibility to open space, sports and recreation facilities.

### Thresholds for the application of existing standards

The existing Local Plan provides threshold sizes of development above which the Council would expect that provision of open space and children's play to be made. These are:

- 40 dwellings or 1ha throughout most of the city, 25 dwellings or 0.5ha in the city centre for open space
- 10 or more child bed spaces for children's equipped play space.

These 'trigger' thresholds reflect a desire to ensure that larger developments are properly serviced by relevant open space and children's play opportunities. However, this study (through the consultation) has demonstrated local people's preparedness to travel a reasonable time/distance to use certain facilities, and that opportunities do not necessarily need to be on the 'immediate doorstep'. Thus, whilst it is important for facilities to be accessible to the intended user there is probably more flexibility on where provision can be made to meet the needs of new development than the above guidance implies.

This has important implications in terms of providing for the needs of the many high-density developments that are currently taking place in Norwich and are planned for the future.

The following standards are based on the results of local consultation, but are also informed by pragmatic considerations, and are intended to be achievable. The standards proposed are for minimum levels of provision, and they are being provided as much to guide planning developer contributions from new development in respect of important community facilities. Therefore, just because geographical areas may enjoy levels of provision exceeding minimum standards does not mean there is surplus provision, as all such provision may be well used. In addition, the standards (as they relate to various forms of open space) reflect only the importance of such areas for given recreation activities. Open spaces may have intrinsic value for other reasons, including visual and ecological. The recreational utility of open space must therefore be viewed in the round and in the context of broader environmental and planning considerations, beyond the scope of this report.

The proposed standards can be used in time to replace the existing Local Plan standard. The existing standard is derived from the National Playing Fields Association Six Acre Standard, which focuses on providing for the needs of outdoor sport and children's play. Although providing for these two needs is important within the City, the current standard does not recognise explicitly the value ascribed to and use of other forms of open space by residents of the City including parks, sports facilities and natural and informal spaces.

A single (Citywide) minimum standard for each type of open space is proposed, to reflect a principle of equity. However, it is recognised that the standards will have to be applied and interpreted in a flexible way to take into account varying local circumstances. The City Council should prepare a Supplementary Planning Document to expand on these standards and their application, as explanation to both residents and developers. This section provides 'scenarios' to show how they might be interpreted and applied in different development locations in the City with contrasting opportunities and constraints.

In particular, there may be a need to interpret the standards flexibly in relation to areas of high density redevelopment, where the land may simply not be available to satisfy the quantitative components of the standards. Nevertheless, such development will generate its own demands and developer contributions might often instead be used to provide and/or improve accessible off-site opportunities; or else help to create imaginative and innovative on site solutions.

**Accessibility**

At the outset this report has emphasised that different kinds of open space and recreation facility serve varying needs, and that depending on the nature of the opportunity people may be willing to travel to a lesser or greater degree to take advantage. This principle must (and has) been reflected in the accessibility component of the standards suggested here. Being clear on these access catchments will provide greater clarity in terms of (for example) establishing whether new residential development can be served best through new or improved 'off site' open space and recreation provision rather than entirely new 'on site' provision.

The 'walktime' catchment areas specified in each case are based on assumptions about realistic speeds at which people (often children) can travel through a 'normal' urban environment. However, when applying these catchments specific local circumstances will need to be taken into account impacting upon ease of travel including crossing major roads, rivers, train rail lines etc. It will also be important to take into account the needs of those with disabilities as, for some, 'getting to' open space and other destinations can involve problems most people do not experience. Elsewhere in this section the importance of planning safe and attractive approaches to parks and spaces is emphasised. In this context consideration of aspects such as dropped kerbs, rest points and seats en route will be of great benefit to many users. There is also the need to consider access immediately into and around open spaces and, therefore, the importance of adhering to the principles of the Disability Discrimination Act.

**Supplementary planning documents/guidance**

As mentioned, the standards will need to be supplemented by additional guidance to assist in the interpretation of their application, and to also indicate associated capital and maintenance costs (where appropriate). A draft SPD for developer contributions to open space, sport and recreation, based on the advice of Sport England, has been prepared to accompany this study, and can be used to develop the Council's own guidance.

**RECOMMENDED STANDARDS**

Standards suggested in this section include those for:

- Parks and Gardens
- Natural and semi natural green space (including green corridors)
- Informal amenity open space
- Play provision for children and young people
- Allotments
- Outdoor sports facilities and 'recreation grounds'
- (Important) built sports facilities,
- Small community halls.

These categories reflect those which the community (through the consultation) has prioritised and to which they attach importance, and also the guidance set out in PPG17 and its companion guide.

The following explanation of these proposed standards also includes existing national and Local Plan standards, with a discussion how these are appropriate to the City.



## PARKS AND GARDENS

### Existing National and Local Policies:

There are no existing national or local standards or guidance relating specifically to the provision of parks and gardens.

### General justification for a local standard:

The audit of provision as well as the consultation has identified the significance of and importance attached to City's Parks and Gardens, and it is therefore highly appropriate for local standards of provision to reflect their existing and continued significance. Many parks in Norwich are multi-functional, including space for outdoor sport, informal use, and natural/semi natural habitats. However, these types of open space are covered by other standards in this section and it is essential not to 'double count'. The quantitative component of this standard therefore covers only the 'articulating space' required to link all the other components of a park together

### Quantity:

The current standard of provision of parks and gardens in the city is 0.62 ha per 1000 population, and this is considered adequate to meet needs. A minimum level of future provision of 0.62 ha per 1000 people is suggested both as a basis for a contribution from new housing, but also as a minimum target for provision in the City. Park space should be combined with provision for other open space (see below) to provide truly multi-functional areas consistent with the existing character of the City's other recognised parks. The space provided should be of an appropriate shape and character to allow for meaningful recreational use, and its possible integration with other types of open space opportunity, (see under 'Quality'). Parks can vary hugely in size, and it may be that 'pocket' parks could be as small as 0.2 hectares- a 50m x 50m site would be a realistic level of provision to provide within high density developments.

### Accessibility:

A distance of 600 metres (straight-line), or about 10 minutes walking time is appropriate, so that local people can gain convenient access by foot. The public consultation suggested that about 90% of respondents said they would be prepared to travel at least 10 minutes to access this kind of provision. The preferred mode of transport is overwhelmingly by foot. However, given that the public consultation has demonstrated people are prepared to travel further to use certain major parks, it would be reasonable to also adopt a larger catchment for the major provision of this kind of around 15 minutes (900m). This would be consistent with local people's preparedness to travel to parks as expressed through the community survey. It is possible that vehicular trips may be shared purpose journeys, perhaps combining a visit to the park with shopping and/or other commitments. Smaller 'pocket parks' (see below), where they are provided, justify a smaller catchment- perhaps around 300 metres (5 minutes walk).

### Quality:

The Council may wish to consider the value of working towards a hierarchy of parks, embracing provision aimed at frequent local use (Pocket and Local Parks), and also regular (but perhaps less frequent) strategic use (District Parks). Parks at different levels of the hierarchy should include:

- **District Parks:** Landscaping with a variety of natural and semi natural features, including natural habitats and planted beds. Space for outdoor pitch, other sports

provision and changing rooms as appropriate (see separate standards). Space for children's and youth play facilities (see separate standards). Car parking. Footpaths. Cycleways. Buildings for secured storage and for catering outlets. Due regard to external links by foot and bicycle which may require improvements to the external environment (see below). Events venue. A notable and defining architectural feature. Seating. Litter and dog bins. Toilets. Refreshment venues. Picnic tables. Consideration of zoning between active and passive zones. The overall size of the park might be expected to be approaching or greater than 20 hectares. Examples of this include Eaton Park.

- **Local Parks:** Landscaping with a variety of natural features, including natural habitats. Space for outdoor pitch, other sports provision and changing rooms as appropriate (see separate standards). Space for children's and youth play facilities (see separate standards). Car parking. Toilets. Footpaths. Cycleways. Buildings for secured storage and/or catering outlets (if appropriate). Due regard to external links by foot and bicycle which may require improvements to the external environment. Seating. Picnic tables. Litter and dog bins. The overall size of the park might be expected to be at least 2 hectares. Examples include Wensum Park.
- **Pocket Parks:** These could be very local opportunities, within five minutes (around 300 metres) walk. They would not be large enough to accommodate features associated with larger parks, but could accommodate elements such as seating areas, local play opportunities, planted beds, treescape and paved areas. The overall size of the park would be small, perhaps up to 2 hectares, but usually much less- even a site of, say, 0.2 hectares could be sufficient to accommodate some of the above features. Examples include Sewell Park.

### Links to Parks

Although the City's Parks and other spaces are much appreciated and valued their use clearly depends on how easy they are to access. There is little point considering the provision of new or improvement of existing parks and spaces without parallel consideration of the means of access to them, and especially by foot and bike. New standards for parks should therefore also include guidance on the improvement of approach routes by foot and bike for which developer contributions should be sought. The City Council will need to determine:

- the linear distance threshold upon which such contributions should be based
- the nature of improvements sought to facilitate and improve upon ease and safety of access which might include clearly defined cycle lanes, safe crossing points etc.

This aspect is covered in the City Council's Riverside Walks and Green links policies and SPD.

## NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL GREEN SPACE

For the purposes of establishing future provision of natural green space, this category also includes green corridors.

### Existing National and Local Policies:

English Nature has proposed a national guidance on an Accessible Green Space Standard (ANGSt) which suggests that provision should be made of at least 2 ha of accessible greenspace per 1000 population according to a system of tiers into which sites of different sizes fit:

- No person should live more than 300 m from their area of natural green space;
- There should be at least one accessible 20 ha site within 2 km from home;
- There should be one accessible 100 ha site within 5 km; and,

- There should be one accessible 500 ha site within 10 km.

There is no current Local Plan standard relating specifically to the provision of accessible natural green space.

### **General justification for a local standard:**

The audit of provision as well as the consultation has identified the significance of and importance attached to accessible natural green spaces, and it is therefore desirable for local standards of provision to cover these features. The household survey has for example shown that 80% of respondents would travel up to 15 minutes (or about 900m) to woodlands, Mousehold Heath and other natural green spaces. Current provision of natural and semi natural green space in Norwich is very high, at 3.28 ha per 1000 population (3.5 ha per 1000 population, if green corridors are also included in this category). This figure is high because of the large areas such as Mousehold Heath and the river valleys within the city boundaries, which also have a role in satisfying the needs of surrounding districts. It would be appropriate to consider the adoption of English Nature ANGSt guidance as a local standard.

In the longer term there might be value in developing a hierarchy of provision as suggested by the ANGSt guidance, offering a range of smaller and larger opportunities set within a geographical dimension. However, it is felt strongly that the focus should be initially on improving provision and accessibility within easy walking distance.

### **Quantity:**

A minimum level of provision of 2.46 ha per 1000 people is suggested both as a basis for a contribution from new housing, but also as a minimum target for provision in the City. This level is not as high as currently exists in the City overall, but is considered to be realistic and capable of delivery, through developer contributions. The space provided should be of an appropriate shape and character to allow for meaningful recreational use, and its possible integration with other types of open space opportunity. (see under 'Quality')

### **Accessibility:**

A distance of 600 metres (straightline), or about 10 minutes walking time to local natural green space is felt to be appropriate so that local people can gain convenient access by foot. The public consultation suggested that people would be prepared to travel further to reach such opportunities, but this may in fact reflect an assumption that currently many such spaces are only to be found on the edge of the City. There is evidence that many people would like to see more wildlife areas provided closer to where they live.

Many natural green spaces have nature conservation site status. A limited number of natural green spaces are unlikely to be able to have public access due to their status – for example Eaton Chalk Pit is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) as an important research site for long-term studies in bat ecology.

### **Quality:**

The nature of the space should be determined to reflect local circumstances. However, provision might be expected to include (wherever possible) elements of woodland, wetland and meadow. Provision should also be made for informal public access through recreation corridors. For larger areas, where car borne visits might be anticipated, some parking provision will be required. The larger the area the more valuable sites will tend to be in terms of their potential for enhancing local conservation interest and biodiversity. The aim should be to create

areas of accessible natural green space of at least 1 hectare that are well distributed throughout the urban area. There should be parallel commitments to maintain natural green space through appropriate maintenance techniques reflecting the primary purpose of promoting natural habitats and biodiversity that can also be accessed and enjoyed by local people.

In areas where it may be impossible or inappropriate to provide additional green space consistent with the standard other approaches may be pursued which could include (for example):

- changing the management of marginal space on playing fields and parks to enhance biodiversity
- encouraging living green roofs as part of new development/redevelopment
- encouraging the creation of mixed species hedgerows
- additional use of long grass management regimes
- improvements to watercourses and water bodies
- innovative use of new drainage schemes
- use of native trees and plants in landscaping new developments.

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

## **INFORMAL AMENITY OPEN SPACE**

### **Existing National and Local Policies:**

There is no national guidance suggesting a standard expressly for the provision of informal green space. The NPFA's Six Acre Standard has proposed that there should be provision of casual or informal playing space within housing areas as part of the overall standard. The existing Local Plan policies are based on the Six Acre Standard.

### **General justification for a local standard:**

The audit of provision as well as the consultation has identified the importance attached by local people to space close to home, and the focus group meetings in particular suggested that it is casual informal space that is most valued by local people. It is unclear from the work undertaken whether local people actually differentiate clearly between what is defined in this report as Informal Amenity Open Space, and other types of space that might be viewed as important for recreation, play, or visual attraction (which might include parks, natural spaces and other open spaces). The fact that it is difficult sometimes to discern between different forms of open space is understandable given the multifunctional nature of much space. However, the value of Informal Green Space must be recognised especially within housing areas, where it can provide important local opportunities for play, exercise and visual amenity that are almost immediately accessible. On the other hand open space can be expensive to maintain and it is very important to strike the correct balance between having sufficient space to meet the needs of the community for accessible and attractive local space and having too much which then becomes impossible to manage properly and therefore a potential liability and source of nuisance.

### **Quantity:**

Informal green space currently is provided to a ratio of 1.27 ha per 1000 population in the city, though this includes some land in private use, which may not be accessible to the public. A minimum level of provision of 1.0 ha per 1000 people is recommended as a basis for a contribution from new housing, but also as a minimum target for provision in the City. This level

is not as high as exists in some parts of the City, but is considered to be realistic and capable of delivery.

The space provided should be of an appropriate shape and character to allow for meaningful recreational use, and its possible integration with other types of open space opportunity. (See under 'Quality')

**Accessibility:**

A distance of 100 metres (straightline), or about 1-2 minutes walking time is felt to be appropriate, as such spaces should be within easy reach of home for informal play and recreation opportunities. In areas of high density development which may lack access to traditional private gardens, access to informal space and other features (like pocket parks) will be one way of providing compensatory provision of doorstep green space.

**Quality:**

The nature of the space should be determined to reflect local circumstances although provision might be expected to include grassed areas, tree and shrub planting, paths, litter bins and benches. Depending on local circumstances it may be appropriate to use the provision sought under the Informal Green Space standard for additional or improved park space, natural green space, as there is clearly some interchangeability of function.

Informal green space can provide an extremely valuable play resource to complement equipped provision. Attention in design of new spaces to planting, topography and safety/security will maximise its potential in this regard.

The shape and size of space provided should allow for meaningful and safe recreation. It will not be appropriate for highway verges and other small pieces of roadside space (for example) to be counted towards such provision.

The definition of open space provided in Section 1 indicates what sort of space would qualify for consideration under this heading, in particular. This definition is sufficiently broad so as not to proscribe imaginative design of such space. For example, contributions towards the provision of informal green space could be used to help create green links/corridors.

## **PLAY PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**Existing National and Local Policies:**

The NPFA's 'Six-Acre' Standard is widely used throughout the country. Standards are expressed as '*acres / hectares per 1,000 population*', and they also include '*frequency / distribution*' factors to ensure accessibility. In practice, '*frequency / distribution*' factors determine the location of provision, whilst '*acres / hectares per 1,000 population*' has an influence on the '*quantity / size*' of provision. Although the Six Acre Standard also provides guidance on the provision for outdoor sport, it also proposes an overall figure of 0.8 ha per 1000 people of children's play space. This global figure includes:

- 'Designated' areas for children and young people containing a range of facilities and an environment that has been designed to provide focused opportunities for outdoor play; and,
- Casual or informal playing space within housing areas.

It is important to note that there is no recommended breakdown of the global (0.8 ha) spatial requirement reflecting the above categories.

The NPFA 'Six-Acre' Standard is essentially designed for application in new large residential developments and requires modification to suit existing urban settlements.

The three 'Designated' categories of equipped play area identified in the Six Acre Standard are:

**LAP - Local Areas for Play** - small (unequipped) areas of unsupervised open space specifically designated for young children for play activities close to where they live.

**LEAP - Local Equipped Areas for Play** - unsupervised play areas equipped for children of early school age.

**NEAP - Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play** - unsupervised sites serving a substantial residential area, equipped mainly for older children but with opportunities for play for younger children.

The Standard provides guidance on desirable walking distance to these areas. These differ reflecting the varying ages and abilities of the children at which each area is aimed, and are:

| Table 51 Play Provision Walking Times |            |                  |                        |
|---------------------------------------|------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Walking time                          |            |                  |                        |
| Play area type                        | Time       | Pedestrian Route | Straight line distance |
| LAP                                   | 1 minute   | 100 metres       | 60 metres              |
| LEAP                                  | 5 minutes  | 400 metres       | 240 metres             |
| NEAP                                  | 15 minutes | 1000 metres      | 600 metres             |

The Local Plan policy covering play provision is based on the above guidance.

**Issues with the Six-Acre Standard:** The NPFA guidance has been adopted by many local authorities over the years and its use continues to be widespread. The NPFA standards for equipped children's play provision have been criticised in recent years because they can result in a proliferation of play areas that can be difficult to maintain, as well as setting unrealistic aspirations in urban areas where insufficient land is available to provide facilities. An additional problem is that the current NPFA guidance does not cover the needs of most teenagers specifically within the standard, and it is felt that this is a significant problem in Norwich (confirmed by many of the comments and findings of the community consultation).

Another fundamental problem with the NPFA standard for children's play is how to interpret it in terms of what type of provision is required per head of population. As has been mentioned, whilst the standard suggests an overall level of children's play provision of 0.8 ha per 1000 people it does not specify what should be the ratio between informal and equipped provision within this overall area.

Although the 2001 version of the Six Acre Standard does provide some guidance upon appropriate thresholds of development for which different levels of the hierarchy should be introduced, this is certainly not intended for inclusion in a general standard covering children's play provision. For example, the Six Acre Standard suggests that for communities with 1000 people or more, there should be full provision of LAPs, LEAPs, and NEAPs.<sup>2</sup> Whilst this may be appropriate for ensuring that all communities of a reasonable size at least have access to a range of facilities for all age groups, it will not be an appropriate basis for an overall standard as in many settlements of 1000 people or more it would lead to a huge legacy of maintenance. An alternative approach would be to work out a level of per capita provision based on the

<sup>2</sup> Six Acre Standard. NPFA (2001) – para 5.62

recommended catchments for LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs, although this would also result in an unfeasibly large and unsustainable level of provision.

The findings of the consultation exercise suggest that local people would largely be prepared to allow children to make longer (accompanied and unaccompanied) trips to equipped play areas compared to recommendations of the NPFA: perhaps in the order of 15 minutes to a good play opportunity. For teenagers/young people it might be reasonable to expect them to travel even further to good equipped provision.

**General justification for a local standard:**

It is felt that a modified standard of play provision for City should be proposed. This could be a justified derivative of the NPFA guidance on equipped playspace, seeking to address the above problems associated with the Six Acre Standard and the local derivatives.

The suggested new standard seeks to achieve a more balanced approach to the needs of children of all ages. It also seeks to be realistic in terms of acknowledging the cost of both providing and maintaining equipped playspace. In overall terms it takes account of:

- Parents' reluctance to allow young children to play outdoors close to home unaccompanied.
- Opportunities for parents to accompany children to school taking 'toddlers' with them and 'stopping off' at a play area near to the school or local shopping centre on the way.
- Recognition that older children often take their younger brothers and sisters to a Play Area.
- The desire to reflect the need of children of all ages in providing play opportunities.
- Cost of provision and maintenance
- The need to provide clear guidance for developers and communities alike as to what should be the target levels of provision.

The purpose of the following standard is not to create 'play reservations' and exclude play elsewhere within the public realm. Obviously children and young people will make use of parks, and natural and informal space. Dedicated play provision can also be located within such spaces. Consideration of outdoor play opportunities should also include use of shared spaces in residential areas and shopping areas, which raises urban design issues beyond the scope of this report.

**Quantity:**

Current provision in Norwich equates to about 0.10ha per 1000 population for younger children and 0.02 ha for teenagers, though there is some justification for increasing this to meet local needs more, particularly for teenagers where provision is considered by some to be inadequate. It is recommended therefore that the local standard for play should be 0.16 ha per 1000 population for equipped space. Provision should be divided between the needs of the under 13s and young people, and the nature of the space and equipment required will therefore vary. Detailed guidance should be provided by the City Council. Ideally these areas should be complemented by surrounding unequipped space designed with the needs of children and young people in mind and which therefore might host kickabout/ball game areas, natural play opportunities etc.

**Accessibility:**

Based on the findings of the public consultation regarding preparedness to travel to use such facilities, a distance of 240 metres (straightline), or about 5 minutes (often accompanied) walking time is felt to be appropriate for provision aimed at the pre teen age group. A straightline distance of 720 metres (about 12 minutes walking time) should be largely acceptable for older children and their parents.

**Quality:**

Space must comprise a variety of equipped and unequipped play opportunities, and further guidance should be provided by the City Council. However, provision could include the following:

- **For young preschool children:** Small low key games area preferably with play features & 3 items of 'small scale' items of play equipment. Seating for accompanying adults.
- **For other children up to teenage years:** About 5 items of play equipment for a variety of activities including climbing, sliding, rocking, balancing, adventure and swinging, and a small flat ball games area with kick walls and 'low level' hoops and 'very low key wheel play facility (undulating riding surface with features). Seating for accompanying adults.
- **For young people:** About 5 types of play equipment, Ball and Wheeled Play opportunities, and covered seating for teenagers to use as a meeting place.

The requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act must also be considered fully in the provision and improvement of facilities.

**Consultation**

These standards should be applied flexibly and imaginatively, taking into account the views of local residents, potential users and various interests wherever possible. Meaningful consultation will therefore help to make new provision sensitive and appropriate to local circumstances.

**Safety**

All **new** Children's Outdoor Playing Spaces, the equipment and ancillary facilities to conform to all aspects of EN 1176 & 1177. Items not covered by either standard or exceptions to the standards must be justified and made explicit.

All **existing** Children's Outdoor Playing Spaces, the equipment and ancillary facilities to be assessed (by an independent RPII Member <sup>3</sup>) against all aspects of EN 1176 & 1177 applying a Risk Assessment to all non-compliance findings. Items not covered by either standard or exceptions to the standards must be also be Risk Assessed if the independent RPII Member has any safety concerns. Where the Risk Assessment indicates an '*unacceptable*' risk the Council will take all such measures that are reasonable & practical to minimise the risk of harm / accident to an '*acceptable*' level.

**Combined provision**

It may often be appropriate to provide for all three age groups at the same location separated only by a short distance or by enclosing the separate areas. This might be most appropriate in the case of sites of a more strategic nature, such as in parks and leisure centre grounds.

The benefits are:

- Savings on land take (buffer zone)

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<sup>3</sup> RPII (Register of Play Inspectors International) has been established by organisations such as the NPFA and ROSPA as a mechanism for quality checking playground inspectors.



- Parents / carers can accompany Toddlers and Juniors to the same Play Area
- Youths and / or Juniors can accompany younger brothers and sisters
- Reduction in the risk of young children playing on items designed for older children as they have their own play equipment at the same Play Area.

Other ideal locations for provision could be at local shopping centres, near schools:

- Facilitates 'stopping off' for parents / carers when accompanying older children to and from school, or whilst shopping.
- Facilities on known / familiar routes for children is a safety advantage.
- The more 'busy' the play area the more 'fun' and 'safe it is.
- Informal surveillance (overlooking) normally quite good.

### **The need for a standard to address the specific needs of children with disabilities.**

Whilst consideration of the Disability Discrimination Act will ensure that most equipped play areas should afford some level of access to children with disabilities, there may be justification for an additional standard of provision in relation to meeting the specific play needs of children and young people that cannot be met through standardised equipment. Occupants of new houses will include a proportion of children with disabilities resulting in their equipped play needs only being met through specialist provision, although it is difficult to estimate the overall numbers that this might mean. However, in the course of the consultation discussions have taken place with representatives of carers, and it is clear that a strategic facility (that could attract use from beyond Norwich) may be both well used and popular, especially if integrated within an attractive park environment and there is proximity to other attractions such as shops and other leisure facilities. A recognised strategic resource could perhaps justify neighbouring local authorities pooling relevant contributions towards the provision of a shared resource.

## **ALLOTMENTS**

### **Existing National and Local Policies:**

There are no existing national or local standards or related guidance relating specifically to the provision of allotments.

### **General justification for a local standard:**

With a few exceptions, allotments within the City are well used although only by a currently small section of the population. However, the need to develop housing at a higher than previous density will make it difficult to continue to provide associated private gardens in the central areas which is likely to enhance the demand for allotment space.

### **Quantity:**

A minimum level of provision of 0.44 ha per 1000 people is recommended both as a basis for a contribution from new housing, but also a minimum target for provision in the City. This reflects the current level of provision within the City but takes into account also the overall low 'vacancy rate' and a growth factor to reflect housing densities.

### **Accessibility:**

A straight-line distance of 600 metres (about 10 minutes walk time) should be largely acceptable, where walking is the chosen mode of transport. The public consultation suggested that 80% of respondents said they would be prepared at least to travel by 10 minutes to access this kind of provision.

**Quality:**

Further guidance should be provided by the City Council, but should include the following:

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

**OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES AND 'RECREATION GROUNDS'****Existing National and Local Policies:**

The NPFA's Six Acre Standard proposes that there should be provision of 1.6 ha of outdoor sports space per 1000 people.<sup>4</sup> The Local Plan policy for the City is also based on this guidance. The 2003 Norwich Policy Area Playing Pitch Assessment and Open Space Policy did not recommend a local standard, but concluded that there was a major deficiency compared with NPFA standards. Current provision in the wider Norwich area equates to about 0.72 ha per 1000 population, but this includes provision for golf. Excluding golf, current provision equates to 0.39 ha per 1000 population.

**Quantity:**

To take into account participation changes targeted in national and local sports strategies and other factors, a minimum level of provision of 1.01 ha per 1000 people is recommended both as a basis for a contribution from new housing, but also a minimum target for provision in the City. This is less than the current standard in the Local Plan.

**Accessibility:**

The public consultation suggests a slightly greater expectation for using a car to get to formal playing fields although the most popular trip mode is still suggested to be by foot. Once again 70% of the respondents would be prepared to travel somewhere up to 15 minutes to access such facilities. Clubs are known to draw on membership from farther afield, and it may sometimes not be possible to provide playing pitches within easy walking distance. A distance of no more than 3 kilometres is desirable from the catchment population, although it should be less where provision is aimed at young people. Further guidance should be provided by the City Council.

**Quality**

Further guidance should be provided, but provision should include changing accommodation, car parking, appropriate drainage and adherence to guidance provided by the sports' governing bodies, Sport England or other established sources of such advice. The City Council should

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<sup>4</sup> The NPFA Six Acre Standard stresses that such provision should exclude golf courses, and should only include those areas where there is bona fide community access.

also provide guidance in relation to the site design, shared and dual use, and the acceptability or otherwise of contributions to improvements to existing facilities in lieu of new provision.

There could be flexibility in the way in which these standards are applied. For example, for football there may be the opportunity for synthetic surfaces to replace grass space, and be used much more intensively. Certain surfaces can now be used for competitive football at a local level (with agreement between leagues and clubs). Where there is insufficient space to lay out new multi pitch complexes and there are no existing sports areas sufficiently accessible with sufficient capacity and the potential for improvement, artificial surfaces may be appropriate.

## **SMALL COMMUNITY HALLS**

### **Existing National and Local Policies:**

There are no existing national or local standards or related guidance relating specifically to the provision of community buildings and halls.

### **General justification for a local standard:**

There is no 'one size fits all' solution to providing community venues. Generally speaking the larger the local population, the bigger and more accommodative a community facility needs to be, as larger populations will tend to generate a greater and more diverse level of activities compared with smaller populations. However, even small populations can sustain simple and attractive venues.

### **Quantity:**

The current level of provision of community centres in the City is close to 1 hall per 8200 people, and it is recommended that this forms the basis of a new standard for future provision.

### **Accessibility:**

900 metres straight-line distance (or about 15 minute walktime). This is consistent with the results of the public consultation.

### **Quality:**

Further guidance should be provided by the City Council, but provision should include:

- A hall sufficiently large to be used for a variety of recreation and social activities, of at least 18 x 10m.
- A small meeting/committee room
- Kitchen
- Storage
- Toilets
- Provision for disabled access and use
- Car parking

Overall a total net floor space of 500m<sup>2</sup> could be used as a guide.

As stated at the beginning of this section the standards can be applied and interpreted flexibly to best meet local circumstances. The aim should not be (for example) to create a proliferation of small community venues in areas of growth where fewer larger venues would be more appropriate. Contributions arising from this standard could also be used towards the

enlargement/improvement of existing venues where appropriate. However, access is the key factor.

## **BUILT SPORTS FACILITIES**

### **Existing National and Local Policies:**

There are no existing national or local standards or related guidance relating specifically to the provision of sports facilities such as sports halls, swimming pools and indoor bowls/tennis. National standards have long since been replaced with facility provision based on local need.

### **General justification for a local standard**

Various tools are used to estimate the local need for built sports facilities, provided by Sport England. The most reliable, but which is not available at present, is Active Places Power Plus, which enables a detailed assessment to be made by the use of a sophisticated planning model. However it is still possible to develop local standards based on other available information, including Active Places Power and the Sports Facilities Calculator (SFC), and these have been used to devise the recommended standards below (see above).

There is a general feeling that built sports facility provision in Norwich is poor compared with the average, particularly in regard to facilities in the public sector and therefore widely available to the community on a pay and play basis. A detailed assessment has been undertaken to ensure that this situation can be addressed.

### **Quantity**

Adopting the guidelines recommended in Sport England's SFC, which uses actual participation rates for sport applied to the population structure of the city, and other tools, the following level of provision is recommended:

**Sports halls** - to meet the needs of Norwich and the surrounding area, there is a requirement for one 4-court sports hall for community use per 12000 population. This is significantly higher than existing provision of facilities, at least those currently in community use.

**Swimming pools** – for Norwich the requirement is for one 4-lane 25m pool in community use per 18000 population. This is significantly higher than existing provision of facilities, at least those in community use.

**Indoor bowls** – for Norwich the requirement is one 6-rink centre per 55,000 population. This is consistent with existing provision in the area.

Active Places Power has been utilised to assess the need for other facilities, using local, regional and national figures as a benchmark, as follows:

**Health and fitness facilities** – based on existing provision in the area and a growth in participation, there is a requirement for one 50-station centre per 8300 population.

**Indoor tennis** - based on existing provision in the area and a small growth factor, there is a requirement for one 4-court indoor centre per 57000 population.

**Athletics** – based on existing provision and future growth the requirement is for one 8-lane track per 115000 people.