WOLVERHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE, SPORT & RECREATION STUDY

A FINAL REPORT BY PMP

OCTOBER 2008
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Introduction and background

The Study

1.1 Wolverhampton City Council (the Council) appointed PMP to undertake an audit and assessment of open space, sport and recreation facilities in the City of Wolverhampton (the City) in accordance with the requirements of the latest Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (Planning for Open Space Sport and Recreation, July 2002) and its Companion Guide (September 2002). The assessment of open space, sport and recreation facilities was undertaken alongside a playing pitch assessment, which considers provision of football, cricket, rugby and hockey pitches in more detail.

1.2 The study includes an audit of all open space provision providing a clear vision, priorities for existing and future open space and a direction for the allocation of future resources.

1.3 The aims of the study were to:

- to provide the Council with an audit and assessment of open space, sport and recreation provision in the City that meets the needs and requirements of Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG 17)
- to carry out a comprehensive assessment of current and future needs with a full assessment of existing open space in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility
- to develop a City wide audit of the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space and built facilities across Wolverhampton
- to develop robust provision standards that will underpin the Council’s open space, sport and recreation forward planning (UDP/LDF policies) and inform future policy decisions for each PPG 17 typology
- to identify surpluses and deficiencies of open space provision
- to provide a robust evidence base for the justification of developer contributions towards open space provision.

1.4 It is intended that this study will enable the Council to develop cost and design guidelines for existing and future provision and maintenance of different open spaces and facilities. The study will also enable the Council to guide development of planning policies and a revised green spaces strategy.

1.5 The study considers the local need for open space, sport and recreation facilities from residents and visitors to the City. The changing context, both locally in Wolverhampton and sub-regionally across the Black Country is also taken into account.

Need for local assessments

1.6 This assessment of open space and local needs will enable the Council to:

- plan positively, creatively and effectively in identifying priority areas, now and in the future, for improvement and to target appropriate types of open space
- ensure an adequate provision of high quality, accessible open space to meet the needs of the local community
• ensure any accessible funding is invested in the right places where there is the most need

• conduct Section 106 negotiations with developers from a position of knowledge with evidence to support

• ensure that local open space meets the needs of the varying sectors of the local community

• plan future open space delivered through physical regeneration programmes effectively.

1.7 Where no assessment exists, developers can undertake their own independent assessment to demonstrate that open space is surplus to requirements. It is therefore desirable for the Council to have robust data to protect open space within the City.

Why public open space?

1.8 PPG 17 states that well designed and implemented planning policies for open space, sport and recreation are fundamental to delivering broader Government objectives, which include:

• supporting an urban renaissance

• supporting a rural renewal

• promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion

• health and well being

• promoting more sustainable development.

1.9 Open space and recreation provision in Wolverhampton has an important role to play in supporting the implementation of these objectives as well as wider regional and local objectives.

Function and benefits of open space

1.10 Open spaces can provide a number of functions within the urban fabric of towns for example, the provision for play and informal recreation, aesthetic landscape areas and / or a habitat for the promotion of biodiversity. Open spaces can also promote community cohesion, encourage community development and stimulate partnerships between the public and private sector.

1.11 Each type of open space has various benefits, for example allotments for the growing of own produce, play areas for children’s play and playing pitches for formal sports events. Open space can additionally perform a secondary function, for example outdoor sports facilities have an amenity value in addition to facilitating sport and recreation.

1.12 There is a requirement to provide a balance between different types of open space in order to meet local needs. Across different areas of Wolverhampton the demand may vary, for example some areas may show a demand for open space in the form of playing pitches or allotments whilst others will have specific local demand for ‘green corridor’ sites such as nature walks or bridleways.
SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.13 Changing social and economic circumstances, shifts in work and leisure practices, more sophisticated consumer tastes and higher public expectations have placed new demands on open spaces. They have to serve more diverse communities and face competition from various developers including sport and leisure.

1.14 Parks and open spaces are more accessible to a wider range of people than some sport and leisure facilities and are better able to realise the aims of social inclusion and equality of opportunity. These opportunities are particularly important within Wolverhampton in light of the diverse population and very low levels of sports participation across the Black Country. Sport England’s Active People Survey reveals that around one in six (16.1%) adults in Wolverhampton take part in moderate intensity sport and active recreation on three or more occasions a week that lasts for 30 minutes or more. Wolverhampton is ranked 347th out of 354 local authorities nationally and 31st out of 34 regionally in the West Midlands. The protection and provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities is key to a healthy, sustainable and thriving community.

1.15 It is widely recognised that the provision of high quality ‘public realm’ facilities such as parks and open spaces can assist in the promotion of an area as an attractive place to live, and can result in a number of wider benefits. These are highlighted in Appendix A.

Types of open space

1.16 The overall definition of open space within the government planning guidance is:

“all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity”.

1.17 PPG17 identifies a range of typologies. This study includes the assessment of nine types of open space and multi-use-games-areas as a separate typology. These have been listed below:

- parks and gardens (broken down into District Parks and Neighbourhood Parks)
- natural and semi natural open space
- amenity green space
- provision for children
- provision for young people/teenagers
- outdoor sports facilities
- allotments and community gardens
- green corridors
- churchyards and cemeteries.

1.18 This study also considers the provision of built sports facilities, specifically swimming pools, sports halls and local community centres.
1.19 The study takes into account open spaces, sport and recreation facilities regardless of ownership and management, ensuring an accurate and representative picture of current provision within the City. Full details of these typologies, their definitions and primary purpose are outlined in Appendix B.

1.20 The Wolverhampton City Council PPG17 study should drive the future planning of sport and recreation facilities across the City and should facilitate the delivery of increased participation in sport and physical activity. The relationship with other strategies and the drivers for increased participation are set out below in figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 – Relationship to other strategies
Methodology

PPG17 – 5 step process

1.21 The PPG17 Companion Guide sets out a five step logical process for undertaking a local assessment of open space. This process was used in undertaking this study to meet the requirements of the Council to plan, monitor and set targets for their existing and future provision of open space within the City. Although presented as a linear process below, in reality, many stages were undertaken in parallel.

1.22 The 5 step process is as follows and has been presented in a flow diagram overleaf (figure 1.2):

- Step 1 – Identifying Local Needs
- Step 2 – Auditing Local Provision
- Step 3 – Setting Provision Standards
- Step 4 – Applying Provision Standards
- Step 5 – Drafting Policies – recommendations and strategic priorities.

1.23 In addition to the Open Space, Sport and Recreation study, the 2003 playing pitch strategy is being up-dated to provide greater understanding of the surpluses and deficiencies of pitch provision within the City. The playing pitch strategy will sit directly beneath the open space, sport and recreation study with detailed actions for the provision of pitches now and in the future. The findings of the playing pitch strategy are integrated within the local standards for outdoor sports facilities in this study.

1.24 The detailed analysis within the report has been undertaken by type of open space looking at different geographical locations across the City, (referred to as Analysis Areas in this report), which were discussed and agreed by the Council.

1.25 The Analysis Areas are derived from the Council’s Neighbourhood Parks Areas – as documented in the Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan. These have been amalgamated into five broader areas.

1.26 PPG17 states that local authorities should use clearly identifiable neighbourhoods as the basis for analysis. In this instance the Neighbourhood Park Areas set out in the Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan have been amalgamated into five geographical areas. The use of these areas when planning the study ensures that consultation is effectively spread across the City, and a greater understanding of the quantity and distribution of sites can be gained. The five areas of Wolverhampton City are:

- Tettenhall Analysis Area
- Central and South Analysis Area
- North Analysis Area
- Wednesfield Analysis Area
- Bilston Analysis Area.
Although sites outside the administrative boundaries of the City are not audited, consideration has been given to cross boundary movement, and the use of sites across the border by residents of Wolverhampton, and travel into Wolverhampton by residents of neighbouring authorities.

The process followed in this study is outlined in figure 1.2 overleaf.

**Figure 1.2 – PPG 17 5-step process**
Our process

1.29 The following steps indicate how the study has been undertaken in accordance with PPG17.

### STEP 1 – IDENTIFYING LOCAL NEEDS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consultation</th>
<th>Consultation, both within the Council and with the general public help to establish and identify the local needs of the City.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public consultation</td>
<td>The following consultation methods were employed to understand the local needs of residents within Wolverhampton:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Residents’ consultation</strong>: an on street survey was conducted at five different locations throughout the City, generating 800 responses from local residents. Whilst this represents a small sample of the population, it ensures that the results are statistically representative in response to local demographics. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix C and the analysis of results are contained within the individual typology sections. Surveys were carried out at the following locations:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Tettenhall Arcade</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- City Centre</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Showell Circus</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Wednesfield High Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Bilston Town Centre</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Neighbourhood ‘drop-in’ sessions</strong> were held across the City, enabling residents and local interest groups to provide their views on open space, sport and recreation facilities. Drop in sessions were held in:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Tettenhall Village Green</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Somerfields, Bushbury</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Mander Shopping Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sainsburys, Wednesfield</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Bilston Town Square</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Workshops and focus groups</strong> were held with:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Children and young people</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Over 50’s forum</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Sports clubs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Friends groups</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- ABCD Regeneration Area Group.</td>
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Other groups were also approached and offered workshops.

- **Internet survey for young people** - a web-based questionnaire was developed and aimed specifically at consulting with school-aged children and young people. All schools within the local authority area were sent a letter and guidance pack to supplement the questionnaire. Schools were asked to encourage their pupils to complete the questionnaire online. There was an extremely pleasing response to the questionnaire, with a total of 774 responses. Opportunities to complete the survey were also provided by the youth services team at adventure playgrounds across the City.

- **Email address** - a dedicated e-mail address was set up to ensure a wide ranging consultation opportunity for those people wishing to respond during the course of the project.

- **Postal Address** – a freepost address was set up for the project for anyone wanting to write in about specific issues

- **Text Messaging Service** – a specific text messaging service was set up mainly targeted at teenagers to text in their opinions and needs.

The email address, postal address and text messaging service were advertised through a press release in local papers.

<table>
<thead>
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<th><strong>Internal consultation</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>Internal consultations provided a strategic overview of Council priorities and policies and informed the development of local standards.</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Specific issues discussed included:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- priorities, problems and change issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>- current policy effectiveness</td>
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<tr>
<td>- planning implications</td>
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<tr>
<td>- recent development proposals</td>
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<td>- sport and leisure strategies and development plans.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>External consultation</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>External Agencies and Organisations – external organisations were consulted with through drop-in sessions, phone, email and questionnaires. Organisations contacted included:</td>
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<td>- British Waterways (West Midlands Office)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Groundwork Wolverhampton</td>
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<tr>
<td>- The Wolverhampton Partnership (the Local Strategic Partnership)</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country.</td>
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### STEP 2 – AUDITING LOCAL PROVISION

| Quantity | The council provided existing information on open space within Wolverhampton, however PMP undertook a full audit of open space categorised into PPG17 typologies using existing Council data as a starting point. All sites were classified by their primary purpose. A total of 1007 sites were identified during the audit and assessment process (a complete list of all audited sites are contained within Appendix D) The audit includes an update from the Playing Pitch Assessment audit of pitches. The following assumptions (signed-off by the Council) were employed during the audit phase:  
- NO minimum size threshold was applied, therefore all useable open space was audited as open space provision  
- all open spaces were categorised into PPG17 compliant typologies  
- green corridors were not audited as a separate typology. Although there are extensive areas of linear open space in Wolverhampton e.g. along canals and disused railway lines, there were categorised for their primary purpose eg natural and semi natural provision.  
- young people’s facilities consist of skate parks, BMX tracks, informal kick-about areas, Multi-Use-Games-Areas (MUGAs) and teenage shelters  
- children’s facilities consist of outdoor children’s play areas and equipment and adventure play grounds that are freely accessible (therefore this excludes play areas in school playgrounds, crèches etc)  
- parks previously categorised as district parks have been classified into district parks, whilst the remainder of parks are classified as neighbourhood parks  
- all publicly accessible open space was audited.  

A series of meetings with key Council officers were held to check and sign off the audit following the desktop audit and again on completion of the site assessments. The audit provides a comprehensive record of all open spaces within Wolverhampton City. Built facilities were audited using Active Places Power and local officer knowledge. |
Site Assessments

A full site assessment of each of the publicly accessible outdoor sites identified within the audit has been undertaken. A site assessment matrix, built upon guidance within PPG 17 and the Green Flag Award, was used in order to consistently measure open space sites across the City. A copy of the site assessment matrices and definitions can be found in Appendix E. All sites, which were publicly accessible at the time of the site visit, were assessed.

The full site audit and assessment information is stored in an Access 2000 database and linked to the Council’s GIS system. The following information can be found within the database for each of the sites audited:

- **NAME OF SITE**
- **TYPOLOGY** – classified into PPG17 compliant types of open space
- **QUANTITY** - size in hectares
- **QUALITY** – condition and quality aspect of the site, including
- **SITE ACCESS** – accessibility of the site
- **USAGE** – level of use, stated as high, average, low or no usage
- **WIDER BENEFITS** – i.e. structural and landscape benefits, education benefits, social inclusion and health benefits, cultural and heritage benefits, amenity benefits
- **OTHER INFORMATION**

The perceived usage at each site was rated by Council officers.

**STEP 3 and 4 – Setting and applying provision standards**

Based on the comprehensive audit data, extensive local consultation, site assessments and value assessments, recommendations for local standards have been set for:

**QUANTITY** – these have been set for each typology, excluding green corridors and are in the form of hectares per 1,000 population

**QUALITY** – a quality vision is recommended for each typology as an aspirational benchmark for provision for new and existing sites

**ACCESSIBILITY** – distance thresholds have been calculated and travel times have been suggested for each typology using either a walk-time or drive-time standard, based on consultation examining local needs (excluding churchyards and cemeteries and green corridors).

All local standards are derived from the local assessment of need and audit of existing provision and are therefore directly representative of the expectations of the local population.
The application of standards provides the detailed level of analysis that underpins the recommendations within the report. Applying robust local standards based on assessments of need forms the basis for addressing quantitative and qualitative needs through the planning process. It also identifies deficiencies in terms of accessibility, quality, and quantity and the spatial distribution of unmet need.

The application of standards will also inform the physical regeneration process, advising on the types of open space that are required within each area.

Based on the analysis and application of standards, strategic options have been devised based on existing provision to be protected, existing provision to be enhanced, existing provision to be relocated and proposals for new provision.

The recommendations contained within the report are based on an assessment of which strategic options are particularly important in terms of satisfying local needs. They appear throughout the report, based on the findings of the application of the local standards for each typology. An example is provided below:

| PG | Given the low number of sites within the City, all parks should be afforded protection |

The report also provides guidance for the application of Section 106 agreements and developer contribution formulae, which reflect the approach taken by other authorities and best practice. Current policies contained within the UDP are reviewed, and comments are provided regarding the future direction of policies where appropriate.

In relation to accessibility standards, in addition to considering access to sites in terms of distance thresholds it is also important to consider the cost of accessing facilities, the majority of facilities included in this report are accessible free of charge. However, where a charge is applicable, the cost and the barriers this may present to usage has not been considered.

Background of local features and demographics

Wolverhampton is a City located in the West Midlands Conurbation, although traditionally part of the county of Staffordshire. It forms part of the Black Country Sub-Region, which also includes Sandwell, Dudley and Walsall metropolitan borough councils. The predominantly rural South Staffordshire District also hugs the north and west boundaries of the City.

The City has a long history of cultural diversity, and the ethnic minority community now accounts for 22% of Wolverhampton’s population. Wolverhampton is a heavily build up area, and is the second most densely developed local authority area in the West Midlands Region, following Birmingham. 10% of the land area forms protected Green Belt “wedges” within the built up area, which are an important part of the green space network in the west of the City.
SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.33 Wolverhampton is expected to see significant physical regeneration over the next 25 years as set out in the adopted UDP and the West Midlands Spatial Strategy Phase 1 Revision: The Black Country Study. This will include a substantial increase in house-building rates, with many out-dated employment sites to be identified for mixed-use redevelopment along the lines of Bilston Urban Village. All of this regeneration will have major implications for open space, sport and recreation provision in future years.

1.34 The City covers an area of 69.44 km² and has a population of 235,590 (according to the Census 2001).

1.35 Key indicators include:

- children under the age of five accounts for 5.99% of the population (proportional to the national average). Government population projections for 2021 suggest that this figure will decrease slightly to 5.94%.

- there is a high proportion of the population below the age of 20, greater than the national average, highlighting the importance of open space provision particularly for young people in the City. However, the overall number of people aged between 10 and 19 is expected to decrease by 5200 up to 2021 (compared to the 2004 figure).

- 16.9% are of retirement age (over 65 years of age). This figure is higher than the level for both the West Midlands (15.96%) and England (15.89%) indicating that there is an ageing population. This must be taken into consideration when planning to meet local needs as different open space types may be required. Furthermore, the figure is expected to increase to 19.1% by 2021 – according to Government projections.

- more generally, the Government’s 2004 Sub National population projections expect the Wolverhampton population to remain relatively constant over the next 15 years, based on current trends – with an anticipated 2021 population figure of 240,900. This figure has provided the basis for projecting forward future open space, sport and recreation needs as part of this assessment. Any increase in population will depend to a great extent on the level of regeneration, particularly house-building achieved over the period (see para 2.14).

- the Health Profile for Wolverhampton (2006, NHS) reveals that health is generally poor when compared with England; approximately 1 in 10 adults surveyed reported feeling in poor health.

- male and female life expectancy remains significantly lower than the national average, however both are increasing over time. The inequalities gap between local and national rates is narrowing for females, but widening for males.

- deaths from heart disease and stroke remain significantly higher than the national averages.

- just of three fifths (60.9%) of adults in Wolverhampton have not taken part in any moderate intensity sport and recreation of 30 minutes duration in the last four weeks (nationally the figure is 50.6%).
• there are high levels of cultural diversity. It will therefore be important to ensure that open space, sport and recreation facilities are equally accessible to all sectors of the community.

1.36 Statistics researched and provided by the Audit Commission indicate that satisfaction the provision of open space and sports facilities in the local area is improving and there is a good base on which to build. Evidence of this includes:

• 96.39% of residents think that the range of activities for young people over the past three years has improved or stayed the same, this result lies within the top quartile of the national statistics, highlighting the continuing commitment of the council to provide facilities/activities for young people. Similarly a high percentage (95.47%) of residents think that children’s facilities/activities have got better or stayed the same, placing Wolverhampton within the top quartile.

• on a similar theme 93.94% % of residents in Wolverhampton think that sport and leisure facilities have got better or stayed the same over the past three years. This statistic is also within the top quartile of all national statistics.

• although there is a high percentage of residents currently satisfied with the improvements in leisure and children and young people’s facilities over the past three years, this is not reflective of the improvements in parks and open spaces within the City. Whilst 87.83% of residents feel that parks and open space have got better or stayed the same over the past three years, this places Wolverhampton in the second to bottom quartile nationally. As highlighted, recent improvements to the open space, sport and recreation sites provide a good platform for improvement of spaces across the City. This study will provide the level of detail and analysis needed to plan for open spaces over the next 15 years based on local quantitative and qualitative needs.

1.37 In order to estimate local needs in the Analysis Areas over the next 15 years, government population projections for Wolverhampton up to 2021 have been used. These estimate that the population City wide will grow to 240,900. The percentage increase over and above the 2001 census figure of 235,590 is 2.25%

1.38 This figure has been applied equally to each of the Analysis Areas, which provides the basis for assessing the quantity standards up to 2021 in terms of pinpointing localised surpluses and deficiencies (see table overleaf).
1.39 These figures represent a continuation of current trends (i.e., no population growth) and are therefore a baseline scenario. 11,000 new dwellings (not including housing renewal) are due to be constructed in Wolverhampton over the next 15 year period, and these will be concentrated in the Central and South and Bilston Analysis Areas, in locations where very few residents live currently. Given the lack of existing residents in these areas, open space infrastructure is currently poor.

1.40 The remainder of this report is set out as follows:

- Section 2 – the national, regional and local context
- Section 3 – parks and gardens
- Section 4 – natural and semi natural open space
- Section 5 – provision for children
- Section 6 – provision for young people
- Section 7 – outdoor sports facilities
- Section 8 – amenity green space
- Section 9 – indoor sports facilities
- Section 10 – allotments
- Section 11 – cemeteries and churchyards
- Section 12 – green corridors
- Section 13 – summary.
Strategic context

2.1 This strategic review provides background on the national/regional picture relevant to open space and sports facilities. The Council has provided all documents reviewed within this section of the report. Whilst this review is not exhaustive it provides details on the context considered important within this study.

2.2 For the purposes of this study, Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 and the Companion Guide, Assessing Needs and Opportunities are the key overarching documents, these have been reviewed within Appendix F which sets out the national strategic context, including Living Spaces: Cleaner, Safer Greener which was produced by the ODPM in 2002 and led to the creation of CABE Space, a national government agency which has the overall aim “to bring excellence to the design, management and maintenance of parks and public space in towns and cities”.

2.3 All documents reviewed within this report influence the provision of facilities in Wolverhampton and the strategic priorities of the Council. Local strategic documents have been reviewed within the individual typology sections, highlighting specific strategic objectives that link into this study. Specific objectives should dovetail with recommendations within this report and will be considered within Sections 3-12 of the report.

2.4 Appendix G consists of external agencies that have an influence and interest in the provision of open spaces and notes some of the key issues and objectives which are relevant to this study. Consultation with external agencies is also referenced where appropriate within each typology specific section of this report.

Regional policy documents

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (formerly Regional Planning Guidance (RPG 11) June 2004

2.5 The Regional Spatial Strategy guides the preparation of local authority development plans and local transport plans to deliver a coherent framework for regional development.

2.6 The overall vision for the West Midlands is to be:

‘an economically successful, outward looking and adaptable region, which is rich in culture and environment, where all people, working together are able to meet their aspirations and needs without prejudicing the quality of life for future generations’

2.7 The key challenges and outcomes for the region are highlighted as:

- providing opportunities for all to progress and improve their quality of life
- an advanced, thriving and diverse economy occupying a competitive position
- successful urban and rural renaissance
- diverse and distinctive cities, towns, sub-regions and communities with Birmingham as a ‘world city’ at its heart
- recognition for its distinctive, high quality natural and built environment
2.8 Policies contained within the Regional Spatial Strategy of specific relevance to this open space, sport and recreation study include:

- **Policy QE1** - environmental improvement is a key component of the Spatial Strategy in order to underpin the overall quality of life of all areas and support wider economic and social objectives.

- **Policy QE4** - local authorities and other agencies should *undertake assessments of local need and audits of provision*, and develop appropriate strategies for green space to ensure that there is adequate provision of accessible, high quality urban green space with an emphasis on:
  
  i. significantly improving the overall quality of public space, especially in city centres;
  
  ii. enhancing the setting of local residential neighborhoods in built up areas;
  
  iii. increasing the overall stock of urban trees;
  
  iv. improved accessibility and community safety; and
  
  v. maintaining and enhancing sports, playing fields and recreation grounds.

- **Policy T3** - development plans and local transport plans should provide greater opportunities for walking and cycling by:
  
  i. developing safe, secure, direct, convenient and attractive networks which connect town centres, local facilities, educational premises, public transport interchanges, residential and employment areas;
  
  ii. giving pedestrians and cyclists priority in residential areas and town centres;
  
  iii. providing links between smaller settlements and centres and development of greenways and quiet roads;
  
  iv. making the most effective use of canal towpaths;
  
  v. expanding ‘cycle & ride’ and cycle carriage on public transport; and
  
  vi. ensuring that new developments and infrastructure proposals improve walking and cycling access.

*The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands – Phase 1 Revision: Black Country Study*

2.9 When the Secretary of State published the Regional Spatial Strategy in 2004, he recognised that, in some instances, more work was required to develop the strategy further. He noted that in this regard a particularly important sub-regional Study was underway in the Black Country; where there is a particular need to resolve a number of inter-connected issues affecting the area.

2.10 A draft revision to the RSS was submitted to the Secretary of State on 31 May 2006, and an Examination in Public was held in January 2007. The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government published the Report of the Independent Panel, which examined the draft partial revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for
the Black Country on 13 March 2007. The Secretary of State will now be considering the recommendations with a view to publishing the Proposed Changes to the RSS for consultation in the summer.

2.11 The Panel Report recommended an amendment to the Phase One Revision to include the following four strategic objectives for the Black Country.

1) to reverse out-migration
   - accommodating within the Black Country all of the generated household growth from 2011
   - meeting at least the levels of housing provision identified in Policy CF3

2) to raise income levels
   - raising demand and household incomes (average earnings, GDP per head and reducing unemployment) to the UK average by 2033

3) to create an inclusive and cohesive society within the Black Country
   - removing barriers to opportunity
   - changing the socio economic mix by increasing the proportion of social grades A and B to match the national profile by 2033 or earlier

4) to transform the Black Country Environment
   - protecting and enhancing the sub-region’s environmental and heritage assets and biodiversity
   - implementing the Black Country as Urban Park concept.

2.12 In summary, open space, sport and recreation provision links to each of the above four objectives. More specifically in objectives one and three - looking to address the trend of outward migration will result in an increased overall population and housing provision which in turn will impact on the levels of open space provision required to meet the needs of the growing and changing community in the future. Objective four links directly to the protection and enhancement of open spaces, which mirrors the objectives of the PPG 17 study.

2.13 The Panel Report also recommended the insertion of a new policy in relation to transforming the Environment of the Black Country as follows:

2.14 Local Authorities and others will plan for the transformation of the environment by:

- giving physical expression to the concept of the ‘Black Country as Urban Park’ through identification of Beacons, Corridors and Communities;
- preparing and implementing a joint Black Country Landscape Action Plan based on a Green Infrastructure approach to define and deliver an integrated network of open spaces, waterways and canals; to protect and enhance topographical, biodiversity and heritage features; and to promote walking and cycling;
preparing a Canal Management Plan to support the promotion of World Heritage Status for the Black Country Canal Network and its environs.

2.15 Other key issues that are particularly relevant to this study include:

- expanding town and city centre areas including Wolverhampton
- building quality housing, improving the quality and widening the choice of housing across the Black Country
- Black Country-wide efforts to enable participation in social and economic life and to build more cohesive communities are fundamental to the overall strategy with the overall aim to create prosperous, diverse and harmonious communities
- the opportunities for improved and enhanced provision of open space is provided in the Black Country, highlighting specific opportunities to seize section 106 money for future open space in Wolverhampton.

*The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands – Phase 2 Revision:*

2.16 Phase 2 revisions to the 2004 Regional Spatial Strategy relate to housing, employment, transport and waste.

2.17 With reference to housing figures, the recently published spatial options consultation document (January 2007) presents three alternative housing growth scenarios (2001-2026). Figures relating to the Black Country range from 79,400 to 106,700 new dwellings.

2.18 Whilst the detailed breakdown of these figures across the Black Country authorities will be considered through the Black Country Joint Core Spatial Strategy, the spatial options consultation suggests that the number of new dwellings constructed in Wolverhampton will range from 17,400 to 22,500.

2.19 According to the Phase 2 Options Consultation, only 10-15000 of the dwellings allocated for the Black Country will actually accommodate new population. Whether these assumptions are accurate or not, the high level of house-building which will take place over the next 15 years will at the very least re-distribute concentrations within and around the City and therefore have a major effect on the demand for open space. The areas of housing growth will be concentrated within and around the City Centre and Bilston Town Centre and on currently employment land in the corridors shown on the Phase 1 Black Country Diagram.

2.20 Once finalised, the scale of house building in Wolverhampton up to 2026 will have a significant impact on open space, sport and recreation requirements in the City. One of the greatest challenges the Council face is ensuring that the quality of life for existing and new communities in the area is improved. Fundamental to achieving this is to enhance existing infrastructure, including open space sport and recreation infrastructure, to support the scale of growth proposed.

2.21 The implications of population growth on the open space, sport and recreation network in Wolverhampton are highlighted throughout this report.
The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands – Phase 3 Revision

2.22 Phase 3 Revisions will be looking at critical rural services, recreational provision, regionally significant environmental issues and the development of a framework for provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites.

2.23 A Regional Sports Facilities Study is being undertaken to inform the Phase 3 Revision.

Sign Up For Sport: A Regional Plan for Sport in the West Midlands 2004-2008, Sport England

2.24 Sport England as the national agency driving sports development, takes a strategic lead on the provision of sport.

2.25 Sign Up For Sport is a plan for sport and physical activity in the region. Its formulation has involved national, regional and local consultations with key stakeholders, agencies and organisations across the private, public and voluntary sectors that fully understand the strategic issues and local needs of the region. It has been facilitated by Sport England under the guidance of the new West Midlands Sports Board.

2.26 The aim of the plan is:

- ‘to significantly increase participation in sport within all age and social groups, leading to improvements in health and other social and economic benefits and providing the basis for progression into higher levels of performance for those with talent and the desire to progress.’

2.27 The plan has seven main outcomes:

- increase participation in club and community sport
- improve levels of sport performance
- widen access to sport
- improve the health and well being of people through sport
- create safer and stronger communities through sport
- improve education through PE and sport
- benefit the economy through sport.

Sub-regional policy documents

The Black Country Sports Partnership

2.28 The Black Country Sports Partnership (BCSP) is an emerging sub-regional strategic partnership operating within the Black Country Consortium’s (BCC) governance framework. It involves a range of partners principally of the four Local Authorities, including Wolverhampton, Sport England and the Black Country Consortium Limited. They are committed to working together to support the development of sport and the joint actions needed to increase and sustain the levels of participation in sport of a population of over 1m people.
2.29 The Black Country Sports Partnership seeks to create a quality of life through sport and physical activity by establishing the Black Country as a world class sporting environment through:

- understanding and interpreting the state of sport and physical activity within the context of the sub-region
- charting the subsequent course of the sub-region’s sport & physical activity participation
- driving real commitment to equality and sports equity
- acting as the recognised advocate for sport in and of the sub-region & the conduit between national, regional and local partners
- focus on demonstrating impact on the sport and Black Country agendas
- working in partnership to enable others and only running operational delivery at times to fill in strategic gaps in delivery.

2.30 The Black Country Sports Partnership promotes a strategic approach to sport and it is therefore essential that consideration is given to provision of pitches on a regional level as well as at a local level within Wolverhampton. In particular, the Black Country Sports Partnership provides a valuable opportunity to develop partnership working, bring mutual benefits.

2.31 A Black Country Sports Facilities Study is a draft stage, and covers all levels of hierarchy of sports provision, from local to regional, and will draw on this study.


2.32 The objectives highlighted within this report, specific to Wolverhampton and in relation to open space, sport and recreation include:

- to support Walsall and Wolverhampton Local Authorities in progress in working towards relevant sport and recreation targets
- to implement the improvements necessary in the quality and provision of sports facilities, including the identification (and where appropriate new build) of at least those specialist facilities of regional significance.


2.33 The Black Country Sports Facility Strategy aims to identify future indoor sports facility needs and priorities in the Black Country and assist in quantifying the long-term investment needed to implement the priorities in a strategic way. Participation in sport and active recreation in the Black Country a 16% is significantly below the national average of 21%. An average of 70% of residents in the Black Country do not take part in significant sport and active recreation.

2.34 There are some examples of good practice, which are demonstrating an impact on increasing participation particularly the School Sports Partnerships, which is making significant progress with many partnerships delivering above the national average level for participation in PE.
2.35 The strategy highlights seven themes:

- accelerating the growth of the economy
- expanding the four strategic centres
- building quality housing
- creating a workforce for the 21st century
- creating prosperous, diverse and harmonious communities
- transforming the environment – the Black Country as an Urban Park
- developing an integrated transport network.

2.36 The strategy identifies a number of issues relating to the existing indoor sports facility provision in the Black Country, these are summarised as:

- swimming – there are major issues relating to the quality and distribution of pools. The strategy supports the development of a high quality swimming pool network as a way of increasing participation and contributing to the regeneration of the Black Country.
- sports halls – an emphasis on a network of local sports halls to meet the needs of the local community is recognised as crucial in supporting and implementing increased provision
- athletics – the current provision of athletics is 0.05 lanes per 1000 population. There is a forecasted increase in participation of 1% per annum and to meet this increase two new tracks will be built in the Black Country by 2031 and upgrades will be made to existing provision.
- health and fitness – the increased provision of health and fitness facilities is acknowledged as a key element of increasing participation across the Black Country. An increase in provision of 600 stations will be provided by 2031.
- synthetic turf pitches – the strategy proposes the provision of three new pitches by 2031, with strong links to school sites identified
- indoor bowls – there is currently no indoor bowls centres in the Black Country. Four new six-rink facilities will be provided by 2031.
- indoor tennis - the provision of indoor tennis across the Black Country is good with a similar level to the national average. Nine courts will be provided by 2031 and commercial facilities will be encouraged which will allow local access for the community.
- open space and children’s play – the strategy identifies the value of open space and children’s play facilities and focuses upon the improvement of access to the sports facility network.

2.37 In summary the recommendations highlighted in the indoor sports facility section of this study, section nine, will need to fit within the strategic framework of Black Country Indoor Sports Facility Strategy.
SECTION 2 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Local strategic documents

2.38 Local strategic documents have been reviewed within the individual typology sections, highlighting specific strategic objectives that link into this study. However summary information has been included below on the main local strategies to provide context for the subsequent comments throughout the rest of the report.

Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

2.39 Until such a time as the Local Development Framework becomes adopted, the Wolverhampton UDP remains the extant development plan. Section 12 is the most pertinent to this study, covering the topic of open space, sport and recreation.

Moving on…. Wolverhampton’s Community Plan, 2002-2012

2.40 The community plan outlines seven themes for the future development and improvement of Wolverhampton. The priorities are for a City of communities and “neighbourhoods” which are safe, green healthy, wealth creating, learning, and caring.

2.41 Opportunities to meet these priorities and specific actions through the implementation of this open space, sport and recreation strategy are detailed throughout the report.

Parks and Green Space Strategy

2.42 This document has been developed to set out the overall aims and objectives for key parks and green space issues for the next three to five years. The vision is to bring pride to this City through the quality, vibrancy and diversity of its parks and green spaces.

2.43 The aims of the Council in this respect are to develop and manage parks and green spaces in a sustainable way to address the public’s needs both now and in the future, to maximise opportunities for recreation, education, relaxation and improving the quality of life and to work constantly to improve services and facilities.

2.44 The findings of this PPG17 compliant local audit and needs assessment will help to deliver the aims of the Parks and Green Space Strategy, and underpin future reviews.

Summary and conclusions

2.45 The provision of open spaces and sport and recreation facilities contributes to the achievement of wider governmental objectives such as social and community cohesion, urban renaissance and promoting a healthy and enjoyable life.

2.46 Any development of open spaces (i.e. provision of either new or enhancement of existing spaces) should take into account bio-diversity and nature conservation opportunities and develop an increasing environmental awareness, as well as facilitating the increase needed in sport and active recreation.

2.47 Many organisations are willing to work in partnership together to manage and develop existing open spaces and share similar aims and objectives e.g. protecting, enhancing and maximising usage and nature conservation value of open spaces. The partnership with the Black Country Consortium should continue to develop as a partnership that can bring mutual benefits to the region.
2.48 Points emerging from the strategic review that are integral to the development of this green space assessment in Wolverhampton include:

- improvements and continuing enhancement of the local environment are an important feature of the region, providing a tool to achieve many wide-ranging issues impacting on health levels as well as increasing the well-being of residents, workers and visitors

- the Regional Spatial Strategy has been a driver for the audit and assessment of local needs for open space within the City

- increasing participation in sport and active recreation is a key component of national policies. This is highlighted through the regional delivery plan with opportunities to increase sport and recreation, as well as linking in to open space, outdoor and indoor sports facilities.

2.49 In summary, this review of strategic documents highlights the regional importance of open space within Wolverhampton and how the delivery of open space, sport and recreation facilities can meet wider aims and objectives. This local needs study and resulting strategy will also contribute to the delivery of aims and objectives of national and regional agencies.

2.50 The context of specific local documents, policies and strategies will be highlighted within the individual typology sections where the relevant policies apply.
3.1 This type of open space includes urban parks (both District Parks and Neighbourhood Parks), formal gardens and country parks that provide opportunities for various informal recreation and community events.

3.2 This type of open space often has a variety of functions and provides a wide range of benefits, eg ecological, educational, cultural and heritage and social inclusion and health benefits, as evidenced by the site assessments. Parks provide a sense of place for the local community, help to address social inclusion issues within wider society and also provide some form of structural and landscaping benefits to the surrounding local area. They also frequently offer ecological benefits, particularly in more urban areas.

3.3 Many parks also provide local pitches and facilities offering a further opportunity to increase participation. The provision of high quality local parks can be instrumental in the achievement of increased participation targets, ensuring that all residents are able to access local facilities for informal recreation – particularly walking. This is particularly important in light of the findings of the recent Active People Survey, which suggested that participation in sporting activities in Wolverhampton is significantly below the national average. The Survey reveals that walking is the most popular recreational activity for people in England. Over 8 million adults aged 16 and over (20%) did a recreational walk for at least 30 minutes in the last 4 weeks. Local park facilities provide key opportunities for residents to participate in informal physical activity.

3.4 A Neighbourhood Park is described in the UDP as an area that “serves the immediate needs of local people for active recreation and acts as a venue for local events. These should include a Local Equipped Area for Play, a formal or informal ball games area, playing pitches, and other good quality facilities and infrastructure. May include an area of natural green space”.
3.5 A District Park is described in the UDP as an area that “provides a wide range of general recreation facilities, beyond those that can be sustained in a neighbourhood park, within landscaped surroundings. These should include facilities as for Neighbourhood Parks, plus a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play, formal plant displays, refreshment facilities, car parking and pathways and may include sports pitches and changing rooms, natural green space, sitting out areas and park depots”.

3.6 Consequently, for the purposes of this study parks in Wolverhampton are subdivided into District and Neighbourhood Parks. District Parks tend to attract users from a wider catchment than the smaller Neighbourhood Parks and tend to have a higher local profile. This gives rise to the concept of a hierarchy of provision. It must be noted that despite the District Parks attracting users from a wider catchment they also provide the function of a Neighbourhood Park to those people living in their local vicinity. West Park included within the definition of a District Park, although it also takes on the additional role of the City Park (offering both a District and Neighbourhood Park function) due to its location.

3.7 For the purposes of this section parks have been categorised as follows:

**District Parks**

- West Park
- Northwood Park
- Bantock Park
- Claregate Park
- East Park
- Hickman Park
- Phoenix Park
- Wednesfield Park.

**Neighbourhood Parks**

- all other parks referred to are Neighbourhood Parks

**Context**

3.8 A total of 27% of residents are using Neighbourhood Parks once a week or more, making them the most regularly visited type of open space; whilst just under half of all residents (43%) use parks within the City once a year or more. The second most popular type of open space overall was District Parks, but these are only visited more than once a week by 18% of residents. This frequency of visits reinforces the particular importance of Parks for day-to-day use and emphasises the value of these local facilities.

3.9 Similar results were found through the IT young people survey and children’s workshop session. 70% of children in the workshop stated that ‘Big Parks’
were their favourite type of open space; significantly higher than any other open space. The total number of children and young people using these sites supports this: 35% use District and Neighbourhood (combined) Parks most frequently.

3.10 Bantock Park and West Park were highlighted as particularly well-used District Parks and most parks were thought to be frequently used. Despite this, six Neighbourhood Parks are infrequently used, for reasons primarily linked to qualitative and accessibility issues. This will be returned to later.

3.11 Table 3.1 overleaf summarises the strategic context for parks and gardens in Wolverhampton.

**Current position – quantity**

3.12 As defined in paragraph 3.6, there are currently eight parks designated as District Parks including West Park. West Park serves as the City’s premier park with facilities catering for the whole of Wolverhampton. Each of the geographical Analysis Areas of the City has a designated District Park (see map 3.1), ranging from smaller sites such as Clarendon Park to East Park, which is significantly larger.

3.13 In calculating the size of both District Parks and Neighbourhood Parks, provision of outdoor sports facilities and children and young people’s facilities are excluded from the total size (ha) of the park as the area of sports facilities and other open space provision is accounted for within the individual typologies, thereby preventing the double counting of open space provision)

3.14 There are 27 Neighbourhood Parks and the 8 District Parks also offer a Neighbourhood Park function bringing the total number of parks to 35, distributed evenly across the City. The Central and South Analysis Areas contain the largest number of individual parks (10).

3.15 The UDP sets a standard of provision of one Neighbourhood Park per Neighbourhood Park Area (defined in Map 12.1 of the UDP). As a consequence, there are currently 3 areas in the City that are deficient in provision of a local Neighbourhood Park. However, the redevelopment of Goodyear (located in the northern area of the City) in the next few years will create a new Neighbourhood Park. The other deficient areas are stated to be at the Lunt, Bilston and in the Compton Tettenhall Wightwick areas of the City.
### Table 3.1 - Strategic review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Parks and Green Space Strategy     | The existing Parks and Green Space Strategy sets specific objectives and actions associated with parks in the City, some of these objectives include:  
- improving the environment of parks  
- providing a more visible presence by park rangers, working closely with the police and neighbourhood wardens  
- improve landscaping and grounds maintenance in Parks  
- encouraging wildlife to flourish within our parks through appropriate management  
- working towards national recognition for the City’s parks, such as Green Flag awards and Britain in Bloom and  
- developing the role of park rangers to educate and inform the public. | The existing parks and green spaces strategy highlights the commitment of the City Council to the provision of open space. In particular the quality of parks and green spaces is highlighted throughout the document and it is important that these are considered within the context of the recommendations for the quality vision set for parks and gardens. Considerations will be made regarding the management and appropriate surveillance of parks as stated within the strategy. |
| UDP                                | Policy R1 seeks to ensure that open space, sport and recreation standards are met, both across the City and at a local level, by improving the provision, quality and accessibility of such facilities, where resources allow, and encouraging their appropriate management.  
- accessibility standards for parks - a minimum walking distances of 2.5 km has been cited in the UDP for the provision of district parks taking into account barriers such as main roads, canals and railway lines  
- following the designation of Neighborhood Park Areas a minimum walking distance threshold of 400m has been adopted, taking into account barriers such as main roads, canals and railway lines. | The underlying policies within the UDP will be important within the context of setting standards for parks and gardens. Existing standards will form the initial review of setting standards, to ensure that realistic accessibility standards are set in line with local needs.  
The difference in standards highlighted for the two types of parks in Wolverhampton (2.5km and 400m) highlights the varying function of these types of parks. This will be important within the analysis of provision when the accessibility standards are applied to the provision of existing parks in the City. |
### Summary of key strategic drivers

**Community Plan 2002-2012**

The Wolverhampton Community Plan seeks to safeguard and improve parks in the City. This reinforces the importance of maintaining and improving the quality of parks in Wolverhampton including:

- improving the design and lighting in parks to deter robbery and other crimes
- safeguard and improve parks by 2010.

### Links to open space, sport and recreation study

The Community Plan is an important document that sets out the over-arching vision for Wolverhampton and highlights some specific local needs, including the importance of parks to Wolverhampton residents. Given that the study aims to establish current and future local needs, the Community Plan should provide the context and starting point for the setting of local open space standards in Wolverhampton. All recommendations set out in this study should seek to dovetail and complement existing work.

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| **Community Plan 2002-2012**                | The Wolverhampton Community Plan seeks to safeguard and improve parks in the City. This reinforces the importance of maintaining and improving the quality of parks in Wolverhampton including:  
- improving the design and lighting in parks to deter robbery and other crimes  
- safeguard and improve parks by 2010.  | The Community Plan is an important document that sets out the over-arching vision for Wolverhampton and highlights some specific local needs, including the importance of parks to Wolverhampton residents. Given that the study aims to establish current and future local needs, the Community Plan should provide the context and starting point for the setting of local open space standards in Wolverhampton. All recommendations set out in this study should seek to dovetail and complement existing work. |
| **Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)** | According to the national CPA indicators for Wolverhampton, 87.73% of residents think that over the past three years that parks and open spaces have got better or stayed the same. Using the national quartiles for this statistic Wolverhampton can be benchmarked within the inter-quartile range (3rd quartile), highlighting a relatively low statistic for this area when compared nationally. | The CPA indicators for parks and open spaces when compared nationally are relatively low. In-line with assessing local needs this highlights the importance of quality of open spaces to residents within Wolverhampton, a key feature of this study. |
| **The City Centre Strategy and Action Plan** | The City Centre Strategy and Action Plan highlights West Park as a key venue for festivals and events, illustrating the multi functionality of parks and setting out the desire to increase formal and informal use of these facilities. | West Park is one of the key sites within the open space audit. It is a city-wide facility, with a multi functionality ie it also provides the role of a District Park and Neighbourhood Park. West Park, as one of a number of key sites in the City, opportunities to increase use through the staging of events and festivals should be maximised. |
| **ABCD Sport and Recreation Strategy**      | The ABCD Sport and Recreation Strategy visualises good quality parks as being instrumental in the delivery of the achievement of some key objectives relating to the health agenda and encouraging increasing levels of physical activity and participation. | This strategy is specific to area within Wolverhampton. However, the links between good quality parks and increasing levels of physical activity and participation in sport should not be underestimated, and apply equally to the rest of Wolverhampton. |
### Document reviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Strategy</td>
<td>One of the key objectives of the Cultural Strategy is to achieve the Green Flag status award at three parks by 2009 through the refurbishment of parks in the City, achieving an award year-on-year from 2007 to 2009. The Council hope to achieve this through developing individual park site management plans and quality improvements are seen as a key determinant of this desired outcome.</td>
<td>The City Council should seek to achieve Green Flag awards at three parks and attain other complementary quality standard awards. The benchmarking of the site assessment quality scores will provide a comprehensive baseline of the relative quality of all open space, sport and recreation sites in the City in particular the areas for improvement in the key parks in order to attain Green Flag status.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.16 The current provision of parks is summarised in Table 3.2 below

Table 3.2 – Parks provision across Wolverhampton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>District Parks (hectares)</th>
<th>Hectares per 1000</th>
<th>Neighbourhood Parks (hectares)</th>
<th>Hectares per 1000</th>
<th>Parks provision (combined hectares)</th>
<th>Parks – hectares per 1000 (combined)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>12.39</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>23.05</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>35.44</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>24.59</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>26.08</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>50.67</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>45.69</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>50.55</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>31.49</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>33.69</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,361</td>
<td>20.48</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>13.95</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>34.43</td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall</strong></td>
<td><strong>235,590</strong></td>
<td><strong>64.52</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.27</strong></td>
<td><strong>140.26</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.60</strong></td>
<td><strong>204.78</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.87</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.17 The main comments arising from Table 3.2 above and the consultations are as follows:

- 64% of respondents to the on street survey indicated that there is sufficient provision of District Parks within the City. Relating the local consultation findings back to the audit of provision, it is evident that whilst each Analysis Area is served with a District Park, there are notable differences in terms of size of each park and the population of the Analysis Areas. Levels of satisfaction with the quantity of provision were slightly lower for Neighbourhood Parks, with 56% of respondents to the on street survey stating that there is sufficient provision of Neighbourhood Parks within the City.

- the even distribution of District Parks across Wolverhampton was a key factor attributed to the overall levels of satisfaction with current provision, with residents’ comments including, “good selection”, “one in every town”, “large variety” and “easily accessible”. Reasons linked to the perception of a lack of parks primarily related to locational deficiencies, however a number of comments were also related to quality with the main issues concerning security, safety and vandalism. The same reasoning was attributed to Neighbourhood Parks, with issues of misuse and antisocial behaviour highlighted as a key deterrent for use of the facilities.

- reflecting perceptions highlighted through consultation, it can be seen that park provision (inclusive of both District Parks and Neighbourhood Parks) across Wolverhampton is reasonably distributed when measured against the population – ranging from 0.68 hectares per 1000 population in the Tettenhall Analysis Area to 1.24 in the North Analysis Area). The Wednesfield Analysis Area has the lowest provision in terms of hectares and the second lowest proportionately per 1,000 population (Tettenhall
has the lowest. Despite this, it is important to note that the majority of residents are satisfied with the current level of provision within this area.

- In terms of Neighbourhood Parks, residents in Tettenhall and Central and South Analysis Areas are particularly satisfied with the level of provision, with very few people stating that there is insufficient park provision. As can be seen in Table 3.2, residents in the Central and South Analysis Areas do have high levels of provision, but the level in Tettenhall is much lower. The North Analysis Area is the only individual area with more people indicating that there is insufficient provision (40%) than sufficient provision (36%). Comparing this level of response to the audit findings, the largest area of Neighbourhood Parks, per 1,000 population, can be found in the North Analysis Area and this area contains the highest level of parks provision overall. This discrepancy may be explained by the fact that dissatisfaction may relate to the quality or accessibility of existing provision and the fact that people exclude areas they would not use from their notion of how much open space is provided.

- West Park is located in the Central and South Analysis Area and contributes to the high level of provision that can be seen in this area of the City - West Park and Bantock Park were highlighted as sites of good practice and sites that are well used and valued by residents within the City. It is evident through the UDP, Community Plan and Parks and Green Space Strategy that parks within Wolverhampton are key success factors of the open spaces portfolio.

- Wednesfield Park, Tettenhall Upper Green, Fowlers Park, Bantock Park and Ashmore Park are the most frequently visited Parks in the City. Some of the sites named by children and young people as frequently visited Parks included Windsor Avenue Playing Fields, Phoenix Park, Hickman Park and All Saints Open Space. It was commented throughout consultation and evidenced with the IT young people survey that these sites are primarily used as open space to meet friends and provide a general meeting place.

**Current position – quality**

3.18 The quality of parks in Wolverhampton is summarised in Table 3.3 below. All scores are detailed in percentages.

*Table 3.3 – Quality of parks in Wolverhampton*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Areas</th>
<th>District Parks</th>
<th>Neighbourhood Parks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of sites</td>
<td>Range of quality scores %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>82.3-85.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>81.4-81.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>84.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>55.9 – 86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>55.9 – 86.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.19 Full details of each site assessment are contained within the linked access database provided as part of this study.

3.20 The main comments arising from Table 3.3 above and from the consultations are as follows:

- there is a substantial variation in the quality of Neighbourhood Parks, ranging from 68.9% to 91.2%. Many comments gathered at the drop in sessions focused on the quality of sites, particularly the level of maintenance and use of sites. This reflects the importance that residents place on the quality of provision.

- all Analysis Areas are served by at least one high quality District Park, scoring over 80%. However all Analysis Areas contain both high quality and poor quality Neighbourhood Parks. Key issues raised included misuse of sites by motorbike users; poor maintenance (and a perception that the quality of maintenance has declined) varying levels of maintenance regimes across different sites and an overall lack of respect for Park Rangers. Addressing these issues is likely to help increase the quality of parks across Wolverhampton. Despite varying perceptions in maintenance, site assessments indicate that the quality of maintenance is good with no sites considered to be below average.

- linked to the issues raised regarding a lack of respect for Park Rangers, one of the key themes emerging from all consultation is the level of safety and security, particularly at larger sites. These issues were perceived to impact on the quality of sites across the City, and highlight the need for specific improvements relating to safety, including employment of more Park Rangers, addressing the height of fences and shrubs and improved lighting. Improvements to the security of the environment were also highlighted as a key element of the Community Plan through the theme “achieving safer neighbourhoods”. In particular, consultation suggests that a greater police presence would be welcomed at some of the larger parks, eg Wednesfield Park.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PG1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In light of existing security issues and safety concerns of residents, continue the implementation of a uniformed ranger/community policing system within larger parks. In addition to creating a sense of safety and security, rangers should also proactively coordinate community involvement at sites and arrange organised events in order to both increase awareness of facilities and maximise use of these sites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- in a similar vein, key concerns raised at the over 50’s forum included security and safety, particularly with regards to parks in the City. It was suggested that a fear of crime deters people from using open space sites and residents highlighted the success of the Park Watch Scheme, which concentrated on safety improvements a few years ago. Toilets and other appropriate ancillary accommodation such as benches were highlighted by members of the over 50’s forum as a key element of successful larger open space sites reflecting the views of respondents of the on street survey. Site assessments highlighted a general lack of amenities at parks, specifically a lack of benches, litterbins and dog bins.
On a number of sites, toilets (where sites had such facilities) were found to be locked, and there was very little evidence of dedicated car parking facilities. User groups were evident at some sites, including Phoenix Park and many Friends Groups also attended drop in sessions. The value of these groups in maintenance and management should be supported and maximised and can often stimulate improvements to the quality of facilities and the respect given to these sites.

Focus future quality investment on improving the range of facilities and ancillary facilities at park sites of poorer quality, including Colman Avenue Playing Fields, Bradmore Recreation Ground, Bushbury Recreation Ground, Long Knowle Open Space, Newbridge Playing Fields, Penk Rise and Windsor Avenue Playing Fields, Heath Town Park.

- East Park was highlighted as a particularly important open space to members of the over 50’s forum although it was felt that the quality of this site was deteriorating and it was in need of investment to ensure that it remained in line with other open space sites.

Current position – accessibility

3.21 37% of residents questioned through the On Street Survey use this typology more frequently than any other form of open space.

3.22 Both District Parks and Neighbourhood Parks are amongst the most popular types of open space for children and young people (as highlighted through the IT young people survey) with the majority of people expecting to travel on foot to these sites.

3.23 In comparison, residents responding to the On Street Survey indicated that while the preferred mode of transport to reach Neighbourhood Parks is by foot, almost half of all residents expect to travel to District Parks by car. Public transport was also highlighted as important to many local residents, particularly those in the Wednesfield and Bilston Analysis Areas. Bilston Analysis Area has the highest number of people without a car, (40.7%), and Wednesfield Analysis Area has the second lowest (34.6%). This is significantly more than the national average of 26.8% (Census 2001).

3.24 Access is an important feature of this type of provision and has been highlighted as a key priority for the Council. Children and young people commented in the IT young people survey that one of the reasons they liked using this type of open space was because it is located close to their home, highlighting the local need for such spaces. Consultation also highlighted the importance of increasing access to parks and other open spaces for all sectors of the community.

3.25 Phoenix Park was highlighted as a particularly good example of a site where quality and access improvements, alongside community involvement in organised activities in the site had generated significant increase in the usage.

3.26 Several sites have three or fewer entrance points into the park eg Bushbury Recreation Ground, Ashmore Park, Bradmore Recreation Ground, Coronation Park, Newbridge Playing Fields and Farndale Open Space. The lack of access
points at these sites results in a number of problems, not only the physical access to the site but issues linked to the safety and security at the sites.

| PG3 | Proactively encourage community involvement, at all parks, in the decision making processes for the management, development and maintenance of facilities to generate respect for local facilities. Ensure that local residents are involved in decision-making processes in order to generate respect for local facilities. Involvement of local communities at all Neighbourhood Park sites would facilitate the removal of barriers to participation for all local residents. |

3.27 Neighbourhood Parks were originally formed across Wolverhampton with the intention of creating formalised open spaces that are within a 400m catchment of residents within Wolverhampton. The importance of improving access to existing parks is a priority for the Council. The provision of local open space will be instrumental in the delivery of increased participation and targets set as part of the health agenda.

**Setting local standards**

3.28 In setting local standards for this typology there is a need to take into account any national or existing local standards, current provision, other local authority standards for appropriate comparison and the findings emerging through the consultation on local needs.

3.29 The process for setting each type of standard is outlined in section one. The rationale for each recommendation, including assessment of local need, existing provision and consultation is provided in Appendices H, I and J. The recommended local standards and the justifications for these standards have been summarised overleaf.

3.30 These standards have then been applied to existing provision in Wolverhampton City in order to determine surpluses, deficiencies and priorities for action. Separate standards have been set for District and Neighbourhood Parks, recognising the varying characteristics of these different types of open space.
District Parks

*Quantity standard (see Appendix H – standards and justification and worksheet)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing level of provision</th>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.27 hectares per 1000 population</td>
<td>0.27 hectares per 1000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

The current level of provision is equivalent to 0.27 ha per 1,000 population in Wolverhampton. The spread of parks across the City is relatively even, although there is some variation in terms of the size of these parks. It is important to consider the quantity of District Parks in the context of Neighbourhood Parks, which provide more localised park areas across the Analysis Areas. Those analysis areas with the lower level of provision of District Parks (North and Wednesfield) have the highest level of provision of Neighbourhood Parks. Therefore perceptions regarding provision of each typology are likely to be closely linked.

The clear message from respondents to the on street survey is that the level of provision is currently about right (54%). Only 10% think that the level of provision is insufficient. This suggests that there are limited expectations in terms of further provision. As a consequence, it is recommended that the Council adopt a standard equivalent to the current level of provision in Wolverhampton. This will enable the Council to focus on improvements to the quality of parks and gardens but also address locational deficiencies in provision (in the context of Neighbourhood Parks provision which could be formalised). Qualitative improvements are particularly important given the limited prospect and opportunity to provide more District Parks within Wolverhampton. Moreover, given the population growth that will be experienced up to 2021, it is important for the local authority to seek to enhance accessibility to existing District Parks – for example by improving routes to them and providing access points to the individual sites.
Quantity standards

Neighbourhood Parks

*Quantity standard (see Appendix H – standards and justification and worksheet)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing level of provision</th>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.60 hectares per 1000 population</td>
<td>0.60 hectares per 1000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

Neighbourhood Parks are very important to residents in Wolverhampton, with a large number of respondents to the on street survey using them more than once a month. Current provision (27 Neighbourhood Parks in total) is reasonably distributed across the Analysis Areas, although the North Analysis Area contains significantly more than other areas of the city (and surprisingly residents in this area are dissatisfied). There was a high degree of resident satisfaction with the quantity of Neighbourhood Parks within the Central and South Analysis Area – despite the fact that there was a low level of provision per 1000 population compared to the majority of other Analysis Areas. This serves to illustrate the complementary role they have with District Parks – which this Analysis Area has a good level of provision of.

Across Wolverhampton, 46% of respondents to the on street survey think that the quantity of provision is about right. Although 13% think that there are insufficient Neighbourhood Parks within Wolverhampton, consultation puts a significant focus on improving the quality of existing spaces. Furthermore, of those people who felt that the level of provision was not enough, many raised qualitative reasons such as poor maintenance rather than actual quantitative issues.

As a consequence it is recommended that the Council adopt a local standard that is equivalent to the current level of provision. This will enable the Council to seek to address particular locational deficiencies but moreover to focus on improvements to the quality of sites across Wolverhampton, which will increase levels of usage and facilitate the pursuit of quality standards such as Green Flag Status. The application of the accessibility standards should be undertaken alongside the District Parks and amenity green space provision. This will help with the prioritisation of quantitative increases. For example, whilst the Bilston Analysis Area would require in the region of 11 hectares of Neighbourhood Park to satisfy the local quantity standard, it has a level of provision of District Parks that is significantly above the current standards. As mentioned throughout, these areas also substitute for a Neighbourhood Park.

Elsewhere, deficiencies could be addressed through formalising amenity green spaces (for which the Analysis Areas are also well served, see Section 8). There is also potential, within the Corridors and Centres identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy, to create new Neighbourhood Parks on large development sites as they arise, to serve both new and existing residents at Bilston Urban Village and Ward Street, Ettingshall.
Accessibility standards

District Parks

Accessibility standard (see Appendix J)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 minute walk time (960m)</td>
<td>When setting an appropriate accessibility standard, a greater emphasis has been placed on expectations rather than current travel patterns, however the split in opinion between those that prefer to walk and drive highlights a difference in expectations between both a local facility and a district-wide catchment and reinforces the dual purpose of this type of open space. Linking in with the health agenda, it is important to consider sustainable methods of transport and encouraging walking and cycling as transport methods to and within open spaces. However, it is also important to reflect on the strategic nature of District Parks within the context of the local authority area and therefore recommend a transport and travel time threshold to encompass all users expectations (using the 75% level). The consultation findings serve to illustrate that parks attract a high number of users from within the local authority area. Although the recommended mode of travel does not reflect the majority response from the on-street survey, it serves to encompass all users expectations, and provide a sustainable method of transport. It also seeks to provide opportunities for Green Flag Parks with playing pitches to be considered as an accredited sports facility measured through the accessibility (Choice and Opportunity) performance indicator for the CPA. The recommended standard is consistent with the 75% threshold level as advocated in the PPG17 Companion Guide using suggested travel times from the responses to walking. Setting a smaller accessibility catchment (based on walking) could provide unrealistic expectations in terms of delivering further provision in areas outside of the distance threshold – however, given that 54% think that the current level of provision is about right it is unlikely that increased provision will be required. Emphasis should be on enhancing the quality of provision and using the opportunity to improve Neighbourhood Parks into more formalised provision like District Parks. It is important to seek to enhance the accessibility of all existing District Parks – for example by promoting new entrance points or better routes to them and/or information and signage. In terms of investigating the spatial distributions of unmet demand, the proposed District Park standard should not be considered in isolation but rather in the context of local Neighbourhood Parks. Those living within the local Neighbourhood Park distance threshold of a District Park will have no need of a local Neighbourhood Park as well. It will be important to provide an overall network of provision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Neighbourhood Parks

Accessibility standard (see Appendix J)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 minute walk (480m)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

There is a clear emphasis in favour of walking in terms of current travel patterns and expectations. 86% of respondents to the on street survey would expect to walk to a Neighbourhood Park, and 89% of regular users do walk. Moreover, given the more local nature of these facilities compared to the District Parks, it is considered appropriate to focus on access on foot.

The standard has been set at a 10-minute walk time because this is the distance that 75% of respondents (across all analysis areas) would be willing to walk.

This is largely consistent across all the analysis areas, with only limited variation in Bilston Analysis Area where the 75% threshold level was calculated as 11.25 minutes.

A 10 minute walk time is equivalent to a 480m distance threshold. This is broadly comparable to the existing policy approach relating to Neighbourhood Parks that is based on minimum walking distances of 400m.

A lower accessibility standard could be justified on the basis of current users travel patterns, with most users travelling less than 5 minutes to access a Neighbourhood Park. However, PPG17 states that lower thresholds are only needed where there is clear evidence that a significant proportion of local people do not use existing provision because they regard it as inaccessible. Given the findings of the local consultation (which highlight the high levels of use at Neighbourhood Parks) this could not be substantiated.

Therefore a 10 minute walk time is recommended; albeit alongside measures designed to improve accessibility, such as better public transport or cycling routes. This will be particularly important if targets to increase participation in physical activity are realised. Neighbourhood Parks will play a key role in ensuring all sectors of the community have access to parks. Phoenix Park provides a good example of where access/quality improvements have resulted in increased usage by all sectors of the community.
Quality standards

District Parks

Quality standard (see Appendix I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“A welcoming, clean and litter free site providing a one-stop community facility which is accessible to all and has a range of facilities and other types of open space within it. District Parks should be attractive, well designed and maintained, providing well-kept grass, flowers and trees, adequate lighting and other appropriate safety features, as well as suitable ancillary accommodation (including seating, toilets, litter bins and play facilities). Sites should be safe and secure and easily accessible. Where appropriate, the Park Ranger scheme should be implemented to enhance the quality of the environment and facilitate community interaction. Encouraging community involvement through organised events should help to increase usage and activities. Sites should promote the conservation of wildlife and the built heritage and provide links to the surrounding green infrastructure”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A quality standard has been devised which reflects both aspirations and concerns expressed through local consultations (as demanded by PPG17) and also the Green Flag Award criteria (the national benchmark). The Council is seeking to gain Green Flag status for its District Parks. The quality vision makes reference to other types of open space within it, recognising the multifunctionality of parks. This is particularly important in light of the presumption within existing Council policy that District Parks will contain a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP). In order to improve the quality of parks across the City it is important that the Council implement and strive to achieve a quality standard that will ensure consistency and high quality provision. Attractive, well-designed and well-maintained parks are key elements of good urban design and are fundamentally important in delivering places in which people want to live. The standard has been formulated to ensure that park provision is sustainable, balanced and ultimately achievable. The improvement of quality and accessibility to parks and the promotion of best practice sites such as West Park and Phoenix Park should increase local aspirations and encourage usage of parks. It is noted that the most significant problem currently experienced at District Parks is their misuse. In many instances, play facilities are located within District Parks. As a consequence, it could be argued that the achievement of the quality vision for these parks (and the delivery of high quality green spaces) will be influenced by the corresponding delivery of high quality play facilities and sites for young people within them as addressed in Sections 5 and 6.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Neighbourhood Parks

Quality standard (see Appendix I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Striving to achieve a national standard for quality, all Neighbourhood Parks should be a facility serving the immediate needs of local people for active recreation. They should provide a welcoming, clean and litter free environment. Maintenance should focus on providing well-kept grass, flowers and trees and encourage wildlife to flourish with the use of varied vegetation through appropriate management. Park Rangers should work with the community and other organisations to provide a hub of interest, activities and local events as well as establishing a safe network of local open spaces. Good quality and appropriate ancillary facilities (toilets, litter-bins, dog-bins and benches) should be provided to facilitate the needs of users and encourage greater use.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Justification

A commonly expressed view of residents through the local consultation is that the quality of Neighbourhood Parks across Wolverhampton is average. A quality standard has been devised which reflects both concerns expressed through local consultations (as demanded by PPG17) and also the Green Flag Award criteria. Important factors to arise from the local consultation, that are included within the quality vision, are well kept grass, clean and litter free, litter bins, flowers, trees and toilets. Explicit reference is not made to specific play opportunities to be included within the site (such as Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs), playing pitches and ball games area) because it is considered that the nature of provision is dependent on the size of the site and other facilities available in the area. Therefore, reference to active recreation is intended to provide a greater degree of flexibility.

The importance of Neighbourhood Parks is highlighted by the fact that it is the second most frequently used typology of all. Therefore, the achievement of a quality standard should be considered as one of the highest priorities for the Council. This focus on the achievement of the quality vision should be given more weight in light of the fact that it is widely felt (by 47%) that the level of provision of Neighbourhood Park sites across Wolverhampton is ‘about right’, suggesting that the emphasis should be on improving existing sites. Residents’ perception of quality and quantity are inextricably linked, with quality improvements often mitigating the need for new provision.
Applying the quantity, quality and accessibility standards

3.31 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those areas where local needs are not met, the quality, quantity and accessibility standards are applied and interpreted together.

3.32 The future level of provision required across Wolverhampton City to satisfy the local quantity standard is summarised below. It can be seen that in the majority of instances, when considering the combined provision of District Parks and Neighbourhood Parks, surpluses or deficiencies in one type of park tend to be counterbalanced by a surplus or deficiency in the other. By way of example, Central and South Analysis Area has an under provision of Neighbourhood Parks of 8.77 hectares when assessed against the local quantity standard. However, at the same time this area contains West Park, and contains a level of provision of District Parks that is above the minimum.

Table 3.4 - Quantitative surpluses and deficiencies across Wolverhampton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Pop</th>
<th>Current provision per 1,000 pop</th>
<th>Local Standard</th>
<th>Current Balance (ha)</th>
<th>Future Balance (ha) 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-1.65</td>
<td>-1.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>9.13</td>
<td>8.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-6.11</td>
<td>-6.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>-9.78</td>
<td>-10.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,361</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>9.31</td>
<td>9.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>235,590</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.33 Whilst this table provides a starting point for the quantitative application of the local standards, it is particularly important to consider the spatial location of parks and their geographical relationships to one another. District Parks are major facilities that may attract a significant proportion of their users from across the authority and potentially from outside the City.

3.34 West Park is the City’s premier park and is of strategic significance in the context of the local authority area. The park attracts a high number of users, both from within Wolverhampton City Council boundaries but also further afield. Neighbourhood Parks are smaller facilities that will tend to attract almost all of their users from their local neighbourhood.

3.35 Invariably, the delivery of new parks will be opportunity led, based on large scale regeneration schemes or the re-designation of existing open space sites, and there will not always be clear opportunities to provide new facilities in areas that are currently outside of the accessibility threshold for both District and Neighbourhood Parks. In these instances, or where designated
neighbourhood parks are unable to adequately meet all aspects of the quality standard (because of size, shape and/or character), the Council should consider introducing Pocket Parks which can provide some but not all of the functions of a Neighbourhood Park. Additionally it is increasingly important to look at what other open space opportunities existing within these areas – particularly amenity green space.

3.36 Map 3.1 overleaf illustrates the geographical distribution of District Parks and Neighbourhood Parks and the catchment areas these amenities serve.

3.37 The main issues to arise from a City wide assessment of the accessibility of parks in Wolverhampton (illustrated on the previous page) are as follows:

- as can be seen on map 3.1 and as outlined earlier, both Neighbourhood Parks and District Parks are well distributed across Wolverhampton City, although there remain many residents without access to either type of park

- analysis of the catchment areas of District Parks highlights that there are a few overlapping catchments, including that of Claregate and Bantock Park and consequently it is suggested that this site is re-classified from a District Park to a Neighbourhood Park. Whilst a District Park serves each Analysis Area, there are many residents outside of the acceptable catchment threshold of these facilities. Despite this, many of these residents have access to Neighbourhood Parks.

| PG4 | De-designate Claregate Park from a District Park to a Neighbourhood Park in association with PG10 to improve District Park of catchment area coverage on the western edge of the City. |

- when considering a hierarchy of facilities to analyse provision, sites at a higher level with a wider catchment (eg District Parks) can substitute for one at a more local level (eg Neighbourhood Parks) but not vice versa. For example, those who live within the Neighbourhood Park distance threshold (480m) of a District Park, will have no need of a Neighbourhood Park as well

- in contrast however, consideration should be given to the provision of further District Parks within the City, to ensure that all residents are within the appropriate catchment as the provision of Neighbourhood Parks does not replace the need for access to a District Park site.

| PG5 | Investigate opportunities to upgrade certain Neighbourhood Parks to District Parks across the City to reduce access problems to top quality provision and to complement the overall portfolio of a balanced citywide network or park provision. Priority in the development of District Parks should go to those Analysis Areas deficient in a Neighbourhood Park. Recommended sites include Pendeford Open Space, Tettenhall Upper Green, Fowlers Park and Ashmore Park. |
3.38 Specific areas of deficiency in terms of both quality and quantity will be addressed in the text that follows. It is important that the quantity of sites and access to open space are considered in the context of the overall quality of provision.

3.39 The thematic map overleaf illustrates the quality of sites, using scores derived from the site quality assessments.
SECTION 3 – PARKS AND GARDENS

Wolverhampton OSS: Quality Scores - Neighbourhood Parks

Quality Scores (Percentage)
- 86 to 100
- 76 to 85
- 66 to 75
- 56 to 65
- 46 to 55

Sites with No Score
Analysis Areas
Mastermap

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Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study –Wolverhampton
3.40 The key comments arising from analysis of the quality of parks include:

- the majority of parks are considered to be of above average quality, scoring over 70% on the site assessments. This is representative of the significant investment that has taken place in parks over the last few years.

- despite the overall good quality of parks, there are a series of lower quality parks across the centre of the City

- the North Analysis Area exhibits the highest quality of sites, as two of the four highest scoring Neighbourhood Parks can be found in this Analysis Area. In contrast, sites in Bilston Analysis Area were of poorer quality – Hickman Park was the lowest scoring site in this area (scoring 55.9%). This represents one of the poorest scores of sites surveyed across all typologies.

3.41 While analysis of existing deficiencies is important, and all opportunities should be maximised to address these deficiencies, as identified through consultation and highlighted within the recommended local standards, facilitating access to existing facilities should be considered of priority importance.

3.42 While the focus of future work on the provision of parks should centre on improvements to the quality of provision and access to existing sites, particularly in terms of the provision of ancillary facilities as highlighted in PG2, it remains important to address locational deficiencies.

3.43 The application of quality, quantity and accessibility standards therefore leads to the identification of the following key priority areas for future development:

**North Analysis Area**

3.44 Within the North Analysis Area, there is perceived to be insufficient District Parks coupled with sufficient provision of Neighbourhood Parks. The combined quantity of provision is considered to be more than sufficient to satisfy the local standard. A large section of the North Analysis Area is currently poorly served by parks (see map 3.1), furthermore, within this
SECTION 3 – PARKS AND GARDENS

locality, there are also areas that are outside of the accessibility catchment of small amenity green spaces. Residents in this area are therefore lacking in recreational open space. The redevelopment of the Goodyear site and the transformation of part of this area into Oxley Neighbourhood Park will serve to address this deficiency in future years. Additionally a further gap in Neighbourhood Park provision is at Tennyson Road open space, currently natural and semi-natural open space, which should be upgraded to a Neighbourhood Park, retaining its natural features. Deficiencies to the west of the analysis area could be offset by the development of a new district park at Pendeford Open Space.

PG8
Recommend upgrading Pendeford Open Space to a District Park and creating a new Neighbourhood Park at Tennyson Road Open Space. Pursue provision of a new Oxley Neighbourhood Park within the Goodyear site to serve the Oxley area of the City.

3.45 Despite being of relatively high quality, both Bushbury Hill and Bushbury Memorial Ground were perceived to be used infrequently. The reasons behind this should be considered and any issues should be rectified. Both sites serve unique catchments and should therefore be highly valued by local residents. Given that these sites are already of good quality, consideration should be given to the value of these sites in their current form and it is suggested that Bushbury Memorial Recreation Ground is improved and enhanced as a Neighbourhood Park and Bushbury Hill be re-designated as a natural and semi-natural area.

PG9
Investigate reasons behind the low levels of use at Bushbury Memorial Recreation Ground and enhance to become a more successful Neighbourhood Park.
Bushbury Hill could be re-designated as a natural and semi-natural open space in favour of Tennyson Road Open Space becoming a new Neighbourhood Park to serve the needs of the Scotlands area (see also PG8 and PG14).

Tettenhall Analysis Area

3.46 Within the Tettenhall Analysis Area, the application of the local quantity standard suggests that there is a shortfall of both District Parks and Neighbourhood Parks. Similar to the North Analysis Area, there are a number of areas that are outside of the distance threshold of both these types of park, in particular areas located within Tettenhall Wightwick. However, the biggest priority for further provision would be those areas that also lack amenity green space, at the western edge of the analysis area. This area also exhibits shortfalls of provision for children and young people. Provision of a new park facility at the western edge would therefore provide an opportunity for a central location to meet all of the identified deficiencies.

PG10
Provide a new Neighbourhood Park on the western edge of Wolverhampton, when / if the opportunity arises, to meet the needs of the part of Tettenhall Analysis Area currently lacking in any recreational open space. These deficiencies should be
addressed through the development of a District Park at Tettenhall Upper Green, which would be maximised by investigating opportunities to make best use of adjoining sports grounds. Additionally consideration should be given to developing a Pocket Park in the Wightwick area through the expansion of Martham Drive Open Space.

Central and South Analysis Area

3.47 West Park falls within the Central and South Analysis Area, and due to its size (hectares) this means that the Analysis Area is above the minimum quantity standard for larger parks. However, the level of provision of Neighbourhood Parks, by hectares, is considerably below the quantity standard.

3.48 Alongside the quantitative undersupply of Neighbourhood Parks, there are a number of areas outside of the relevant accessibility catchments within the Central and South Analysis Area. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that three of the existing Neighbourhood Parks have partially overlapping catchments. There are three priority areas for new Park provision. One of these is located (see diagram) within the Penn and Blakenhall area, on the edge of the ABCD area.

3.49 There is another gap in provision at the eastern edge including the Canalside Quarter of the City Centre adjoining the ring road. In this area many high-density flat developments are being progressed / planned but also including family housing. Whilst the accessibility catchment of West Park covers most of the area, there is currently limited amenity green space within this locality. This could be particularly important in attracting social class A/B households (an RSS objective), and a good environment and facilities is key. Provision of a Pocket Park in this area containing equipped provision for children would also alleviate deficiencies in play provision, as highlighted later in this report. Pocket Parks assist in serving the recreational needs of local residents. Another suggested Pocket Park development would be at Broad Street Canal Basin which is not suitable for play facilities but would provide quality canalside attractions/environment.

3.50 The third area of Park deficiency is located around Lanesfield to the east of the Birmingham New Road. Taylor Road Open Space has the potential to be improved to alleviate this deficiency by serving as a Neighbourhood Park.

PG11

Recommend creation of a new Neighbourhood Park at Taylor Road Open Space to serve the neighbourhood to the east of the Birmingham New Road.

Provide a new Pocket Park, as the opportunity arises, within the...
SECTION 3 – PARKS AND GARDENS

Goldthorn Hill/Penn Road area of the City to meet the needs of residents who currently have little or no access to recreational open space. Additionally consider the development of Pocket Parks to serve the City Centre including Broad Street Canal Basin.

Bilston Analysis Area

3.51 Bilston Analysis Area is the location with the greatest variance in provision in terms of District and Neighbourhood Parks. It has the largest hectares per 1000 population of District Parks, but the lowest provision of Neighbourhood Parks suggesting that many residents are outside of the catchment for local facilities. It is important to note that a high quantity provision of parks can be achieved through the existence of just a small number of larger sites. In this instance, whilst the two available District Parks are large in scale, in terms of accessibility, they do not serve the whole of the Analysis Area and locational deficiencies exist (there is overlap between the two catchments and therefore some residents are actually within the threshold distance of two District Parks). Important, the District Parks are known for their distinctive character and East Park has been flagged as a potential site for focussing on sporting excellence.

3.52 Despite high levels of usage, Hickman Park was perceived to be the poorest quality site in the City. Hickman Park is currently undergoing improvements through investment from the Heritage Lottery Fund. There are three areas of priority for further provision of parks within the Bilston Analysis Area. The first area is to the south of Bilston Town Centre. The provision of a District Park as part of the Bilston Urban Village development would alleviate deficiencies of provision in this area, as well as serving the residents of 1,000 new dwellings. A second area of deficiency is located around the Ettingshall area where a new Neighbourhood Park needs to be provided as part of the provision of 600 new dwellings as part of the Ward Street Masterplan redevelopment.

PG12 Recommend provision of a new District Park as part of the Bilston Urban Village development and a new Neighbourhood Park as part of the Ward Street Masterplan development.

The third area of park deficiency is to the east of the analysis area (see diagram), specifically the Lunt area. Whilst this area is served by a number of small amenity green spaces it is outside of the catchment area for both forms of park provision and a Pocket Park at least is required. In the Analysis Area as a whole, re-designation of sites may be the most appropriate means of providing an additional Pocket Park perhaps in the lower Bradley area, as the quantity of natural and semi natural open space and amenity space exceeds minimum standards. Arnhem Road Neighbourhood Park is adjacent to Moseley Rd Open Space Park and covers a similar catchment area. Consideration should therefore be given to the de-designation of Arnhem Park to a Pocket Park.
SECTION 3 – PARKS AND GARDENS

The existing Neighbourhood Park at Coronation Park is of a small size (the smallest in the City) and therefore currently unable to meet quality standards.

| PG13 | Provide a new Pocket Park in the Lunt area to address the existing shortfall in quality open space by looking to merge with Dingle Wood, the community centre, multi use games area and the Lunt Road open space and play area to form one larger Pocket Park to serve the needs of residents living in the area. Arnhem Road Neighbourhood Park should be de-designated to a Pocket Park. Recommend investigation of potential to extend Coronation Park as opportunities arise. |

Wednesfield Analysis Area

3.53 The Wednesfield Analysis Area has the largest quantitative shortfall in District Parks – with the provision of one, Wednesfield Park located near the town centre of Wednesfield. The recent development of a link canal bridge from the town centre into the Park has addressed previous access problems. However the northern and southern boundary of Wednesfield Park adjoins King George V Playing Fields (outdoor sports facilities) and therefore locally this is perceived as a large park. Another example of this is Fowlers Park, which includes Fowlers Playing Fields. Fowlers Park has the potential to become a District Park serving a wider catchment subject to access improvements including links to the City Centre and the Low Hill area which are both deficient in parks and open space. Recent improvements to Ashmore Park mean that this can now be designated a District Park, serving a wider catchment area. Additionally, residents in the north-west of the Analysis Area are outside the accessibility catchment area of both a District Park and Neighbourhood Park.

| PG14 | Recommend improving access to Fowlers Park and upgrading to a District Park and designating Ashmore Park as a District Park because of the wide area it serves. Recommend development of a Neighbourhood Park at Tennyson Road Open Space to serve the north-west of the Wednesfield Analysis Area, which adjoins a dense residential area in the North Analysis Area. |

Summary

3.54 Just under half of all residents (43%) use parks within the City once a year or more, with a total of 27% using Neighbourhood Parks once a week or more, making them the most regularly visited type of open space. The second most popular type of open space overall was District Parks, but these are only visited more than once a week by 18% of residents, reinforcing the particular importance of Neighbourhood Parks for day-to-day use and emphasising the value of these local facilities. The IT Young People Survey confirmed the value of parks, with parks being amongst the most visited type of open space for this age group.

3.55 Consultation highlighted that while Neighbourhood Parks are highly valued, concerns remain regarding the levels of vandalism and misuse that these sites experience. Many residents also expressed a desire for additional ancillary facilities to be located within parks, an issue that also emerged.
through site visits. While the focus of improvement should concentrate on the quality of sites, there remain locational deficiencies across the City, which have been addressed through the recommendations.

3.56 Locational deficiencies are particularly evident in Tettenhall Wightwick and in the Bilston East area and these areas should be prioritised for new provision. The redevelopment of the Goodyear site provides an important opportunity for the development of the Oxley Neighbourhood Park in the North Analysis Area of the City.

3.57 Throughout this section a series of recommendations have been made. These recommendations are built primarily on the principle of utilising existing open space sites, addressing the access issues to these sites, exploring the opportunities to extend the boundaries of existing sites and consideration of the re-designation of open spaces into District Parks, Neighbourhood Parks and Pocket Parks.
Natural and semi natural open space

Introduction and definition

4.1 Natural and semi natural open space includes woodlands, urban forestry, scrubland, grassland (e.g., downlands, commons, meadows, wetlands, nature reserves and wastelands) with the primary purpose of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

Figure 4.1 – An example of natural and semi natural open space

4.2 Wolverhampton UDP notes that although densely built-up, Wolverhampton contains pockets of green space, trapped countryside and areas of open water that provide a variety of habitats for a wide range of plant and animal species. “Wastelands” are examples of other value urban wildlife habitats.

4.3 Within Wolverhampton, natural green space includes a hierarchy of sites, ranging from the regionally important Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), through Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs), to sites which are currently undesignated (due to their low quality or lack of information) but have the potential for enhancement over time.

Context

4.4 22% of people within Wolverhampton use natural open space once a year or more, while only a small percentage of people (15%) use this type of open space on a regular basis, defined as once a month or more.

4.5 It was highlighted through consultation that there is perceived to be limited land and open space (compared to other neighbouring areas) within Wolverhampton and with the City being such an urban area; nature conservation sites are an important asset to the Council and its community. The Council is keen to designate more Local Nature Reserves as they serve an educational purpose; particularly in terms of awareness of sites as natural and semi natural open spaces have such low usage by young people. The Council is looking to produce a nature conservation SPD to provide an extra
layer of guidance within the Local Development Framework. This is partially in response to the fact that given the limited availability of brownfield land, there is increasing pressure from developers to build on natural sites – concerns that were reflected in public consultation.

4.6 Table 4.1 overleaf, sets out the strategic context for natural and semi natural open space in Wolverhampton.

Current position – quantity

4.7 The current provision of natural and semi natural open space is summarised in Table 4.2 below:

Table 4.2- Natural and semi natural open space provision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Hectares</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Range in sizes</th>
<th>Ha per 1000 population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>83.05</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0.02 – 21.13</td>
<td>1.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>53.32</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0.1 - 11.52</td>
<td>0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>48.44</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.29 – 20.06</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>30.87</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.16 – 14.52</td>
<td>0.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,461</td>
<td>129.47</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>0.12 – 15.6</td>
<td>3.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>235,590</td>
<td>345.15</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>0.02-21.13</td>
<td>1.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Table 4.1 - Strategic review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UDP</td>
<td>0.8 hectares of other accessible open space, including formal and informal outdoor playing space for children and accessible natural green space. 0.5 hectares of Local Nature Reserve for every 1,000 residents across the City as a whole (see Policy N4). The Council has identified a number of sites which it will seek to declare as LNRs during the lifetime of the UDP, to increase present provision to 0.5 ha per 1,000 residents.</td>
<td>Given the urban nature of Wolverhampton it is important to consider natural and semi-natural open spaces. The Council’s commitment to providing these types of spaces is evident through the quantity standards set-out within the UDP. Highlighted within the UDP, and important in the context of natural spaces, is the provision of Local Nature Reserves. These standards will be considered within the context of setting quantity standards for this typology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UDP - Policy N2: Access to Natural Green Space</td>
<td>The Council will seek to ensure that all residents have access to a natural green space within 400m of their home. In areas falling short of this requirement, the protection and provision of publicly accessible natural green space of value for wildlife will be a high priority.</td>
<td>Accessing this type of open space may be more difficult given the urban nature of the City. Nevertheless, consideration should be given to utilising other spaces, such as parks to provide wildlife and natural areas. This will be considered within the individual typology sections for parks and amenity greenspaces.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Plan</td>
<td>As part of the creation of a green and healthy City, the Wolverhampton Community Plan aims to:  - safeguard and improve natural green space, including parks and allotments  - enhance school grounds for nature conservation and promote environmental awareness among pupils  - assess the potential for providing new or improving existing green open space and wildlife habitats as part of new developments, especially in areas which are deficient in such habitats.</td>
<td>The Community Plan seeks to highlight the importance of this type of open space to residents within the City. Efforts are being made to create more natural areas using parks, allotments and school grounds. These initiatives should be supported by the Council and will be considered within the application of standards for this type for open space.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Black Country Millennium Urban Forest has created significant areas of new woodland in Wolverhampton. The Black Country Nature Conservation Strategy was adopted in 1994 and a Birmingham and Black Country Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was published in 2000, listing actions that need to be taken to safeguard important local species and habitats.

Actions within BAP should link with priorities within the recommendations within this report.

Raising awareness of the natural environment and involving local people in developing solutions to such matters, again reflecting priorities of key national organisations. Working with others to develop information on the natural and horticultural environment is also a key theme of the Green Spaces Strategy.

The management of parks and open spaces is key to the delivery of high quality sites. Wolverhampton has a good network of Friends Groups that help to manage and maintain the parks within the City; these should be rolled out into the management and maintenance of natural spaces. Priorities within the Green Spaces Strategy should dovetail with themes within this study.

Specific objectives relating to the provision of natural and semi-natural open space for the site proposed as part of the Bilston Urban Village, include:

- retention of as much of the existing habitat as possible
- creation of a new habitat that will mitigate for loss of existing habitat, enhance retained features and contribute to local biodiversity objectives
- maintenance and enhancement of links into other local green spaces and the wider countryside.

This study is very specific to an area within Wolverhampton, nevertheless the impact of the newly proposed site will be considered within the analysis of provision. Maintaining and enhancing link into other local green spaces and the wider countryside should be considered as an overall policy for the City and will be highlighted through the recommendations within this report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document Reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black Country Millennium Urban Forest</td>
<td>The Black Country Millennium Urban Forest has created significant areas of new woodland in Wolverhampton. The Black Country Nature Conservation Strategy was adopted in 1994 and a Birmingham and Black Country Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) was published in 2000, listing actions that need to be taken to safeguard important local species and habitats.</td>
<td>Actions within BAP should link with priorities within the recommendations within this report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parks and Green Spaces Strategy</td>
<td>Raising awareness of the natural environment and involving local people in developing solutions to such matters, again reflecting priorities of key national organisations. Working with others to develop information on the natural and horticultural environment is also a key theme of the Green Spaces Strategy.</td>
<td>The management of parks and open spaces is key to the delivery of high quality sites. Wolverhampton has a good network of Friends Groups that help to manage and maintain the parks within the City; these should be rolled out into the management and maintenance of natural spaces. Priorities within the Green Spaces Strategy should dovetail with themes within this study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston Nature Conservation Strategy</td>
<td>Specific objectives relating to the provision of natural and semi-natural open space for the site proposed as part of the Bilston Urban Village, include: retention of as much of the existing habitat as possible, creation of a new habitat that will mitigate for loss of existing habitat, enhance retained features and contribute to local biodiversity objectives, maintenance and enhancement of links into other local green spaces and the wider countryside.</td>
<td>This study is very specific to an area within Wolverhampton, nevertheless the impact of the newly proposed site will be considered within the analysis of provision. Maintaining and enhancing link into other local green spaces and the wider countryside should be considered as an overall policy for the City and will be highlighted through the recommendations within this report.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.8 Key issues emerging from Table 4.2 above and consultations undertaken across Wolverhampton City include:

- substantial variation in the number of natural and semi natural open space sites across the different Analysis Areas of the City, with the North and Wednesfield Analysis Areas of the City having significantly lower levels of provision in terms of number of sites than the other areas. Despite this, it is evident that sites within the North Analysis Area are large, and despite the small quantity of sites the amount of natural space per 1000 population equates to the third highest level of provision of all of the Analysis Areas.

- provision in the Bilston Analysis Area of the City is significantly higher than other areas, with the level of provision per 1000 population equating to 3.13 ha, and the total overall hectarage is equivalent to 129 ha.

- analysis of responses to the on street survey highlights a correlation between the number of sites and level of resident satisfaction with the highest level of satisfaction within Tettenhall and Central and South Analysis Areas and the lowest within the North Analysis Area (where 37% think that the level of provision is insufficient).

- in contrast, there is limited correlation between the overall quantity of provision in terms of hectares per 1000 population and resident satisfaction. For example, despite a significantly lower level of provision per 1000 population in Bilston and Wednesfield, residents in the North Analysis Area have the lowest satisfaction levels. This indicates that access to local facilities may be a key determinant in the overall perception of quality, rather than the level of provision in terms of hectares.

- further analysis of responses within the North Analysis Area reinforces this belief, with reasons behind the perceptions including a lack of awareness and poor knowledge of where this type of open space was. The small number of sites means that few residents live in close proximity to a natural or semi natural open space site.

- other comments relating to the perceived low level of provision across the City included “none in our area”, “have to travel to access them” and “too many housing developments”.

- fears regarding the perceived loss of natural open space to development across Wolverhampton were also frequently raised during consultation, further emphasising the importance of these open spaces to some residents.

Current position – quality

4.9 The quality of natural green space in Wolverhampton is summarised in Table 4.3 below. All scores are detailed in percentages.
Table 4.3 – Quality of natural and semi natural open spaces across Wolverhampton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Areas</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Range of scores</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>81.5 – 96.4</td>
<td>94.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>68 - 95.4</td>
<td>88.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>83.1 – 93.8</td>
<td>88.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>76.2 – 92.6</td>
<td>85.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>60.8 – 96.8</td>
<td>80.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall</strong></td>
<td><strong>137</strong></td>
<td><strong>60.8 – 96.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>86.03</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.10 The key issues arising from Table 4.3 above and the consultations are as follows:

- The audit and site assessments highlight that many large natural areas are embedded within other open space types, most specifically parkland areas, again emphasising the multi functionality of open space sites within the City. Consultation highlights that there is a lack of awareness of these types of open spaces. Site assessments reveal that despite the lack of awareness about natural green spaces in Wolverhampton, the general quality of natural green spaces is good, with all Analysis Areas containing sites of very high quality (scoring over 90%). Furthermore, as illustrated in Table 4.3, it can be seen that the quality of natural and semi natural sites is consistent across the City, with average scores very similar in all Analysis Areas.

- Site assessments suggest that the maintenance at some sites was poor, with fences not being repaired and paths overgrown. In some instances there were no formal paths, and paths were worn through heavy usage.

- Although the Bilston Analysis Area contains the highest quantity of natural and semi-natural sites of any area of Wolverhampton, this Analysis Area also exhibits the highest variation in terms of quality of all sites.

- While site assessments highlighted that the management and maintenance, security and safety, pathways and boundaries are the key concerns at a number of sites, consultation highlighted the importance of ensuring an appropriate balance between the level of use of natural sites and conservation in order to maintain the quality of these areas.
consultation highlighted that there are a number of nature trails at different parks, which are perceived to provide access to natural open space for many residents. Despite this, awareness of natural and semi natural open space sites is lower. The importance of linking natural areas and other open space types through green linkages (such as green corridors) is emphasised in the UDP and was also a key focus of local consultation.

residents at the over 50’s workshop session specifically highlighted the importance of natural sites and the protection of wildlife and the enhancement of biodiversity. The importance of high quality maintenance, which is sensitive to the natural environment, was also a key finding from this workshop and was evident in other qualitative consultations.

significant cross border travel was also evident through consultations, with the use and value of natural open spaces across local authority boundaries, in particular in South Staffordshire and Cannock Chase, raised as a key issue at the ABCD Workshop and drop in sessions and within the on street survey.

specific key quality issues arising from consultation include fly-tipping, poor maintenance regimes that are not sensitive or beneficial to increasing bio-diversity and a general decline of quality over the years.

Grapes Pool, the pool and natural area within Moseley Road Neighbourhood Park is suffering from a decrease in water resources, and there is a need to stabilise the islands and improve the environment surrounding the lake.

other water related issues include geese issues particularly at Ladymoor Pool, which requires the implementation of a geese management plan.

Current position - accessibility

4.11 The current travel times of existing users varied significantly, both in terms of mode of transport and the distance people were willing to travel. Green corridors were highlighted as providing important links between natural and semi natural and other open space sites.

4.12 Similar to the patterns exhibited by current users, consultation highlights that the expectations of users are relatively evenly split. Despite this, slight variations between residents living in different areas of the City can be seen. Residents of Wednesfield and Bilston Analysis Areas, which neighbour the urban area of Walsall, indicated that they are more likely to walk to natural sites, whereas residents residing on the other side of the City were more likely to drive. These residents have closer access to the outlying countryside of South Staffordshire, subsequently, there is a greater likelihood of them travelling by car to access the natural open spaces across local authority boundaries.

4.13 Consultation highlighted that improving access to sites, through increased promotion to local residents and improved signage on site was of particular
importance. Site assessments highlighted that signage was particularly poor, both in terms of signage to the site but also at the site location.

| NSN 1 | Identify opportunities to provide additional signage at larger sites across the City to enhance resident’s awareness of the wider benefits of the site. |

Setting local standards

4.14 In setting local standards for natural and semi natural open spaces there is a need to take into account any national or existing local standards, current provision, other local authority standards for appropriate comparison and the findings emerging through consultation on local needs.

4.15 The process for setting each type of standard is outlined in Section Two. The rationale for each recommendation, including assessment of local need, existing provision and consultation is provided in Appendices H, I and J. The recommended local standards and the justifications for these standards have been summarised overleaf.

4.16 These standards have then been applied to the existing Wolverhampton provision in order to determine surpluses, deficiencies and priorities for action.
Natural and semi-natural green space

*Quantity standard (see Appendix H – standards and justification and worksheet)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing level of provision</th>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.47 hectares per 1000 population</td>
<td>1.50 hectares per 1000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

Current provision across Wolverhampton is equivalent to 1.47 hectares per 1000 population. The spread of natural and semi natural provision across the City varies. The highest levels of provision are found within the Bilston Analysis Areas. Despite this, 28% of residents within Bilston Analysis Area responding to the on street survey perceive there to be insufficient natural space.

The overall split in opinion between provision being about right and insufficient is perhaps representative of the uneven distribution – which suggests a large contrast across Wolverhampton with some areas well served by natural and semi natural green spaces whilst in other areas there are likely to be locational deficiencies. This is to be expected as the geography of the area does not lend itself to this type of provision and relies on other open space types to fulfil its function eg parks. Therefore, in many instances those areas better served by other typologies such as District Parks will also be well served by natural and semi natural green space.

Although value is placed on natural sites, qualitative consultation again placed a focus on improving the quality of provision. Given the distribution of provision and the focus on quality, a standard just above the current level is recommended. The standard would protect existing levels of provision, without placing onerous demands for new provision. This recognises the value of these spaces and the importance of protection, offering opportunities for development of such facilities in areas perceived to be lacking. Due to the incidental nature of this type of open space and the limited opportunities for provision, a standard slightly above current levels of provision has been recommended. The Council should continue to consider incorporating natural areas within other typologies as a key mechanism for achieving the local standard.

Current levels of provision in the Bilston Analysis Area are 67 ha above the recommended standard (this includes 20 ha to be lost when Bilston Urban Village is redeveloped). The largest requirements for further provision are in the Central and South and Wednesfield Analysis Areas which each require over 30 ha of provision in order to meet the recommended standard.
Accessibility standard (see Appendix J)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 minute walk time (720 metres)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

The local consultation serves to highlight the split in opinion regarding whether natural and semi natural sites should be accessed by walking or driving: 47% of respondents would travel by car, whilst 42% of people stated that they would travel by foot. To a certain extent, this will relate to the varying size and function of spaces within each locality. However, there is a significant contrast between walk/drive expectations within the North Analysis Area that serve to skew the overall picture. Within this Analysis Area, 62% expect to drive as opposed to only 10% who would expect to walk. Using the audit of provision, this Analysis Area has the second lowest provision of natural open space, compared to all other areas, however when calculated against its relative local population, it can be seen that it is the second highest of all Analysis Areas providing this type of open space.

A drive time standard would produce a significantly larger distance threshold than a walk time standard. PPG17 states that higher thresholds may be appropriate if there is no realistic possibility of sufficient new provision to allow lower thresholds to be achievable, but can result in levels of provision that are too low and may not meet some local needs. In the context of the local consultation findings, regarding the quantity of provision (21% think that there is not enough as opposed to only 9% who think there is more than enough) and given the importance of facilitating everyday contact with nature, a standard based on a walk time is recommended as this will help to deliver a greater number of localised natural and semi natural spaces.

An assessment of the 75% threshold level across the City suggests that residents are willing to walk up to 15 minutes to a natural and semi natural open space. Only residents in Wednesfield Analysis Area felt that people should be willing to walk further (up to 20 minutes). Given the high levels of agreement from respondents to the on street survey regarding the appropriateness of a 15 minute walk time, it is recommended that the standard is set at this level, reflecting and supportive of nationally derived standards.
Quality standard (see Appendix I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“A clean and litter free site with clear and obvious pathways that provide opportunities to link other open spaces together and where appropriate link in to the outlying countryside. Where possible sites should encourage wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental awareness, maximised through appropriate natural features. Litter-bins, dog-bins, benches and picnic areas should be provided where possible and there should be a clear focus on balancing recreational and wildlife needs, whilst ensuring public access to all. Increased community involvement through management, maintenance and promotion of these sites should be encouraged where possible.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Justification

From consultation it is evident that the majority of users of natural areas value these sites for their recreational value, for example, for walking, as a picnic area etc indicating that ancillary facilities will be an important quality feature of this type of open space. Clear footpaths and appropriate management of vegetation are issues to be addressed at these sites and this has been reflected in the quality vision.

The main issues identified through local consultations centre around litter and dog fouling and that is reflected in the need for sites to be clean and litter free. Natural and semi natural green spaces are one of the more commonly used green space typologies for residents in Wolverhampton (as indicated in the on street survey). As a consequence, the need to balance recreation and wildlife needs is reflected within the vision ensuring that quality is maintained while providing access. There is also a need to maintain and improve the biodiversity and wildlife value of all open space sites.

The standard also incorporates the Council and public aspirations for safe, clean and functional natural open spaces that should be well used and promoted for their conservation and educational benefits. To facilitate the management of sites the vision suggests the involvement of and consultation with the local community. The Green Flag Criteria represent a key national benchmark of quality for natural sites and the key elements of this standard are therefore included within the proposed vision.

Applying the quantity, quality and accessibility standards

4.17 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those areas where local needs are not met, the quality, quantity and accessibility standards are applied and interpreted together.

4.18 The future level of provision required across the City to satisfy the local quantity standard is summarised in Table 4.4 below. As previously highlighted, it can be seen that there is a large disparity between the levels of provision per 1000 population in the Bilston Analysis Area compared to the other Analysis Areas. As a consequence, the application of a City-wide quantity standard creates a scenario with both large surpluses and deficiencies. This enables the identification of locational deficiencies.
Table 4.4 – Quantity of natural and semi natural open space

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Current provision per 1,000 population</th>
<th>Local Standard</th>
<th>Surplus / Deficiencies (ha) - Current</th>
<th>Surplus / Deficiencies (ha) - Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>3.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-32.55</td>
<td>-34.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-12.51</td>
<td>-13.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-35.67</td>
<td>-37.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.13</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>67.43</td>
<td>66.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-8.24</td>
<td>-16.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.19 Whilst Table 4.4 provides a starting point for the quantitative application of the local standards, it is particularly important to consider the spatial location of natural and semi natural open spaces and their geographical relationships to one another, and to sites of other typologies. Map 4.1 overleaf illustrates the geographical distribution of natural green space and the catchment areas these sites serve.
The main issues arising from a city-wide assessment of the accessibility of natural and semi natural open spaces (illustrated on the previous page) in Wolverhampton are as follows:

- the majority of the larger natural green spaces are located on the outskirts of Wolverhampton’s urban area

- the application of the natural and semi natural open space accessibility catchment (720m) shows that while the majority of residents are outside of the recommended distance threshold for natural and semi natural open space sites, there are some residents living outside the catchment of any facility. In light of the high quantitative levels of provision in the Bilston Analysis Area, it is unsurprising that it is the only Analysis Area of the City where all residents are well served in terms of natural and semi natural open spaces. However, future developments at the Bilston Urban Village will see the loss of some of this natural open space provision.

- despite having a substantial number of natural green spaces, there remain accessibility deficiencies in both Tettenhall and Central and South Analysis Areas. This serves to illustrates that a number of the sites are located in close proximity to one another (with overlapping catchments).

- for many residents outside of the recommended catchment of a natural and semi natural open space, the nearest available provision is also very small.

Figure 4.2 on page 68 overleaf illustrates the quality of sites across the City.
4.22 The main issues arising from the City-wide quality maps include:

- the majority of higher quality natural green spaces are located to the west of Wolverhampton, with a significant proportion in the Tettenhall Analysis Area. There are also a number of high quality natural green space within the Central and South Analysis Area.

- a substantial number of poor quality natural green spaces can be found in the Bilston Analysis Area. Parks in this Analysis Area were also perceived to be of lower quality.

4.23 While consideration of the quality of natural and semi natural provision is essential, consultation also highlighted the need for the sensitive management and maintenance of natural sites. Consideration of quality improvements in the context of maintaining an appropriate balance between human and wildlife use is therefore essential. Many formally designated sites (for example SINCs, SLINCs SSSI) are of particular importance and should be protected for this purpose. Of the SINCs and SLINCs located across Wolverhampton, which are of regional and local nature importance, almost all are particularly valuable in terms of the provision of ecological habitats and should therefore be protected.

**NSN 2**

Ensure that natural and semi natural sites are maintained appropriately and sensitively, facilitating the balance between wildlife and humans. The Council should continue to protect Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), SINCs and other habitat areas through the UDP and new policies in the LDF.

4.24 While consultation highlighted the importance of quality improvements to some natural and semi natural sites in the City, the application of the quantity standards highlights significant quantitative deficiencies in some areas. Consultation reinforced this issue; with many residents highlighting both that there are no sites in their locality, but also demonstrating low awareness of existing sites.

**NSN 3**

Raise awareness of the local natural and semi natural open spaces in the City to increase levels of usage and enhance the value of sites to local residents. It will remain important to manage the interaction between wildlife and biodiversity and human use.

4.25 While there remain locational deficiencies of natural and semi natural open space across the City, the UDP highlights a desire to improve the quality of sites, including the designation of further Local Nature Reserves. This target reflects desires expressed during qualitative consultation, where many residents highlighted a need for higher quality natural spaces. Community involvement will be an essential component of the future achievement of Local Nature Reserve status.

**NSN 4**

Encourage community involvement in natural and semi natural sites across the City, both to enhance awareness and improve the quality of sites.
Explore appropriate sites for the creation of further LNRs, these should include:

- Northycote Farm, Bushbury
- Pendeford Nature Reserve
- Ladymoor Pool
- Extensions to existing Smestow Valley Local Nature Reserve along the Birmingham Canal,
- Peascroft Wood
- Springvale Park
- The Gorge, Cinder Hill
- Parts of Goldthorn Wedge, including Ashen and Park Coppices (private).

As well as achieving qualitative targets relating to improvements at existing sites and enhancing access and awareness to existing open space sites, consideration should also be given to the need to address locational deficiencies across the City. While much natural and semi natural open space is opportunity led, opportunities for new provision should be considered.

Based on the application of the local accessibility, quality and quantity standards, key priority areas for future development are as follows.

**Wednesfield Analysis Area**

The most significant deficiencies of natural and semi natural open space can be found in the Wednesfield Analysis Area of the City. This occurs as a result of both a low level of provision in terms of hectares, but also as a result of a small number of sites in total. Sites are located primarily at the far eastern and western sides of Wednesfield Analysis Area, meaning that many residents towards the centre of the City do not have any access to natural and semi natural spaces. Analysis of the quality of existing sites highlights that all sites in Heath Town are considered to be only moderate, suggesting that there may be opportunities for qualitative improvement.

Priority should be given to the provision of new natural and semi natural open space within the central Wednesfield Analysis Area should the opportunity arise.

**North Analysis Area**

Although there are only eleven sites located within the North Analysis Area of the City, the majority are small and some are not of the highest quality, these sites are well distributed and there are few residents outside of the catchment of natural sites. Many residents in this area are served by centrally located natural and semi natural open space.
Tettenhall Analysis Area

4.30 The Tettenhall Analysis Area has a small surplus of natural and semi-natural green space in relation to the recommended quantity standard. Natural sites are well distributed and of a high quality. Smestow Valley LNR, the only LNR in the City, serves this area. There are two small areas outside catchments – Palmers Cross (adjoining the countryside) and Pennfields (served to some extent by natural areas in Bantock Park).

4.31 The south west part of the Tettenhall Analysis Area (Merry Hill/Penn) is served by three natural and semi natural green spaces, but these all scored between 78-88% during the quality assessment. Given the lack of alternative provision, achieving high quality of sites in this locality should be considered a priority.

Central and South Analysis Area

4.32 There are significant deficiencies in quantity of natural and semi natural open space in the Central and South Analysis Area. There is one area outside natural site catchments – Blakenhall / Parkfields. In the area towards the north of the Central and South Analysis Area, there are many small sites.

Bilston Analysis Area

4.33 There are a particularly high number of natural green spaces in the Bilston Analysis Area. Provision in Bilston is significantly above that in other Analysis Areas, predominantly as a result of the presence of the Bilston Urban Village Natural Area, which will be lost through development. As can be seen from the map, a number of sites are of poor quality,
with high quality sites clustered together. As a consequence, some poor quality sites may be of limited value to local communities. Almost all sites in the City perceived to be of poorer quality were located within Bilston. The value of these sites should be investigated and selected sites enhanced where necessary and appropriate. Sites perceived to be particularly poor included Ladymoor Pool and Highfield Road Natural Area.

4.34 Although there are sufficient natural and semi natural open spaces in this area, there are deficiencies in park provision. The appropriateness of changing the use of one of the poorer quality sites to a more formal park facility should be investigated, as explored in the previous section. This may also provide opportunities to address deficiencies in children’s play, through the co-location of play provision in Neighbourhood Park sites.

| NSN 10 | Within Bilston Analysis Area the role of poor quality natural and semi-natural green spaces should be investigated. Those considered valuable to the local community and wildlife should be retained and enhanced where possible, and the remaining sites should be reviewed. |

**Summary**

4.35 22% of people within Wolverhampton use natural open space once a year or more, while only a small percentage of people (15%) use these sites on a regular basis, defined as once a month or more.

4.36 It was highlighted, through consultation, that there is perceived to be limited land and open space (compared to other neighbouring areas) within Wolverhampton and with being such an urban area; nature conservation sites are an important asset to the Council and its community.

4.37 Consultation highlighted that improving access to sites, through increased promotion to local residents and improved signage on site was of particular importance.

4.38 One of the key issues expressed consistently through consultations regarded the need to promote natural green space and educate people on the benefits of these sites and the value of different sites in the City in terms of wildlife habitats.

4.39 Application of the local standards set highlights that provision is significantly higher in the Bilston Analysis Area than in other Analysis Areas. Despite particularly low numbers of sites in some areas of the City, an even distribution ensures that most residents are able to access natural areas. The key area of deficiency is Wednesfield Analysis Area, where there are relatively few sites and as a result, high numbers of residents live outside of an appropriate catchment area.

4.40 While opportunities to address these deficiencies should be taken, in some Analysis Areas, qualitative improvements should be prioritised, particularly where sites are serving large catchments.

4.41 In all instances, an appropriate balance between human and wildlife use should be maintained.
Provision for children

Introduction and definition

5.1 PPG17 defines provision for children and young people as one of its eight green space typologies. It states that the broad objective of provision for children and young people is to ensure that they have opportunities to interact with their peers and learn social and movement skills within their home environment. At the same time, they must not create nuisance for other residents or appear threatening to passers-by and Wolverhampton ensures any new developments of equipped play areas are not located within 30 metres of residential properties to address this very issue.

5.2 This typology encompasses a vast range of provision from small areas of green space with a single piece of equipment (similar to the typology of amenity green space) to large multi purpose play areas. The National Playing Fields Association categorises play facilities into three distinct types of facility, specifically:

- Local Areas of Play (LAPs)
- Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAPs)
- Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play (NEAPs).

However the Council does not apply the LAPs standard within Wolverhampton.

5.3 Since the production of PPG17 the definition for children’s play has broadened and as highlighted in the New Play Policy, providers of play areas are now being encouraged to have more informal and natural play features to encourage a variety of play experiences, complimenting the more formal provision. This is a reverse in the play policies which have been in place over the past years and a shift to encourage a different learning experience for children.

Figure 5.1 – Patshull Avenue Play Area
5.4 PPG17 notes that using these sub-types of provision for children and young people often ignores the needs of older children such as teenagers. Each site and range of equipment has a different purpose and often serves a different age group and catchment. It is therefore important to divide the typology into two separate categories and analyse provision for children separately to provision for young people.

5.5 Provision for children is taken to include the following areas:

- Equipped Children's Play Areas
- Adventure Playgrounds
- Informal Play Spaces - providing unique play experiences.

5.6 This Section of the report sets out the background, strategic context, consultation and current provision for children in Wolverhampton. Local standards have been derived from the consultation undertaken as part of this study and are therefore directly representative of local needs. The application of these standards provides the Council with a number of policy options for the delivery of children's provision. The issues identified should complement those highlighted within the Wolverhampton Play Strategy.

5.7 Table 5.1 overleaf details the strategic context with regards provision for children, highlighting the key strategic drivers and the associated links to this open space, sport and recreation study.
### Table 5.1 – Local strategic context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan 2006</td>
<td>The UDP differentiates between different types of play area, according to the National Standards and Benchmarks. These locally adopted standards are:</td>
<td>Existing standards highlight the commitment of the Council in providing quality facilities for children. Current standards should dovetail with recommendations within this study regarding parks and this should be considered within both types of open space ensuring there is a consistent and cohesive approach to delivery.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 2.6 ha of recreational open space per 1,000 residents in each Neighbourhood Park Area. To include the following</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 0.8 ha of other accessible open space, including formal and informal outdoor playing space for children and accessible natural green space</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) within each District Park and the City Park;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) for every 1,000 residents, located within 400m walking distance of every home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolverhampton Children and Young People’s Plan 2006-2009 (DRAFT)</td>
<td>The draft policy highlights the Council’s commitment to providing an enriched play environment, taking into account planning, designing and maintaining places where children and young people should be able to play. An emphasis of the strategy is about using the natural environment, natural materials and play friendly art works and structures that will provide a varied and interesting environment. Other objectives of the play strategy include providing new and refurbished places for play, either designated play areas or within shared public space that are designed and developed on an individual basis to reflect local identities and topography.</td>
<td>The recommendations and consultation within the children and young people’s plan should link directly with the recommendations and standards within this study. It is important that the Open Space Study provides sufficient detailed analysis on consultation with children and analysis of need in order to implement objectives within the children’s plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)</td>
<td>95.47% of residents think that over the past three years, that facilities for young children have got better or stayed the same – this statistic is in the top quartile when compared to the national averages in this category</td>
<td>The CPA indicators highlight an ongoing success of provision for children’s facilities with high levels of satisfaction from residents. This study should help to ensure that this level of satisfaction is retained and improved based on specific local needs consultation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Document reviewed

#### Wolverhampton Local Area Agreement

Wolverhampton has been chosen as one of 21 areas to pilot a new way of joint working which enables more flexible, responsive services and a more responsive relationship between local and central government.

The agreement brings together public services and will build on existing partnerships to address key priorities for tackling all areas of inequality across the City. Under the Local Area Agreements clear targets will be set to reflect the needs and wishes of Wolverhampton residents.

Children and young people is one of the Local Area Agreement themes which runs throughout a number of Council documents all containing similar objectives relating to play. These include providing safe play areas, providing increased play opportunities and creating better places for children to play safely. These objectives will be supported through the play policy and strategy for the Council which is currently in draft format.

#### Wolverhampton Play Strategy

The Strategy recognises that through play children and young people begin to understand themselves and the world about them. In play they explore the physical and social environment, develop ideas and concepts and learn how to deal with situations that trouble or frighten them. The overarching aim of the play policy therefore, is to ensure that Wolverhampton’s children and young people have easy access to a range of quality play opportunities within a practical walking distance from their homes. The Council recognises the importance of creating and providing a range of informal as well as formal play experiences throughout the City which will allow children and young people to explore, manipulate, experience and effect their environment within challenging settings in a risk reduced environment.

#### Links to open space, sport and recreation study

Around 20 different funding streams – totalling £9.5million – have been brought together into three blocks structured around Children and Young People, Safer Stronger Communities and Healthier Communities and Older People.

The Local Area Agreements provides a new way of thinking and opportunities for prioritising the delivery of quality facilities and services for children. Recommendations within this report should again dovetail with the targets set-out in the LAA and organisations should work together to deliver high quality facilities based on local needs.

Outdoor play opportunities are provided through the City by many organisations and Council departments. This Study helps to inform the Strategy on areas of deficiencies and under provision in play facilities in addition to those areas needing to be prioritised for improvement based on their low quality or catchment areas with a lack of, or limited, play provision.
Current position – quantity (audit table and consultation comments)

5.8 There are currently 65 play areas for children across Wolverhampton. The current provision of children’s play areas is summarised below in Table 5.2:

Table 5.2 – Quantity of children’s play areas across Wolverhampton:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Areas</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Hectares</th>
<th>Hectares per 1000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.0173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>0.0276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>0.0283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>0.0340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,361</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>0.0268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall</strong></td>
<td><strong>235,590</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.25</strong></td>
<td><strong>0.0265</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.9 The key issues arising from this table and consultations undertaken include:

- the level of provision per 1000 population ranges from 340 sq metres in the North Analysis Area to 173 sq metres in the Tettenhall Analysis Area (despite this including Tettenhall Paddling Pool which is just “one” type of play value and only available/filled for a small part of the year). This was not reflected in the responses to the on street survey however, where highest levels of satisfaction were expressed in the Tettenhall area, with only 7% of respondents perceiving there to be insufficient facilities.

- Bilston Analysis Area has the lowest of all areas of the City in terms of actual number of facilities, and second lowest (to Tettenhall) in hectarage of play facilities provided. Residents in the City within Wednesfield Analysis Area are best provided for in terms of quantity (Ha) of play facilities for both children and young people. The highest levels of dissatisfaction with current levels of provision can be found in the North (having a large number of very small play facilities) and Bilston Analysis Areas having the least number of play areas.

- there are a couple of play areas located for community use within school sites at D’eyncourt and Moathouse Primary Schools within the Wednesfield Analysis Area where no other amenity green space appropriate for play provision was available. Creating play areas at schools which are accessible to the public would be particularly valuable in these types of areas eg. Tettenhall Wightwick and Bilston Urban Village, and would also further the extended schools agenda.

- where local residents perceived there to be an inadequate level of provision, justifications included both quantity and quality issues. Issues regarding the quality of provision for children include vandalism, safety and security, as well as anti-social behaviour. These factors could prevent residents from using these play areas and lead to them discounting them from their idea of overall quantity. Issues specifically related to the quantity of provision for children suggest that locational deficiencies exist, with comments from the on street survey
referring to “none in my area”. Residents in both Wednesfield and Bilston Analysis Areas focused primarily on quality issues, which may be reflective of why people perceive there to be a lack of provision. It is recognised by residents that facilities are needed to provide something for children to do.

- with regard to the IT young people survey the majority (36%) stated that provision of play/youth facilities is good in Wolverhampton. When focusing just on responses from age groups 6-8 and 9-11 years of age, responses were consistent with the above.

- a perceived lack of play provision for young children was a consistent theme at consultations. The Tettenhall Paddling Pool was considered an example of good practice / provision that is well-used by residents throughout Wolverhampton, not just in the local area. It was stated by residents in this area that similar provision elsewhere would alleviate the demand placed on the facility at Tettenhall.

- a specific lack of provision was highlighted at the Bilston drop-in session. Suggestions were made that Springvale Park would be a good opportunity to provide children’s play equipment, where there was also perceived to be a specific lack of facilities for children.

5.10 The current quality of provision for children is illustrated in Table 5.3 below. The key issues arising from this analysis, detailed site visits and consultation are highlighted below:

Table 5.3 - Current position – quality scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Areas</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Range of scores</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>65.5 - 97.8</td>
<td>88.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>80 - 93.9</td>
<td>88.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>78.3 - 96</td>
<td>90.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>72.2 - 92.6</td>
<td>84.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>77.9 - 100</td>
<td>87.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>65.5 - 100</td>
<td>87.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.11 It can be seen through analysis of Table 5.3 and emerging issues from consultation that:

- the average quality of sites is consistent across the City, with the overall highest quality of sites in the North Analysis Area and the overall lowest quality in the Wednesfield Analysis Area

- site visits indicated that the majority of play areas are of high quality and contain well maintained, modern equipment. Only 16% of children responding to the survey indicated that the overall quality of facilities is poor.

- the largest range in quality scores can be found in the Tettenhall Analysis Area, highlighting the variety in the quality of facilities and includes the poorest quality site. There are a number of high quality
play facilities clustered in the western side of the North Analysis Area skewing provision across the Area.

- the overall quality of sites in the Central and South Analysis Area is particularly commendable, with no site scoring below 80%

- the workshop session highlighted that children dislike small play equipment and would like to see an improvement in the size of equipment provided at play sites, they like using the adventure playgrounds, they like the opportunity to meet up and play with friends and they also enjoy using open spaces to ride bikes, play cricket or have an informal kickabout

- consultation also highlighted that there are high levels of use of adventure playgrounds, something that is unique to Wolverhampton and an example of good practice. Children are highly involved in choosing equipment and contribute to organised activities at these sites. Children help to build the sites as well, which is an important part of the culture and works particularly well. Provision has been prioritised in locations with the highest levels of deprivation hence residents in other areas have more limited access to such facilities.

- almost all play areas are perceived to be well used, reinforcing the importance placed on these facilities by children.

| C1 | All future developments of facilities for children should be planned in conjunction with children, who should be involved at all stages of the process, including the design, development and management of local facilities. Involvement of children throughout the process should ensure access for all sectors of the community. |

**Current position – accessibility (including scores and consultation comments)**

5.12 23% of children responding to the IT young people survey are current users of children’s play areas. As may be expected, most children walk to their local facilities and the vast majority (61%) travel under 5 minutes. This view was reflected by residents of all Analysis Areas of the City, particularly in Wednesfield and Bilston Analysis Areas, where car ownership is low.

5.13 Other consultation suggested there is a lack of play facilities, with many residents citing distance from their home as the primary deterrents for use. This reinforces the necessity for local facilities, a point which was further emphasised through the IT young people survey, where the proximity of facilities to the home was considered to be instrumental in determining the likelihood of use of facilities.

**Setting provision standards**

5.14 In setting local standards for children’s facilities there is a need to take into account any national or existing local standards, current provision, other local authority standards for appropriate comparison and consultation on local
needs. The IT young people survey, neighbourhood drop in sessions and children's workshops were particularly important in determining local needs.

5.15 A full assessment of local needs both city-wide and within each Analysis Area has been undertaken for Wolverhampton, and the key messages emerging from this assessment, coupled with an evaluation of the existing audit have been used to determine provision standards required to meet local needs.

5.16 The process for setting each type of standard is outlined in section one. The rationale for each recommendation, including assessment of local need, existing provision and consultation is provided in Appendices H, I and J. The recommended local standards have been summarised overleaf.
Provision for Children

*Quantity standard (see Appendix H – standards and justification and worksheet)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing level of provision</th>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.027 hectares per 1000 population</td>
<td>0.05 hectares per 1000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

The current level of provision is equivalent to 0.027 hectares per 1000 population. Existing sites are spread very evenly across the City in terms of the Analysis Areas. However, the extent to which locational deficiencies may exist within each Analysis Area will be dependent on the specific location of each play area (illustrated through the application of the relevant accessibility buffer).

A key theme emerging from the consultation has been a shortage of provision for children, for example almost 20% of respondents to the on street survey think that the level of provision is insufficient. This is supplemented by comments regarding the quality of existing sites. A standard has been recommended (derived from the local consultation) that seeks to encourage small quantities of new provision in some areas, and quality improvements in other areas.

The recommended local standard is higher than the current provision across all Analysis Areas, and will therefore result in further provision being required within all Analysis Areas. In order to meet the minimum quantity standard, in the region of 5.8 hectares of play space would be required. This is an increase of approximately 93% on the current level of provision up to 2021.
### Accessibility standard (see Appendix J)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 minute walk time (480m)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

The majority of respondents to the On Street Survey indicated that they would expect to walk to a children’s play facility. The opinion that provision for children should be localised was emphasised in responses to the IT Young People Survey with a clear justification for using sites being in close proximity to where they live, suggesting that a standard could be set at a 5 minute walk time. Furthermore, the distances that parents are willing to let their children travel unaccompanied from their homes to play facilities has reduced as concerns over safety have grown. However, PPG17 suggests that distance thresholds should be reflective of the maximum distance that typical users can reasonably be expected to travel. The 75% threshold level for children using the responses from the On Street Survey was a 10 minute walk time across the City. This figure was consistent across all Analysis Areas, with the exception of one, indicating an overall consensus of opinion. Setting the standard in accordance with the 75% threshold level is advocated in PPG17. Moreover, aiming for a larger accessibility catchment is recommended in terms of providing the Council with greater flexibility in terms of striking a balance between qualitative and quantitative improvements in provision. A 5-minute catchment would place a greater requirement on new provision, but local consultation revealed the importance of high quality sites and not just new facilities. The Council should continually seek to promote measures designed to improve accessibility, such as better public transport or cycling routes.

A standard of 10 minute walk time (480m) therefore meets user expectations and provide a realistic target for implementation. This is broadly equivalent to existing policy that seeks to ensure that Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) are located within 400m walking distance of every home. Furthermore, this local standard encompasses all types of provision for children, including the larger, more strategic sites that people could be expected to travel further to visit.
**Quality standard (see Appendix I)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“A well designed, well-maintained, clean site of sufficient size to provide imaginative formal equipment and/or an enriched play environment in a safe and convenient location. Equipped play spaces should be fun and exciting and should have clear boundaries with dog free areas and include appropriate ancillary facilities such as seating, litter-bins and toilets in the locality of larger sites. Sites should also comply with appropriate national guidelines for design and safety and safeguard the amenity of neighbouring land users. The site should also be accessible to all.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The need to address the misuse of some sites is reflected within the standard in the need to design the site well, to locate it in a safe and secure location and to have clear boundaries. This can refer to clear boundaries from older children facilities to try and deter older children using younger children facilities. As such, the standard reflects the need for the good design of play areas. Recognition of the need for places to go to meet friends is incorporated in the need for an enriched play environment rather than a focus only on formal equipment, following suggestions from children that some equipment can be boring. Consultation highlighted the importance of these sites being of sufficient size for children to enjoy, and this is mentioned in the quality vision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The standard aims to achieve a balance between locating play areas close to housing or footpaths as an additional level of security to be provided through natural surveillance e.g. overlooking houses where possible, but also ensuring that residential amenity and privacy is protected. The standard encompasses the need for play areas to be both sustainable in management terms but also a mix of facilities and an enriched play environment and that the site is clean and safe to use. Wherever viable, the play equipment should be changed and developed over time (preferably in consultation with local children) to ensure that the facilities remain relevant to children and continue to be fit for purpose.

### Applying local standards

5.17 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those Analysis Areas where local needs are not met, the quality, quantity and accessibility standards are applied and interpreted together. Consideration should also be given to the quality of facilities in order to determine the value of specific sites. Consideration has been given to the provision of facilities for children in the context of other open space types. Amenity green space has a particularly important role to play in the delivery of facilities for children, providing a key opportunity for informal play.

### Identifying deficiencies in quantity

5.18 The recommended local standard is significantly higher than the current level of provision across all Analysis Areas of the City, and achievement of this standard will therefore require further provision within all areas (see Table 5.4 below).
5.19 This is reflective of the findings of the consultation, in which further provision for children emerged as a key priority for local residents. In order to meet the minimum quantity standard, approximately 5.80 hectares of play space would be required. This is an approximate doubling of the current level of provision up to 2021.

5.20 The main opportunity for quantitative increase is through the current programme to introduce more informal natural-based play spaces throughout the City, as set out in the Council’s Play Strategy (see Table 5.1). Other opportunities for new provision are areas where comprehensive redevelopment may be proposed, derelict land or brownfield land unsuitable for development, and educational sites where the school has existing facilities that are not currently available for community use. Developments in the City Centre and Bilston Urban Village, for example, therefore should offer key opportunities for the delivery of new facilities under for example the extended schools and the Primary Schools Capital Programme.

5.21 The application of the local quantity standard is set out in Table 5.4 below:

Table 5.4 – Quantitative shortfalls and surpluses of provision for children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Current provision</th>
<th>No of sites</th>
<th>Current provision per 1,000 population</th>
<th>Local Standard</th>
<th>Children’s Facilities (ha) - Current</th>
<th>Children’s Facilities (ha) - Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.0173</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>- 1.70</td>
<td>- 1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.0276</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>- 1.28</td>
<td>- 1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.0283</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>- 0.88</td>
<td>- 0.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0.0340</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>- 0.71</td>
<td>- 0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,361</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.0268</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>- 0.96</td>
<td>- 1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>235,590</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>0.0265</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>- 5.53</td>
<td>- 5.80</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.22 In light of the local nature of children’s facilities, and the local catchments that these facilities serve, the local quantity standard has also been applied at a Ward level, in order to understand localised deficiencies.

5.23 The results of the application of these standards by Ward are contained within Table 5.5 overleaf.
### Table 5.5 – Provision for children at a Ward level (Current)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Population (current)</th>
<th>Number of play areas</th>
<th>Provision for children (ha)</th>
<th>Local Standard (ha/1000)</th>
<th>Provision per 1000 population (Ha)</th>
<th>Requirement (Ha)</th>
<th>Surplus / Deficiency (Ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilston East</td>
<td>11478</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0148109</td>
<td>0.5739</td>
<td>-0.4039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston North</td>
<td>11810</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5905</td>
<td>-0.5905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blakenhall</td>
<td>11301</td>
<td>* 3</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0389346</td>
<td>0.5651</td>
<td>-0.1250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushbury North</td>
<td>12021</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0133100</td>
<td>0.6011</td>
<td>-0.4410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushbury South and Low Hill</td>
<td>14103</td>
<td>* 8</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0524711</td>
<td>0.7052</td>
<td>0.0348</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Park</td>
<td>10452</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0277459</td>
<td>0.5226</td>
<td>-0.2326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ettingshall</td>
<td>10839</td>
<td>* 5</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0691946</td>
<td>0.5420</td>
<td>0.2080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallings Park</td>
<td>10996</td>
<td>* 3</td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0481993</td>
<td>0.5498</td>
<td>-0.0198</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graisley</td>
<td>11691</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0136857</td>
<td>0.5846</td>
<td>-0.4245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath Town</td>
<td>10876</td>
<td>* 5</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0579257</td>
<td>0.5438</td>
<td>0.0862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merry Hill</td>
<td>11893</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0033633</td>
<td>0.5947</td>
<td>-0.5546</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxley</td>
<td>12848</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0202366</td>
<td>0.6424</td>
<td>-0.3824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>12844</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0241358</td>
<td>0.6422</td>
<td>-0.3322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penn</td>
<td>12392</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0088767</td>
<td>0.6196</td>
<td>-0.5096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Vale</td>
<td>12588</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0206546</td>
<td>0.6294</td>
<td>-0.3694</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Peter's</td>
<td>14472</td>
<td>* 4</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0352405</td>
<td>0.7236</td>
<td>-0.2136</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall Regis</td>
<td>12000</td>
<td>** 3</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0450000</td>
<td>0.6000</td>
<td>-0.0600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall Wightwick</td>
<td>10832</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0083087</td>
<td>0.5416</td>
<td>-0.4516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield North</td>
<td>10978</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0054655</td>
<td>0.5489</td>
<td>-0.4889</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield South</td>
<td>11195</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0169719</td>
<td>0.5598</td>
<td>-0.3698</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* includes an adventure playground (with building) of 0.3 - 0.36 ha in size (8.75 times larger than an average equipped play area), this distorts accessibility across these Ward

** includes a 0.24 ha paddling pool

5.24 Figure 5.2 on page 86 overleaf illustrates the distribution of facilities for children across the City and the catchment areas that these facilities serve. The quality of facilities is displayed in figure 5.3 on page 87.
SECTION 5 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN

Wolverhampton OSS: Quality Scores: Children

[Map showing quality scores for children's open space, sport, and recreation areas across different districts of Wolverhampton.]
5.25 Interpretation of these figures draws the following conclusions:

- there is an even distribution of facilities for children across the City with the majority of residents located within the catchment of a facility.
- where there are residents outside of the catchment for formal equipped children’s play, in the majority of instances, these residents have access to local amenity space provision, meaning that as a minimum informal play opportunities are provided. There are exceptions to this, including Tettenhall Wightwick and the northern part of Bilston Analysis Area.
- The majority of particularly high quality facilities are located either in the North Analysis Area or within the central belt of the Central and South Analysis Area. The quality of facilities is of particular importance to local residents when considering provision for children, with many residents reinforcing the value of safety and indicating that poor quality of facilities for children is a key barrier to use of facilities.

| C2 | Providers of facilities should ensure that they meet standards set out within the quality vision for play areas and play spaces. |

5.26 In light of the localised nature of play provision, consideration has been given to priorities within each Analysis Area. Based on the application of the local accessibility, quality and quantity standards, key priority areas for future development are as follows.

**Area specific application of provision standards**

**Central and South Analysis Area**

5.27 The Central and South Analysis Area has the second most largest requirement for further play facility provision in order to satisfy local requirements for children’s play facilities where there is a requirement for a further 1.35 hectares up to 2021 to meet the local quantity standard. This represents an increase of 85% on the current level of provision. Importantly, the Central and South Analysis Area is also one of two Analysis Areas deficient in amenity green space, illustrating that there are few opportunities for informal play spaces in this area. Despite overall quantitative shortfalls in this Analysis Area, Ettingshall Ward (which is partially located in the Central and South Analysis Area) has sufficient provision of play facilities to meet the needs of residents in quantitative and accessibility terms.

5.28 In terms of locating priority areas for new facilities, new provision should be targeted at geographical areas outside the distance threshold where there are sufficient people to justify new provision. Within the Central and South Analysis Area two of the largest accessibility deficiencies exist in the following areas.

5.29 The first dense residential area outside of the distance threshold of children’s play facilities is located in Park Ward to the north west of the Analysis Area. It
can also be seen that this area is deficient in both amenity green space and parks and hence there are limited opportunities for new development. In light of the lack of informal play provision however, this area should be prioritised for new provision.

| C3 | The north west side of the Central and South Analysis Area should be considered a priority for new outdoor children’s play facilities. |

5.30 A further large accessibility deficiency exists to the south west of Central and South Analysis Area in the Goldthorn Hill / Blakenhall area. A large proportion of this area also contains no amenity green space and hence residents do not have access to any informal recreational space.

| C4 | The Goldthorn Hill / Blakenhall part of the Central and South Analysis Area should be prioritized for new outdoor children’s play provision as opportunities arise. |

5.31 In addition to the shortage of facilities in this Analysis Area, facilities to the south of the Central and South Analysis Area are of overall poorer quality than in many other areas of the City. In light of shortfalls in this area, consideration should therefore be given to improving these facilities.

| C5 | Prioritise improvements to facilities of low quality in the Central and South Analysis Area to ensure they meet with the quality vision. |
5.32 The North Analysis Area also has the requirement for significant additional facilities to satisfy local requirements for children’s play. There is a need for a further 0.93 hectares up to 2021 to meet the local quantity standard. The Bushbury South and Low Hill Ward currently contains sufficient open space to meet local needs in quantitative terms. There are no accessibility deficiencies within this Ward. Despite a small quantitative deficiency, there are some overlapping catchment areas within the Oxley Ward indicating that some play areas serve unique catchment areas or the same residents.

5.33 In terms of locating priority areas for new facilities, new provision should be targeted at those areas outside the distance threshold where these areas contain sufficient people to justify new provision. Within the North Analysis Area the largest accessibility deficiencies exist in the following areas:

5.34 A large number of residents in Bushbury North fall outside of the distance threshold for children’s facilities around the Abbeyfield Parklands neighbourhood. Although there are several amenity green spaces in this area these are all too small, or inappropriately located, to accommodate provision for children. Therefore, opportunities should be pursued to create new sites suitable for play provision, preferably centrally located and able to serve a large number of residents.

5.35 Another accessibility deficiency exists in the Oxley area to the south west of the North Analysis Area, where it borders with the north of the Central and South area. Therefore it is important that the Neighbourhood Park to be created as part of the Goodyear development, falling within this area, provides sufficient, good quality children’s play facilities.

| C6 | The Abbeyfield Parklands / north part of the North Analysis Area should be considered as a priority for new provision for children and young people as opportunities arise. |
| C7 | Recommend that new children’s play facilities are provided within the new Oxley Neighbourhood Park to serve the south west part of the North Analysis Area. |
5.36 The area to the northeast of the North Analysis Area (Fallings Park Ward) is also currently lacking in children’s play facilities. New play facilities should be created in this area, preferably within Tennyson Road Open Space, which should serve as a new Neighbourhood Park.

Recommend that new children’s facilities should be provided to serve the north east part of the North Analysis Area, preferably within the Tennyson Road Open Space/Scotlands area.

**Wednesfield Analysis Area**

5.37 Given the requirement for further increases in the quantity of provision for children within Wednesfield Analysis Area, key priorities should include those areas currently outside of the accessibility catchment. Heath Town Ward, one of the three key wards making up the Wednesfield Analysis Area is currently well served in terms of the quantity of provision for children. There are few residents outside of the recommended accessibility catchment within this area of the City.

5.38 The area to the east of the Wednesfield Analysis Area is the main area of deficiency in both the north and south of Wednesfield provision for children. As illustrated, both of
these areas are well served in terms of amenity space and there are therefore opportunities may exist to provide children's facilities at these sites. The quantity of amenity space in these areas is currently above the minimum standard.

**C9**

A priority for new provision of children’s facilities should be the area to the east of the Wednesfield Analysis Area.

5.39 In addition to the shortfalls of provision evident within Wednesfield Analysis Area, the quality of provision is poorer than in other areas of the City, with scores averaging only 84%. Despite the quantity of sites being sufficient, the quality of sites in the Heath Town area is lower than other areas.

**Bilston Analysis Area**

5.40 In order to meet the needs of residents within the Bilston Analysis Area, an additional hectare of provision is required up to 2021 – the third greatest deficiency across the City. Regeneration plans in this area will provide significant opportunities to address these deficiencies, with provision for children included within the masterplans for the new development.

5.41 There are greater accessibility deficiencies in Bilston Analysis Area than in other Analysis Areas with a number of residents outside appropriate catchment areas for within the Bilston North and Bilston facilities to meet the quantity

5.42 A key area of deficiency is located to Bradley where residents do not have reasonably well served in terms of also identified as deficient in parks.

5.43 Should a new District Park be provision located within this site for the east of the Analysis Area around Lower access to provision for children, but are amenity green space. This area of the City was
devolved as part of Bilston Urban Village, play new residents should also improve accessibility
issues for many existing residents. The provision of a new Neighbourhood Park for Ettingshall under the Ward Street Masterplan development will also provide opportunities for new play provision to address deficiency in the area.

| C10  | Provide facilities for children to the east of the Bilston Analysis Area (Lower Bradley) in geographical areas currently outside of the catchment area for existing facilities. Opportunities should be taken to provide new facilities through both the Bilston Urban Village and the Ward Street Masterplan developments. |

5.44 In light of shortfalls of provision in the Bilston Analysis Area, and the lower levels of quality in play areas in this Analysis Area compared to other areas of Wolverhampton, consideration should be given to improving facilities that are currently of lower quality such as at Coronation Park.

| C11  | Improve the quality of facilities in the Bilston Analysis Area where they do not currently meet the desired quality level. |

**Tettenhall Analysis Area**

5.45 The Analysis Area with the largest requirement for childrens play facilities with a further 1.76 ha (196% increase) in the quantity required in 2021. Provision for children and young people are Analysis Area than in any other Analysis Area.

5.46 Accessibility deficiencies also exist in the Tettenhall Wightwick Ward with many residents facilities and in these areas opportunities should improve play provision in these areas as they falling outside of the catchment for Tettenhall Regis Ward and be looked for and considered to arise.
5.47 Should a new Pocket Park be developed in the Tettenhall Wightwick area (as identified in Section 3, Parks and Gardens) consideration should be given to locating play provision within this site in order to address deficiencies. Should the park be inappropriately located to address provision for children, alternative sites should be found. There is only limited amenity space in this area, providing few opportunities to place children’s facilities on existing sites.

| C12 | Provide new facilities for children within both the Tettenhall Regis and Tettenhall Wightwick areas of the Analysis Area, particularly giving consideration to the feasibility of locating provision within new or existing parks in the area. |

5.48 There are further areas of deficiency located within Wards as illustrated opposite. There are further catchment area for provision for children as can be surpluses in Tettenhall Regis, deficiencies within prioritised above other priority areas of the City. The south Tettenhall Wightwick/Merry Hill pockets of residents outside of the seen in figure 5.1. In light of quantitative this geographical area should not be

| C13 | Provide new facilities for children where residents are outside of the catchment area and there are sufficient residents to justify new provision within the South Merry Hill / south Penn area |
5.49 The quality of facilities in Tettenhall Analysis Area is one of the highest of all Analysis Areas in the City with only Laburnum Street Play Area considered to be of poor quality. Furthermore, this play area currently has low catchments with other facilities. Given the usage it is currently of limited value to local residents, and one given to the closure and possible relocation of this facility. Consideration should therefore be given to the closure and possible relocation of Laburnum Street Play Area and replacement with new provision located nearby, at Oak Street Open Space.

Summary

5.50 Wolverhampton has established recommended distances on the siting of children's equipped play facilities from people’s houses to avoid conflicts and general annoyance which can arise from having them located too close. As a general guidance minimum distances are generally useful to ensure the sustainability of play facilities to cater for future neighbourhood needs, although in rare cases a unique set of local characteristics or topography for instance could make it acceptable to slightly reduce such distances.

Recommend to endorse the 30m minimum distance between a children’s equipped play area and the nearest dwelling unless a special case, locally supported case can be made that such conflicts of use or annoyance will not
SECTION 5 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN

5.51 PPG17 defines provision for children and young people as one of its eight green space typologies. It states that the broad objective of provision for children and young people is to ensure that they have opportunities to interact with their peers and learn social and movement skills within their home environment. At the same time, they must not create nuisance for other residents or appear threatening to passers-by.

5.52 This typology encompasses a vast range of provision from small areas of green space from a single piece of equipment (similar to the typology of amenity green space) to large multi purpose play areas.

5.53 Provision for both children and young people was a key theme throughout consultation and across all areas of the City, with many residents highlighting that there are insufficient facilities to meet local needs. This reflects the importance of these facilities to local people.

5.54 Provision for children is also a key priority of the City Council as outlined within the emerging Play Strategy for Children. Provision of activities for children is also a key priority across other strategies, including the Community Strategy, Parks and Green Spaces Strategy and Cultural Strategy.

5.55 Analysis of the quality of play areas indicates that provision is of better quality in the North Analysis Area and the majority of poorer sites are located within the south of the Central and South Analysis Area. Despite this, all sites were perceived to be frequently used with the exception of Laburnum Street Play Area, which is also the poorest site in terms of quality in the City.

5.56 Reflecting the overall perception that there are insufficient facilities across the City, the local quantity standard was set to significantly exceed current levels of provision. Application of the local standard therefore illustrates that provision in all Analysis Areas of the City is insufficient to meet quantitative needs, although there are two Wards where the level of provision exceeds that required, although the presence of the five large adventure playgrounds within their various Wards can skew the data and can distort locational deficiencies within the Wards in which they are located.

5.57 Application of the accessibility standards further reinforces this overall deficiency, with pockets of residents across the City outside of the catchment area of residents, in general across the Tettenhall Analysis Area, but also to the east side of the Wednesfield Analysis Area, east of Bilston Analysis Area, within the Bushbury area in the North Analysis Area.
5.58 It should be ensured that local children are involved in the design, installation and management of any new facilities developed in the area.

5.59 Finally it is essential that any future developments are based on strategic planning and spatial analysis to ensure there is limited duplication of provision within close proximity to each site and to make best use of resources. Linked to this point is the recommended vision that each District Park develops a play area site which is considered a site of excellence due to its unique and wide range of play opportunities, each with its own type of specialism. The very nature of these sites will draw residents from wider catchment areas.

| C16 | Consideration should be given to enhancing the quality of play provision within each of the District Parks within the City with the aim of creating sites of excellence due to the provision of unique and wide range of play opportunities. Each District Park should have its own type of specialism. The very nature of these sites will draw residents from a wider catchment area. |
Provision for young people

Introduction and definition

6.1 PPG17 defines provision for children and young people as one of its green space typologies. It states that the broad objective of provision for children and young people is to ensure that they have opportunities to interact with their peers and learn social and movement skills within their home environment. At the same time, they must not create nuisance for other residents or appear threatening to passers-by.

6.2 PPG17 notes that using the sub-types of provision for children (LAPs, LEAPs and NEAPs and informal play area) often ignores the needs of older children. Each site and range of equipment has a different purpose and often serves a different age group and catchment. It is therefore important to divide the typology into two separate categories and analyse provision for young people separately to that of children, hence the separate sections.

6.3 For the purposes of this assessment, provision for young people is taken to include the following types of provision:

- Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs)
- Skate Parks
- Basketball Courts
- Youth Shelters
- Informal Kickabout Areas
- BMX tracks.

6.4 This section of the report sets out the background, strategic context, consultation and current provision for young people in Wolverhampton. Recommended local standards have been established and are derived from the local needs assessment. The application of these standards provides the Council with a number of policy options for the delivery of facilities for young people and complements the Wolverhampton City Council Play Strategy.

Context

6.5 36% of young people responding to the IT young people survey stated that provision of outdoor play/youth facilities is good in Wolverhampton, whilst 19% felt facilities were poor. The key improvements desired by young people were more interesting play equipment (21%) and the provision of additional MUGAs/kickabout areas.

6.6 Increased emphasis has been placed on the provision of facilities for young people (and children) in recent years and a programme of installation of MUGAs and other provision for young people has taken place, although not evenly spread across the City.

6.7 Many residents highlighted the importance of providing facilities for young people, indicating that a lack of facilities and opportunities can generate a culture of antisocial behaviour and mis-use of other sites.

6.8 The strategic context of facilities for young people is set out in Table 6.1 overleaf.
Table 6.1 - Strategic review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UDP</td>
<td>The standards adopted for MUGAs, include providing a multi-ball games area for every 2,000 residents;</td>
<td>MUGAs are one type of facility that are provided for young people within Wolverhampton. Isolated standards have been set for the provision of MUGAs within the UDP, however this will be considered within the overall standards set for young people. Given the significance of this type of facility within the City, separate consultation will be undertaken regarding the provision of MUGAs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.6 hectares of recreational open space per 1,000 residents in each Neighbourhood Park Area. To include the following:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 0.8 hectares of other accessible open space, including formal and informal outdoor playing space for children and accessible natural green space</td>
<td>These standards will be considered within the context of setting quantity standards for this typology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• a Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) within each District Park &amp; West Park.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Community Plan</td>
<td>The Community Plan highlighted through consultation that residents would like to see more activities for young people and develop their role in the community.</td>
<td>The recognition for activities for young people is highlighted be residents within the Community Plan. Whilst this study considers provision of facilities, this should facilitate different activities offered to young people in Wolverhampton. Opportunities to involve young people in the decision-making surrounding facilities and activities is paramount to the success of provision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## SECTION 6 – PROVISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wolverhampton Young Peoples’ Plan</td>
<td>The priority outcomes of the children and young peoples’ plan include: increasing access to high quality play facilities and activities. A priority that was identified through consultation with children and young people.</td>
<td>Accessibility and quality of sites is an importance feature of facility provision. Both aspects will be consulted on with residents including young people. Based on this consultation, specific standards will be recommended to ensure that these priority outcomes within the children and young people plan are addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)</td>
<td>CPA Indicators highlight a high degree of satisfaction with the number/quality of activities for young people, whereby 96% of residents feel that over the past three years, activities for young people have got better or stayed the same (this places Wolverhampton in the top quartile). In comparison to neighbouring authorities and statistically nearest neighbours, Wolverhampton was the highest scoring authority.</td>
<td>The CPA indicators and comparative findings highlight the success of existing initiatives linked to providing activities for young people in Wolverhampton. All measures should be ensured to continue this degree of success now and in the future using young people’s facilities and open spaces as an opportunity to engage this age group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Current position – quantity

6.9 There are currently 64 facilities for young people in Wolverhampton. Some sites contain more than one facility. This provision is summarised in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2 – Provision for young people

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Areas</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Total Provision (ha)</th>
<th>MUGA provision (ha)</th>
<th>Hectares per 1000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.0094</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.0246</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.0534</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,361</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.0300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>235,590</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>0.0303</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.10 Key issues arising from the above table and the consultations undertaken include:

- A general lack of overall provision for young people was a consistent theme throughout all consultation and there are concerns that a lack of provision is causing safety issues at other open space types, specifically parks during the evenings. The audit reveals a low land area of provision for young people across Wolverhampton – equivalent to only 303 square metres per 1000 population. Despite the small size of sites, provision is higher in terms of the total number of facilities provided (63 sites) than in many other authorities in the UK. However it must be noted that the provision of informal kickabout areas has skewed the overall provision figures, in terms of both size, quantity and distribution. In particular, the Central & South area includes two kickabout areas totalling 1 ha, and the Wednesfield area includes one kickabout of 0.46ha and a 0.61ha BMX track.

- The level of total provision for young people per 1000 population ranges from 0.0094 hectares in the Tettenhall Analysis Area to 0.0534 hectares in Wednesfield Analysis Area. This is reflective of the number of sites in these areas, with Tettenhall Analysis Area also having the fewest number of sites (six) and Wednesfield Analysis Area and Central & South Analysis Area having the most with 16 and 17 respectively. This echoes findings of informal consultations, where many residents of Tettenhall Analysis Area indicated that they are forced to travel outside of the area in order to reach facilities for young people.

- Respondents to the on street survey felt that there was an even split between those who think that the level of provision meets the needs of local residents (19%) and those who feel there is insufficient (22%). This is also the same for MUGAs, where the respective figures are 24% and 17%.

- Higher quantitative levels of provision can be found in Bilston, Wednesfield and Central & South Analysis Areas and these areas have the highest
number of sites. Within Wednesfield Analysis Area and Central & South Analysis Area there is reasonable provision of MUGAs. Additionally the five existing skate parks are located in Wednesfield Analysis Area (Ashmore Park, Wednesfield Park and Fowlers Park) and Central and South Analysis Area (Penn Road Island) and one in North Analysis Area (Northwood Park).

- analysis of reasons attributed to this perception shows that concerns are primarily based on quantitative comments, including “none in our area”, “young people need somewhere to go”, “more required” and “don’t know of any”. One possible justification for the lack of correlation between levels of provision at an Analysis Area level and the local perceptions about quantity are that locational deficiencies do exist within these areas. This will be explored through the application of the local accessibility standards later in this section.

- 9% of respondents to the IT young people survey use MUGA’s (9%), skate parks and teen shelters (4%) and informal kick about areas within parks (16%). The survey also highlighted that the majority of the facilities used were located in parks, in particular Bantock Park, Phoenix Park and West Park (most frequently visited sites).

Current position – quality

6.11 The quality of provision for young people in Wolverhampton is summarised in Table 6.3 below. All scores are detailed in percentages.

Table 6.3 – Quality of provision for young people

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Areas</th>
<th>Range of scores</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>81.7-95.5</td>
<td>88.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>67.3-98.2</td>
<td>86.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>81.1-95.7</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>79.1-95.5</td>
<td>87.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>80.9-95.5</td>
<td>86.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>79.1-98.2</td>
<td>88.34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.12 The main comments to arise from the consultation findings and site visits (summarised in Table 6.3) are:

- the overall perception of the quality of young people’s facilities during site visits was positive although some equipment appears to be particularly poor and some sites were poorly maintained. The average quality score in each Analysis Area ranges between 86 – 92% - this indicates that the overall provision is good.

- the range of scores achieved during site visits was significantly greater in the Central and South Analysis Area than any other Analysis Area, indicating that there is more variation in the quality of sites. The poorest quality site is also located within the Central and South Analysis Area.

- high quality provision is likely to act as a catalyst for increased usage. Few comments regarding the usage of sites related to the quality of site, although
16% of young people who do not use facilities for young people indicated that this was because they were perceived to be “dirty”.

- young people indicated that lighting and cameras would make them feel safer when using open spaces. Site assessments revealed that few facilities for young people and children are currently lit. The majority of respondents rated the overall quality of play/youth facilities as fair.

- vandalism and graffiti is a problem at sites for young people – use of dedicated graffiti walls was suggested by a number of people. In contrast, the site assessments suggest that graffiti and vandalism are only isolated problems across existing provision for young people.

- the development of the Penn Road Island Skate Park is an example of good practice, stated through consultation. The skate park features floodlights, security cameras, ramps and rails. This development was developed through regular dialogue with users and detailed consultation with the skateboarding community. This (alongside its central location) has helped to ensure a high level of usage and reinforces the values of ensuring community involvement. The site has also been designed with elements that are important to people (such as lighting) in mind. The highest quality skate park in Wolverhampton (based on the site assessment findings) is the facility in Ashmore Park that scored 93.9%.

| YP 1 | All future developments of facilities for young people should be planned in conjunction with young people, who should be involved at all stages of the process, including the management, maintenance and design of local facilities. Involvement of young people throughout the process should ensure access for all sectors of the community. |

- concerns were expressed through local consultation undertaken that provision for young people is mostly very dull and tends to be located in areas that can’t be maintained once they have been constructed. The relative accessibility of provision for young people, which will be discussed later in this section, is based upon the locally derived provision standards. Site assessments however did not support this comment, highlighting that provision for young people was of good quality City-wide.

**Current position – accessibility**

**6.13** Analysis of the IT young people survey suggests that as may be expected, the majority of residents walk to facilities for young people with 24% walking 11 – 15 minutes, whilst 35% of young people would walk for 5 minutes or less. 37% of young people indicated that they would cycle to reach open spaces, emphasising the importance of cycleways and green linkages between sites.

**6.14** Easy access to facilities for young people was one of the key positive features of provision in Wolverhampton, as was the presence of facilities in close proximity to the home.
Setting provision standards

6.15 The process for setting local standards for facilities for young people has taken into account existing national and local standards, current provision, other local authority standards for appropriate comparison and consultation on local needs.

6.16 The key messages emerging from the assessment of local needs, coupled with an evaluation of the existing audit have been used to determine provision standards. The application of these provision standards therefore provides an understanding of the priorities in order to deliver effective provision for young people across the City.

6.17 The process for setting each type of standard is outlined in section one. The rationale for each recommendation, including assessment of local need, existing provision and consultation is provided in Appendices H, I and J. The recommended local standards have been summarised overleaf.
Young people’s facilities

*Quantity standard (see Appendix H – standards and justification and worksheet)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing level of provision</th>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.03 hectares per 1000 population</td>
<td>0.05 hectares per 1000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

The current level of provision is equivalent to 0.03 hectares per 1000 population, which is slightly higher than the level of provision for children. Across the Analysis Areas, the quantity of provision ranges from 0.0534 within Wednesfield Analysis Area to only 0.009 within Tettenhall Analysis Area – a wide variety. The extent to which locational deficiencies may exist within each Analysis Area will be dependent on the specific location of each site (illustrated through the application of the relevant accessibility buffer).

A similar proportion of respondents to the on street survey and IT young peoples survey think that the level of young people provision is inadequate as was the case for children’s provision. Both adults and young people made similar comments at drop in sessions around the City. Given that the existing level of provision is similar to that for children, a standard has been recommended that will require similar quantitative increases in provision. This will facilitate small quantities of new provision in some areas and quality improvements in other areas.

The recommended local standard is higher than the current provision in four of the five Analysis Areas. In order to meet the minimum quantity standard, in the region of 4.6 hectares of facilities for young people would be required up to 2021.

*Accessibility Standard (see Appendix J)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 minute walk time (960 m)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

The majority of people stated that walking is the preferred method to travel to a young person’s facility; therefore it is recommended that a walk time standard be adopted. A walk time is considered most appropriate as these facilities are for young people who do not always have access to a motorised vehicle and consequently a walk time enables access for all ages and users.

The recommended standard of 20 minutes walk time is in line with the 75% threshold level, however, it is important to note the implications in terms quantitative improvements. Setting a higher travel time threshold provides opportunities to invest in existing facilities and highlights areas in most need (priority for new provision). The standard also sits in line with the recommended accessibility standard for District Parks, providing an opportunity to deliver facilities for young people in these parks.
Quality Standard (see Appendix I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘A well designed, high quality site that provides a meeting place for young people, encompassing the needs of all users with varied formal and informal equipment / space. The site should be located in a safe environment that is accessible to all, without compromising neighbouring land users. The focus should be on providing a well-maintained, clean and litter free area with appropriate lighting and shelter, promoting a sense of community ownership.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consultation with young people reinforced the findings in similar studies that highlight the importance to regular users of such spaces to ‘meet friends’, as somewhere to go and not specifically to use the equipment. Promoting a sense of ownership with the sites may also help to reduce the level of vandalism. It is important that these sites are clean, safe and secure. This was a key element emerging from local consultation and is therefore reflected within this standard. It is important that sites continue to improve and the council works towards the achievement of the quality vision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A recent CABE Space study shows that well designed, well maintained public spaces can contribute to reducing the incidence of vandalism and anti-social behaviour, and result in long term cost savings and this is reflected in the quality vision.
Applying the quantity, quality and accessibility standards

6.18 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those Analysis Areas where local needs are not met, the quality, quantity and accessibility standards are applied and interpreted together. Consideration should also be given to the quality of facilities in order to determine the value of specific sites.

6.19 The future level of provision required across the City to satisfy the local quantity standard is summarised below in Table 6.4. This has been summarised at both an Analysis Area and Ward area level.

Table 6.4 - Future level of provision for young people required (Analysis Areas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Popn (current)</th>
<th>Provision</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Provision per 1,000 population</th>
<th>Local Standard</th>
<th>Surplus / Deficiency (ha) - Current</th>
<th>Surplus / Deficiency (ha) - Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.0094</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-2.11</td>
<td>-2.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0.0358</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.81</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.0246</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-1.03</td>
<td>-1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.0534</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,361</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.0300</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-0.83</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>235,590</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>0.0303</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>-4.63</td>
<td>-4.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.20 As may be expected in light of the lower levels of provision in the Tettenhall Analysis Area, this area currently has the largest shortfall in provision when assessed against the local quantity standard. In contrast, the level of provision in Bilston Analysis Area exceeds the minimum standards and is likely to remain sufficient even in the face of future population growth. Provision of facilities for young people in the North, Central & South and Bilston Analysis Areas are below the minimum standard.

6.21 Table 6.5 considers the quantity of provision at a ward level, providing a more localised picture. Based on the application of the quantity standard, the wards that would require further provision for young people have been highlighted in red. The areas with the largest quantitative shortfalls are:

- Penn Ward
- Springvale Ward
- Tettenhall Wightwick Ward
- Merry Hill Ward
- Bilston North Ward
### Table 6.5 - Provision for young people at a Ward level (current)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Popn (current)</th>
<th>Provision for young people (ha)</th>
<th>Local Standard (ha/1000)</th>
<th>Provision per 1000 population (ha)</th>
<th>Requirement (ha)</th>
<th>Surplus / Deficiency (ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilston East</td>
<td>11478</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0548876</td>
<td>0.5739</td>
<td>0.0561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston North</td>
<td>11810</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0237087</td>
<td>0.5905</td>
<td>-0.5668</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blakenhall</td>
<td>11301</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0628263</td>
<td>0.5651</td>
<td>0.1449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushbury North</td>
<td>12021</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0191332</td>
<td>0.6011</td>
<td>-0.3710</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushbury South and Low Hill</td>
<td>14103</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0262356</td>
<td>0.7052</td>
<td>-0.3351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Park</td>
<td>10452</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0220054</td>
<td>0.5226</td>
<td>-0.2926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ettingshall</td>
<td>10839</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0350586</td>
<td>0.542</td>
<td>-0.1619</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallings Park</td>
<td>10996</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0727537</td>
<td>0.5498</td>
<td>0.2502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graiseley</td>
<td>11691</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0162518</td>
<td>0.5846</td>
<td>-0.3945</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath Town</td>
<td>10876</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0579257</td>
<td>0.5438</td>
<td>0.0862</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merry Hill</td>
<td>11893</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0109308</td>
<td>0.5947</td>
<td>-0.4646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxley</td>
<td>12848</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0217933</td>
<td>0.6424</td>
<td>-0.3624</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>12844</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.042043</td>
<td>0.6422</td>
<td>-0.1022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penn</td>
<td>12392</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.6196</td>
<td>-0.6196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springvale</td>
<td>12588</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0007944</td>
<td>0.6294</td>
<td>-0.6194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Peter’s</td>
<td>14472</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0310945</td>
<td>0.7236</td>
<td>-0.2736</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall Regis</td>
<td>12000</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0233333</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall Wightwick</td>
<td>10832</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.5416</td>
<td>-0.5416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield North</td>
<td>10978</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0664966</td>
<td>0.5489</td>
<td>0.1811</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield South</td>
<td>11195</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.0250112</td>
<td>0.5598</td>
<td>-0.2797</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.22 Whilst these tables provide a starting point for the application of the local quantity standard, it is particularly important to consider the spatial location of provision for young people, the types and role of provision for young people eg skate park, MUGAs (addressing the issue of a lack of formal playing pitches) and their geographical relationships to one another. The map overleaf illustrates the geographical distribution of provision for young people and the catchment areas these facilities serve.
SECTION 6 – PROVISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Wolverhampton OSS: Open Space Type Catchment, Young Persons & Neighbourhood Parks

[Map showing catchment areas for young people in various districts of Wolverhampton]

Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study – Wolverhampton
6.23 The main comments to arise from a city wide assessment of the accessibility of facilities for young people in Wolverhampton (illustrated on the previous page) are as follows:

- there is a good spread of overall provision for young people with many residents able to access provision for young people within the recommended catchment. However when this is broken down by facility type we can start to see where there are Analysis Areas with deficiencies of a particular type of facility e.g. there are no skate parks within either the Bilston or Tettenhall Analysis Areas and no MUGAs in Tettenhall Analysis Area.

- despite the good distribution of facilities for young people, a number of residents remain outside of this distance threshold. In particular the Tettenhall Analysis Area contains a number of densely populated residential areas that are outside of the accessibility threshold – this correlates with the total quantity of provision as Tettenhall Analysis Area has both the fewest sites and the lowest level of provision in terms of hectares.

- even within areas with a substantially higher number of facilities such as the Bilston Analysis Area, there remain small pockets of residents outside of the distance threshold for any facility for young people and specifically the catchment of a skate park and MUGA to the south of the Analysis Area.

- in areas where residents are outside of the recommended catchment for facilities for young people, amenity green spaces may be of greater value as they provide opportunities for informal play and serve as a meeting space for young people. This is covered in section eight.

6.24 The map overleaf illustrates the quality of sites, allowing further analysis of the interrelationships between sites and the value of different facilities to the local community.
SECTION 6 – PROVISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Wolverhampton OSS: Quality Scores: Young Person

Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study – Wolverhampton
6.25 The main comments to arise from the City wide quality maps are as follows:

- the majority of higher quality provision for young people is located close to the City centre. Provision in Wednesfield Analysis Area and North Analysis Area is also of particularly high quality

- in contrast, provision towards the south in Central and South Analysis Area and Bilston Analysis Area is of poorer quality. Given that a number of these sites are in close proximity to one another, it could be that a number of them are of limited value in their current role (due to the presence of higher quality sites in the immediate neighbourhood).

- consideration of the usage of sites indicate that many sites focused in the Bilston Analysis Area and Central and South Analysis Area are perceived to be poorly used.

**Area specific application of the local quality, quantity, and accessibility standards**

**Tettenhall Analysis Area**

6.26 Based on the application of the local accessibility, quality and quantity standards, key priority areas for future development are as follows. New facilities should only be provided where the population in the area is sufficient to warrant the provision of a new facility. New facilities should always be developed in consultation with young people.

6.27 The largest area of Wolverhampton with a deficiency in provision for young people can be found in the Tettenhall Wightwick Ward. Given that this area has the fewest number of sites within this typology, it could be anticipated that it would have a larger number of accessibility shortfalls. This area should be considered a priority for further provision in order to meet the local quantity standard. At the present time the nearest provision of young people’s facilities for residents in this area is to the north at Pendeford Open Space (in the northern area). The Tettenhall Wightwick Ward is also deficient in Neighbourhood Parks. As mentioned in Section 3 the development of a District Park at Tettenhall Upper Green and a Pocket Park at Martham Drive Open Space is recommended and these sites could offer the opportunity for the development of provision for young people to meet the needs of local residents. An evident gap is that of a MUGA or skate park, but it is recommended that the type of provision is finalised through more detailed consultation with young people.

6.28 There is another accessibility gap in terms of provision for young people in the Penn area. Neither Bradmore Recreation Ground nor Windsor Avenue Playing Fields contain provision for young people. Should a young person’s facility be located at these sites, this would address deficiencies in this part of the Analysis Area.
SECTION 6 – PROVISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

North Analysis Area

6.29 Provision in the North analysis area is well distributed and all residents are within the catchment of an appropriate facility, despite some quantitative shortfalls. New provision should be considered in order to offset quantitative deficiencies should the opportunity arise. The high quality of facilities in this area should be maintained.

Central and South Analysis Area

6.30 The southern part of the Central and South Analysis Area. This area was also identified as particularly deficient when comparing the current quantity of provision against the local quantity standard. The Neighbourhood Park located within this area (Muchall Park) provides a key opportunity for new provision for young people.

YP 2

Consideration should be given to the provision of facilities for young people in the Tettenhall Wightwick part of the Tettenhall Analysis Area. An evident gap is that of a MUGA or skate park, but it is recommended that the type of provision is finalised through more detailed consultation with young people.

YP 3

Investigate the feasibility (and demand for) new provision for young people within Muchall Park in order to address both qualitative and quantitative deficiencies in Central and South Analysis Area.

YP 3

Investigate the feasibility (and demand for) new provision for young people within Windsor Avenue Playing Fields or Bradmore Recreation Ground in order to address deficiencies.

The very south of Central and South Analysis Area, bordering Bilston Analysis Area, also includes some small areas of deficiency. This area (see diagram) could be considered a priority for further provision, to ensure that residents are within an acceptable travel distance of provision for young people. A facility located at Springvale Neighbourhood Park in this area would address a significant proportion of this deficiency. Additionally there are proposals for MUGAs at both Bilston Urban Village and Greenway Playing Fields in the future and their catchments would assist with addressing the deficiency of this type of open space in the Central and South Analysis Area.
SECTION 6 – PROVISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

YP 4
Provide a new facility for young people within Springvale Neighbourhood Park / Goldthorn Park areas in order to address both qualitative and quantitative deficiencies.

Bilston Analysis Area

6.31 Provision in the Bilston Analysis Area is insufficient to meet local needs in quantitative terms. When the current MUGA provision (which is not used by all young people) is removed from the equation there are some areas of particular quantitative deficiency e.g. a skate park. However, new developments as part of the Bilston Urban Village, are likely to see significant additional growth in the number of facilities available for young people eg a MUGA at this site plus one at Greenway Playing Fields plus a proposal for a skate park at the same site will alleviate the deficiency for this type of provision for young people in this area.

6.32 The catchments of the current overall provision of provision for young people in the Bilston Analysis Area shows most residents are able to access appropriate provision within the recommended distance threshold. Despite this, as highlighted earlier, facilities in the Bilston Analysis Area are of lower quality than other Analysis Areas. Qualitative improvements may therefore be of equal benefit to the local community as the additional planned developments.

YP 5
Recommend provision of a MUGA as part of the Bilston Urban Village development and a MUGA and skate park at Greenway Playing Fields.

6.33 This is further evident when considering the level of use of some sites in Bilston Analysis Area. Of all sites considered to have low levels of usage across the City, three are located in Bilston, specifically:

- John Roberts Open Space Goalposts (plans are underway to replace this site with a Neighbourhood Park, including a MUGA, as part of the Ward Street Masterplan development).
- Cedar Grove (now replaced with a MUGA)
- Coronation Park kickabout

YP 6
Replace existing kickabout at John Roberts Open Space with a MUGA as part of Ward Street Masterplan development.
Explore opportunities to improve provision for young people at Coronation Park and the Lower Bradley / Rocket Pool area.

Wednesfield Analysis Area

6.34 Areas where enhancement could be of greater benefit to the local residents than new provision are highlighted opposite:
SECTION 6 – PROVISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

6.35 Whilst the whole Wednesfield Analysis Area is well served in terms of number of facilities for young people, and provision exceeds the minimum standards in quantitative terms, the majority of these sites are located nearer to the City Centre and there are fewer sites towards the extremes of the Council’s boundaries. In contrast, residents in the northwest of this Analysis Area are served by fewer sites. Furthermore two of these sites are of relatively lower quality compared to the majority of sites across Wolverhampton. The only two sites located within the north of Wednesfield Analysis Area are both based in Ashmore Park; specifically Ashmore Park MUGA and Ashmore Park BMX track.

6.36 In many areas of the City, the facilities for young people serve unique catchment areas and as a consequence these could be considered to be particularly valuable to their local communities regardless of their quality. Therefore improvements to the quality of these sites, whilst also looking at the possibility of delivering further facilities where there are known qualitative deficiencies, could be seen as a priority. All facilities serving unique catchments should be protected from future development.

6.37 There are a number of other examples of geographical areas that are particularly well served by a number of sites in close proximity to one another. Those facilities of poorer quality and / or lower usage could be of relatively limited value in their current capacity to the overall open space network. For example, if an area is known to be deficient in provision for children, but there are currently two facilities for young people in that area – one of high quality and the other of poor quality – it could be argued that the poor quality space could be more effectively redesigned as provision for children. This would enable the children’s play space deficiency to be addressed whilst still catering for young people of the local community. Areas in Wolverhampton where a number of facilities for young people fall in close proximity to one another have been highlighted below.

6.38 There are a relatively high number of facilities for young people in Central and South Analysis Area. As can be seen from the diagram, a number of these are of poor quality, with higher quality sites in the same neighbourhood. As a consequence, they are likely to be of limited value. This situation of overlapping catchments is particularly apparent in the Central and South Analysis Area, with some facilities located almost immediately adjacent. A more even distribution may serve the needs of the wider population more effectively. Farndale Avenue open space (see diagram), located within the Central and South Analysis Area, was both the poorest facility for young people and was considered to have limited usage.

| YP 7 | Consider the value to the local community of facilities where there are significant overlaps in the catchment areas and assess alternative uses for lower quality sites. |

6.40 Wolverhampton has established recommended distances on the siting of young people’s play facilities from people’s houses to avoid conflicts which can arise from having them located too close. As a general guidance minimum distances are generally useful to ensure the sustainability of play facilities to cater for future neighbourhood
SECTION 6 – PROVISION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

needs, although in rare cases a unique set of local characteristics or topography for instance may make it acceptable to slightly reduce such circumstances.

YP 8

Recommend the following minimum distances of young people’s play facilities from dwellings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Distance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multi Use Games Areas (MUGA)</td>
<td>50m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skate Board Parks</td>
<td>100m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unless a case can be made that due to local conditions such conflicts of use or annoyance will not arise.

Summary

6.39 Provision for young people encompasses a wide range of facilities, including MUGAs, informal kick-about areas, teen shelters and skate parks. A recent initiative has seen the development of several new MUGAs across the City and there are other potential sites such as Renton Road, Oxley Park, Bilston Urban Village and Greenway Playing Fields.

6.40 The importance of providing facilities for young people was emphasised throughout consultation, and young people highlighted that spaces close to their homes are particularly well valued, emphasising the desire for local facilities.

6.41 A lack of facilities for young people emerged as a key issue throughout consultation, with many residents feeling that this was a key determinant of mis-use of other sites and anti social behaviour. It must be acknowledged that outdoor provision for young people alone cannot address all of these issues eg Youth Service/youth centres etc have a role to play. The quality of existing provision was perceived to be fair and quantitative deficiencies were perceived to be the most significant issue.

6.42 Application of the local quantity standard highlights that while provision in Wednesfield Analysis Areas is currently sufficient to meet minimum standards much of this provision is in the form of MUGAs (Wednesfield). Other Analysis Areas, particularly Tettenhall, are lacking in facilities for young people.

6.43 Analysis of access to facilities for young people indicates that the distribution of facilities is even and the majority of residents have access to local sites. Despite this, there remain some residents who are outside of the defined catchment for facilities for young people and some that are outside of the catchment for a specific type of facility for young people. New facilities at existing Neighbourhood Parks within the Central and South Analysis Area will ensure that almost all residents have access to some type of provision for young people.

6.44 The quality of facilities is significantly higher in the north of the City, across the Analysis Areas of the North and Wednesfield. Where the distribution and quantity of facilities is sufficient to meet local need, consideration should be given to the enhancement of existing facilities.

6.45 A small number of sites are located in close proximity to each other and serve similar catchments. Consideration should be given to the value of these sites and the appropriateness of redesignation to meet other open space needs of residents. It is essential that any new provision for young people is provided where there is a geographical gap in provision avoiding overlapping catchments.
Outdoor sport facilities

Introduction and definition

7.1 Outdoor sport facilities represent one of the broadest typologies included within the PPG17 Companion Guide. It includes all natural or artificial surfaces either publicly or privately owned used for outdoor sport and recreation. Types of outdoor sports facilities include; sports pitches, tennis courts, bowling greens and golf courses. This category of open space also includes school playing fields (both community and non-community facilities).

7.2 Increasing the number and quality of opportunities to participate in sport and physical activity is likely to assist in the implementation of other equally important objectives such as the need to reduce crime, improve community health, raise levels of self-esteem and provide employment opportunities. Increasing levels of physical activity is taking on increasing importance both locally and nationally.

7.3 Outdoor sports facilities are very much demand-led and as a consequence application of local quantity and accessibility standards should be applied for broad planning need only (to identify overall the adequacy/level of provision). For example, should a neighbourhood of Wolverhampton require further provision of outdoor sport facilities to have a level of provision that is equivalent to other areas within the City, the specific nature of this facility; be it pitches, greens, courts etc, should be based on local demand. Therefore the findings of this section should be read in conjunction with the findings of the Wolverhampton 2007 Playing Pitch Study (Adopted July 2008). The Wolverhampton Playing Pitch Study considers the detailed demand for tennis, bowls, football, cricket, rugby and hockey.

7.4 The land required to deliver new outdoor sport facilities can be sizeable. Provision of sports facilities in dense urban areas such as Wolverhampton can therefore be challenging. Maximising the use of facilities at school sites therefore represents a key opportunity for the Council. Both the extended schools programme and Building Schools for the Future (BSF) should facilitate the delivery of sport at schools sites to ensure that facilities in existing schools are made more accessible and those to be included in new schools are designed with community sport and physical activity use in mind.

7.5 This section of the report sets out the background, strategic context, consultation and current provision for outdoor sports facilities in Wolverhampton and provides a broad overview of areas of deficiency. Built indoor facilities are considered separately and are contained within section nine of this report.

Context

7.6 86% of respondents to the on street survey do not use outdoor sports facilities within Wolverhampton. However within the remaining 14% who do use these facilities, the majority use them more than once a week, showing the demand led nature of this typology and their importance to this group of residents.
SECTION 7 – OUTDOOR SPORT FACILITIES

7.7 The IT young people’s survey reveals that a high percentage (31%) of children and young people also use outdoor sports facilities, primarily grass pitches, tennis and basketball courts. The majority of respondents stated that they use this type of open space once a week or more with the primary reason for using them being either an informal kickabout area (21%) or to meet friends (18%). Respondents stated that they like using this type of open space because it is close to their home (29%) and it is a good place to meet friends (21%).

7.8 This low level of usage across Wolverhampton is consistent with the interim findings of the Active People Survey, where Local Authority participation rates for Wolverhampton showed that just 13.2% of residents participate in at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity sport or active recreation three or more times a week. This is a significantly low level of participation when compared with the national average, which exceeds 20%. Provision of high quality sports facilities in the right place will facilitate the delivery of increased participation in sports across the City.

7.9 Analysis of football participation (Source FA: 2006) suggests that Wolverhampton has poor participation rates in all types of football, with the exception of girls’ football when compared with other members of the Birmingham LFP. This reinforces the findings of the Active People Survey where low levels of participation were identified.

7.10 Consultation with football league secretaries noted that school pitches are used frequently for matches and they are essential in helping to meet the demand for pitches across the City. Some clubs insinuated that a lack of appropriate facilities is a barrier to participation in Wolverhampton.

7.11 Table 7.1 overleaf summarises the strategic context for outdoor sports facilities in Wolverhampton.
### Table 7.1 - Strategic review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)</td>
<td>According to the national CPA indicators for Wolverhampton, 93.94% of residents think that for their local area, over the past three years, that sport and leisure facilities have got better or stayed the same. Statistically using the national quartiles, Wolverhampton is in the top 25% of all results from all Local Authorities with high values.</td>
<td>The CPA indicators for outdoor sports facilities when compared nationally are within the top 25% of national averages, highlighting a high level of satisfaction. In-line with assessing local needs, this highlights the importance of quality of outdoor sports facilities to residents within Wolverhampton. Quality is a key feature of this study and the playing pitch assessment which focuses predominantly on the level of demand and current quality of sports pitches within the.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extended Schools Strategy - Building Schools for the future (BSF)</td>
<td>BSF offers significant opportunities to shape and improve provision of outdoor sports facilities, both through the enhancement of current facilities and through ensuring extended use of these facilities to benefit local communities outside school hours. The Council is currently devising a strategy detailing which facilities will be prioritised for community access to outdoor sports facilities.</td>
<td>School playing fields and pitches offer significant opportunities for additional outdoor sports facilities. This is particularly true where demand exceeds supply. This level of analysis and specific recommendations relating to the BSF will be explored within the playing pitch assessment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PESS Strategy</td>
<td>The emphasis of the PESS strategy (2005) is upon placing learners at the heart of the emerging infrastructure for PE and school sport. It also focuses upon the capital investment required in Wolverhampton schools to support development programmes. The sports colleges and school sport partnerships (SSPs) work within a ‘web’ of PE and sport development networks locally, sub-regionally, regionally and nationally. These, in turn, contribute to and link with wider educational, health and social developments. The LEA, providing a strategic lead, assists sports colleges and SSPs to establish identity within existing structures and works to enable all partners to avoid potential duplication and conflict.</td>
<td>In light of Government targets to increase participation in sport and the commitment highlighted through the ‘sss’ PESS strategy and wider partnership working, outdoor sports facilities will be a valuable tool in helping to achieve these targets and facilitate initiatives being driven forward through the sports development networks and other partners.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Document reviewed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan 2006 | • 2.6 hectares of recreational open space per 1,000 residents in each Neighbourhood Park Area.  
To include the following:  
• 1.2 hectares playing fields used for association football, rugby, hockey, cricket, lacrosse or American football, including those available through dual-use agreements and on private sports grounds  
• 0.4 hectares outdoor playing space for non-pitch sports (bowling greens, tennis courts, athletics tracks, rounders pitches, synthetic courts and cycle tracks), including playing space available through dual-use agreements and on private sports grounds  
• 0.8 hectares of other accessible open space, including formal and informal outdoor playing space for children and accessible natural green space. | The UDP highlights the importance of formal and informal outdoor sports facilities. Informal kickabout areas have been classified as young people’s provision as they are not typically used for competitive sport.  
The existing quantity standards for outdoor sports facilities will be considered within the context of setting quantity standards for this typology. |
| Sport and Recreation Strategy for ABCD area | One of the strategic aims of the sport and recreation strategy for the ABCD area is the commitment to provide the necessary quality and number/availability of sports facilities. The broad aim for doing this is to help increase the level of physical activity in the local population. This is particularly important in the context of the findings of the Active People survey, which suggest that levels of participation in sport are lower in Wolverhampton than the national average | This strategy is specific to an area within Wolverhampton, however the links between the provision of outdoor sports facilities that are good quality and increasing levels of physical activity and participation in sport should not be underestimated. It is an important consideration that applies to the remainder of the area. |
| Wolverhampton Best Value Performance Plan | The Best Value Performance Plan provides results on the Council’s performance based against a series of performance indicators. These indicators have been created and based around the key themes of the Community Plan and the strategic priorities highlighted in the Corporate Plan (2005-2008), Specific performance indicators related to this study include:  
• number of people accessing sport and recreation services  
• satisfaction with sport and leisure facilities | Provision of the right quantity and quality of facilities is paramount in achieving these specific indicators laid out in the Best Value Performance Plan. |
7.12 There are currently 178 outdoor sport facilities in Wolverhampton including facilities in all ownerships. The current provision of facilities is illustrated in Table 7.2 below.

Table 7.2 – Quantity of outdoor sports facilities in Wolverhampton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Areas</th>
<th>Popn</th>
<th>Ha (inc Golf)</th>
<th>No of sites (inc Golf)</th>
<th>Ha (ex Golf)</th>
<th>No of sites (ex Golf)</th>
<th>Ha per 1,000 (inc Golf)</th>
<th>Ha per 1,000 (ex Golf)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>120.06</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>76.91</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>1.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>76.34</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>76.34</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>117.66</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>74.84</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>64.98</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>64.98</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>1.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,361</td>
<td>45.12</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>45.12</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Overall</strong></td>
<td><strong>235,590</strong></td>
<td><strong>431.06</strong></td>
<td><strong>178</strong></td>
<td><strong>338.19</strong></td>
<td><strong>175</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.83</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.13 The main comments arising from this table and the consultation are as follows:

- across Wolverhampton, 19% of residents stated that the level of provision of outdoor sports facilities was sufficient, whilst 11% felt that provision was insufficient.
- golf courses are particularly large sites and are included within the outdoor sports facilities categories, those areas where golf courses are provided (Tettenhall and North Analysis Areas) therefore have significantly higher levels of provision than the other areas of the City.
- when excluding golf courses, the distribution of outdoor sports facilities remains relatively uneven across Wolverhampton. When considering the size of the population in each Analysis Area in relation to the overall level of provision, the North Analysis Area is well provided for, having the largest coverage of outdoor sports facilities in Wolverhampton. Despite this, the majority responses of respondents from the North Analysis Area think that the level of provision is insufficient.
- the third highest level of provision in the City is found within the Tettenhall Analysis Area. Residents in this Area perceived the overall quantity of provision to be about right.
- the level of provision per 1,000 population is lowest within the Bilston Analysis Area, at 1.09 hectares per 1,000 population. This equates to just 59% of the level of provision provided within the North Analysis Area, which serves to highlight the differences in amount of provision across Wolverhampton. The majority response of residents within Bilston Analysis Area regarding the quantity of provision is that the level of provision was insufficient.
- despite having the largest number of outdoor sport facilities (45), the level of provision with Central and South Analysis Area is only 1.33 hectares per 1,000 population. By contrast, the North Analysis Area with the greatest level of provision per 1,000 population has the fewest number of sites. This is because of the existence of some large facilities within this area - such as
Bee Lane Playing Fields. This may indicate that while there are sufficient facilities in terms of quantity, there may be quality and accessibility deficiencies where residents reside some distance from facilities. This issue was also raised during site assessments, where sites were perceived to be poorly distributed across the City.

Current position – quality

7.14 The quality of outdoor sport facilities in Wolverhampton is summarised in Table 7.3 below. All scores are detailed in percentages. The degree to which playing pitches are fit for purpose was investigated in more detail as part of the Playing Pitch Study.

Table 7.3 – Quality of outdoor sports facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Areas</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Range of scores</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>77.9 – 97.3</td>
<td>87.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>73.1 – 95.5</td>
<td>86.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>62.6 – 92.2</td>
<td>81.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>76.2 – 94.2</td>
<td>88.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>77.4 – 95.5</td>
<td>86.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>62.6 – 97.3</td>
<td>86.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.15 The main comments arising from Table 7.3 above and the consultations are as follows:

- the breakdown of the site assessment scores across the Analysis Areas reveals that there is a large variety in the quality of sites across Wolverhampton, and this variation is evident across all Analysis Areas. Despite this, the average score in each area of the City is consistent. Site visits created a general perception that outdoor sports facilities, in particular tennis, bowls and cricket facilities were of good quality. Despite this, the average score obtained by outdoor sports facilities is lower than some other typologies.

- all respondents of the on-street survey were asked to rate the top five features of sports facilities (applicable to outdoor and indoor sports). Highest rated aspirations were maintenance (80%), cleanliness of changing rooms (76%), range of activities (54%), welcoming staff (51%) and accessible routes (45%). There are very few problems experienced with this type of open space (according to users) and site visits highlighted that the cleanliness and maintenance of sites was good. Despite this, some comments arising through consultation during this study focused on the maintenance and quality of pitches, with the majority of people stating that they are poor. Drainage issues are one of the biggest problems that sports clubs face at pitches in Wolverhampton (e.g. Kings C of E School) and the Playing Pitch Study identified a number of pitches in need of improvement. Significant work is currently underway on several Council sites in order to enhance the quality of the pitches and ancillary facilities.

- the majority of football clubs responding to the Sports Club Survey as part of the consultation for the Playing Pitch Study rated the quality of pitches as good to acceptable. 40% of clubs rated the overall quality of pitches as acceptable, whilst a high percentage (38%) stated that they were good. Quality factors scoring poor (although not the majority of respondents) were free draining, length of grass, grass-cover and disabled access to
pitches/facilities. Responses from tennis and bowls clubs in the City highlighted the quality of courts/rinks and additional ancillary facilities were on the main average to good – this is reflective of the ownership of this type of sports facility, usually privately owned and managed.

- although the maintenance specification on Council owned sites has remained the same, the perceptions of local league secretaries is that the standards have fallen. Specific issues relate to grounds maintained by outside contractors, where the grass is cut less often and to a lesser standard than previously and line markings are poor. The infrequency of maintenance, especially around autumn time when leaves have fallen, is a problem as line markings can be hidden making it impossible to play.

- vandalism is perceived to be a major problem, especially to ancillary facilities and equipment such as posts. Dog fouling on public facilities is also a perceived problem and has occasionally meant games being cancelled, as the pitch is deemed unplayable. Whilst there are some poorer quality outdoor sport facilities, the site assessments reveal that problems relating to dog fouling and vandalism are generally isolated.

- consultation reveals that parking provision at many pitch sites is poor which not only affects the playing pitch users but is also a highway safety issue with vehicles parking on-street. This is consistent with the findings of the site assessments, which show that parking is considered to be poor or very poor more regularly than any other quality indicator.

- The condition of changing rooms on Council sites was perceived to be poor and needing replacement

**Current position – accessibility**

7.16 The use of outdoor sports facilities is very specific to its function and is very much a demand-led typology.

7.17 Children and young people are a large user group for outdoor sports, as are specific sports clubs within the City, with 31% of children using outdoor sports facilities regularly. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the majority of young people walk to outdoor sports facilities, with most travelling less than five minutes. 28% of young people also indicated that they cycle to facilities.

7.18 Responses from the on-street survey regarding preferred methods of travel to different types of open space highlighted the variation between types of facilities. Results for all areas included:

- grass pitches – walk (61%), car (34%)
- tennis courts – walk (42%), car (51%)
- bowling greens – walk (50%), car (43%)
- golf courses – walk (13%), car (79%)
- synthetic pitches – walk (31%), car (55%).

7.19 This highlights the differing expectations in Wolverhampton regarding different types of outdoor sport facilities. More people expect to walk to grass pitches and bowling
greens than drive whilst the opposite is the case for golf courses, synthetic pitches and tennis courts. Golf courses were the only outdoor sports facility where almost all residents expected to drive.

7.20 One of the top reasons for using outdoor sports facilities stated by children and young people is, again, that they are located close to home and that they are free to use. Whilst they also commented that it is a place to meet friends they also recognised the value of using such open spaces to play sport.

7.21 Other consultation highlighted a general lack of knowledge and awareness regarding local outdoor sports provision. Signage was again highlighted as an issue through site visits. If participation rates in sport and physical activity are to increase across Wolverhampton it will be necessary to provide both local facilities and facilities that are accessible by the public transport network.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OSF 1</th>
<th>Promote the availability of sports facilities across the City and ensure that facilities are accessible to all sectors of the local community. This should include improved / centralized booking systems for users, increasing signage to sites and maximizing public transport links.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

7.22 Residents suggested that an increase in dual-use facilities may help alleviate problems with young people in providing an increase in accessible facilities. Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and the Primary Schools Capital Programme will both provide significant opportunities to address these issues.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OSF 2</th>
<th>Actively pursue community use at school sites to maximize the number of residents that have access to local facilities. This should be achieved by ensuring that any development proposals secure community use.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Setting provision standards

7.23 In setting local standards for outdoor sport facilities there is a need to take into account any national or existing local standards, current provision, other local authority standards for appropriate comparison and consultation on local needs.

7.24 A full assessment of local needs both City wide and within each area has been undertaken for Wolverhampton. The key messages emerging from this assessment, coupled with an evaluation of the existing audit have been used to determine provision standards required to meet local needs.

7.25 A summary of the key messages emerging from the analysis of existing provision and local need is provided at the end of this section.

7.26 The rationale for each recommendation, including assessment of local need, existing provision and consultation is provided in Appendices H, I and J. The recommended local standards have been summarised overleaf.

7.27 The provision standard for outdoor sports facilities integrates the local standard derived as part of the Playing Pitch Study. This will enable the Council to ensure that the composition of the outdoor sports facility stock meets local needs.
Outdoor sport facilities

*Quantity standard (see Appendix H – standards and justification and worksheet)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing level of provision</th>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.44 hectares per 1,000 population</td>
<td>1.50 hectares per 1,000 population (of which 0.53 Ha should be actual pitch area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.05 hectares of this is located at school sites which are currently not accessible to the wider community.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.54 hectares of the 1.44 ha is actual pitch area (derived from the Playing Pitch Study).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

Golf courses have been removed from all figures due to their size and subsequent tendency to skew figures. Although many school sports sites are not accessible at the current time, they are identified as important resources in both the Playing Pitch Study and through other consultations. School facilities have been included within the calculation, to ensure that they are protected. The Building Schools for the Future and extended schools programmes may offer opportunities to address future shortfalls of provision and ensure additional facilities are available for community use. This may be critical if participation targets are achieved, particularly in terms of providing facilities for peak day activity.

Due to the broad nature of this typology, this standard should be applied for planning need only. Whilst local consultation suggests that the level of provision of grass pitches is about right, the Playing Pitch Study that has been undertaken provides detailed research into the demand for specific sporting facilities and the supply of pitches locally.

In reflecting the demands placed on outdoor sports facilities, and the nature of this standard, it has been recommended that it is set above the current level of provision (1.44 ha) at 1.50 ha per 1,000 population. Additional consultation should inform where this demand is needed most, however results from the local consultation suggest there are demands being placed on STPs, tennis courts and bowling green. To meet this standard, outdoor sports provision would need to increase by 23 ha up to 2021.
### Accessibility standard (see Appendix J)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 minute walk time (720 m) to local outdoor sports (grass pitches, tennis and bowling greens)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 minute drive time (8 km) to synthetic turf pitches and golf courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Justification

There are several factors to consider in setting a standard for outdoor sports facilities. In particular, the range of facilities that lie within this typology makes it difficult to set a meaningful standard that can be applied across the board as per PPG17 requirements. For example, residents have significantly different expectations for synthetic turf pitches (for which they are willing to travel further) than they do for grass pitches (where there is a presumption of more localised provision).

Given the findings from the local consultation, it is suggested that two standards are set, one for grass pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens, and a separate standard for Synthetic Turf Pitches and golf courses to reflect local expectations regarding driving and walked to outdoor sport facilities. The exception to this rule is tennis courts, for which more people expect to drive and yet a walk time standard is recommended. Whilst more people expect to drive to tennis courts, it is important to facilitate sustainable transport methods wherever possible, and given that 42% would expect to walk, an accessibility standard based on walking is recommended for tennis courts as well as grass pitches and bowling greens.

The 75% threshold level for those who expect to walk to grass pitches, tennis and bowling greens ranges from 10 minutes to 20 minutes. As a consequence a 15 minute walk time to these “local” outdoor sports facilities is considered an appropriate standard that will ensure quantitative improvements whilst also focusing on improving the quality of existing provision. This is in line with ensuring sustainable transport choices, to account for the wide mix of facilities types within the standard to meet all expectations.

The 75% threshold levels for those who expect to drive to Synthetic Turf Pitches and Golf Courses are both 20 minutes. Given the more specialist nature of these facilities, and the fact they are usually built in strategic locations to incorporate local demand, a 20 minute drive time standard is recommended.
**Quality standard (see Appendix I)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| “A well-planned, clean and litter free sports facility site that sits in harmony with its surroundings. The site should be well maintained to an appropriate match play standard, with good grass coverage and well-drained quality surfaces. Appropriate ancillary accommodation should be provided at sites with consideration given to providing toilets, changing rooms and car parking. Community-use synthetic turf pitches should be floodlit to comply with quality standards and maximise usage. Meeting places should be provided for both formal and informal sports pitch sites inclusive of sheltered areas and benches, encouraging participation and access for all. The site should be managed appropriately to ensure community safety and provide a local amenity that is close to people's homes, contributing to the health agenda”.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The key issues identified with existing sites: vandalism and graffiti; poor maintenance and poor quality changing facilities are reflected within the vision. The standard incorporates &quot;appropriate management&quot; to ensure that where appropriate, management issues are addressed. Community safety is also incorporated to reflect NPFA design guidelines. It is also important that outdoor sport facilities are well drained and are fit for purpose. Given that general satisfaction regarding outdoor sports facilities is fairly low, it is important that careful consideration is giving to delivering aspirations for outdoor sports facilities. Some quantitative issues can also be addressed through improved quality of pitches. This increases the importance of meeting this quality vision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Given that the majority of sites will be of substantial size, it is important that sites are designed with careful consideration to their context – this is reflected in the quality vision.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Applying the quantity, quality and accessibility standards**

7.28 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those Analysis Areas where local needs are not met, the quality, quantity and accessibility standards are applied and interpreted together.

7.29 The future level of provision required across Wolverhampton to satisfy the local quantity standard is summarised below. It can be seen that there is a large difference between the levels of provision per 1,000 population in the North analysis area compared to the other analysis areas. As a consequence, the application of a wide quantity standard creates a scenario with both large surpluses and deficiencies. The North Analysis Area is the only geographical areas where the current level of provision is currently sufficient in quantity terms to meet local needs.
Table 7.4 – Application of local quantity standard for outdoor sports facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>76.91</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1.4793</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-1.08</td>
<td>-2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>76.34</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>1.3335</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-9.53</td>
<td>-11.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>74.84</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.8420</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>13.89</td>
<td>12.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>64.98</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>1.4648</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-1.56</td>
<td>-3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,361</td>
<td>45.12</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>1.0909</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-16.92</td>
<td>-18.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>235,590</td>
<td>338.19</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>1.4355</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-15.20</td>
<td>-23.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7.30 The recommended local standard is higher than the current provision across four of the Analysis Areas and will therefore require further provision. In order to meet the minimum quantity standard, approximately 23 hectares of outdoor sport facilities would be required by 2021.

7.31 Whilst this table provides a starting point for the quantitative application of the local standards, it is particularly important to consider the spatial location of outdoor sport facilities and their geographical relationships to one another. Figure 7.1 overleaf illustrates the geographical distribution of outdoor sport facilities and the catchment areas these areas serve.

7.32 Table 7.5 below and overleaf summarises the key issues arising from the Playing Pitch Study with regards quantitative shortfalls and surpluses for each sport. Table 7.6 highlights key issues by Analysis Area.

Table 7.5 – Sport specific issues from the Playing Pitch Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sport</th>
<th>Key issues arising</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Football - General</td>
<td>There is overall very good provision of adult football provision especially in the Tettenhall and Wednesfield Analysis Areas. In contrast, there are shortfalls of junior football provision with only Wednesfield Analysis Area having sufficient. There are pressures across the City for junior and mini pitches which are likely to increase as junior and mini football continues to grow. Amendments to the configuration of some of the larger sites (e.g. East Park) should be considered. A short-term recommendation is to have the flexibility to re-designation of adult football pitches in order to best meet demand for junior and mini pitches. It is important to maximise community use agreements at school sites to ensure accessibility to additional facilities, in particular for junior and mini teams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cricket - General</td>
<td>There is a lack of cricket facilities at school sites across the City and due to the emphasis of clubs to forge school / club links to enable growth in participation, provision at school sites and ensuring access to these sites is critical.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Rugby – General

Current rugby provision is sufficient to meet the needs of Wolverhampton Rugby Club. However there is pressure for additional junior pitches if the sport is to continue to develop. School sites should be considered for any increase in provision to help develop rugby around Wolverhampton.

All current pitches should be protected under the Local Development Framework and support should be given to the club where quality improvements are required.

### Hockey

The current stock of synthetic pitches is sufficient to meet the needs of the clubs that are currently playing there. However, the provision of a specialist water based pitch dedicated to hockey would enable increased development within Wolverhampton.

In the long term opportunities to create new synthetic pitch provision should be taken with the aim of providing at least one pitch within each of the Analysis Areas.

There should be a rolling schedule of investment to ensure the quality is maintained especially for replacement surfaces. In the short term the current maintenance regime should be reviewed ensuring that the output specification is sufficient to meet the needs of the users.

### Tennis & Bowls

With regards to both outdoor bowls and tennis, these are in need of improvements to increase the quality of existing facilities and for the long term planning of new facilities in areas currently without access.

### Table 7.6 – Issues for pitch provision across the Analysis Areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>There is a shortage of cricket provision in the North Analysis Area and this is considered a short-term high priority. There are no facilities at school sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>Tettenhall Analysis Area has the best provision of adult football pitches where there are contrasting large shortfalls of junior provision. There is an opportunity to explore the opportunity to convert adult pitches into junior pitches where appropriate. Specific examples that could be re-designated include Tettenhall Upper Green and Windsor Avenue Playing Fields.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>Wednesfield Analysis Area also good provision adult football pitches but in contrast to Tettenhall Analysis Area there are also sufficient junior pitches to meet demand, However, the re-designation of certain adult pitches would allow those clubs (in particular those with a junior section) to have one central venue rather than play at different sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>There is sufficient provision of football facilities in this area although there are small shortfalls of cricket provision. Bilston Analysis Area is the only one where the total level of playing pitch provision is insufficient to meet demand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>Although there is good provision of adult football pitches in this Analysis Area, new junior and mini football provision should be prioritised. There are also small shortfalls in provision of cricket in this area. The overall level of provision is sufficient to meet demand.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The main issues arising from a City-wide assessment of the accessibility of outdoor sport facilities in Wolverhampton (illustrated on the previous page are as follows:

- despite the fact that most areas need further provision to satisfy the local quantity standard, almost all residents within Wolverhampton are within 720m (the local accessibility catchment) of a court or pitch. This illustrates that existing sites are well located to serve local residents but that where possible they should be extended to help address quantitative shortfalls.

- furthermore, it can also be seen that in relation to playing pitches, some Analysis Areas are particularly well served with localised provision whilst others are not. This illustrates that a number of the sites are located in close proximity to one another (with overlapping catchments).

- the highest level of quantitative deficiency can be found in Bilston Analysis Area. Bilston is also the only Analysis Area within the Playing Pitch Study where an overall shortfall of pitch provision was identified. Despite this, it appears that all residents have access to at least one local sports facility.

- whilst all residents are also within the accessibility catchment for Synthetic Turf Pitches and golf courses, it can be seen that existing provision is focused in the North Analysis Area whilst residents in the south of the authority boundary have to travel substantial distances to reach these sites.

The map overleaf illustrates the quality of sites, using the scores derived through the site assessments. Pitch quality is considered in further detail within the Playing Pitch Study.
7.35 The key issues arising from an analysis of the distribution and quality of sites include:

- all Analysis Areas contain outdoor sport facilities of high and low quality, suggesting that high quality facilities are well distributed across the City. Given the quantitative shortfall in provision across the majority of Wolverhampton, it is particularly important to improve the quality of existing sites and ensure that all are fit for purpose.

| OSF 3 | Ensure that all outdoor sports facilities are fit for the purposes intended. Specific improvements required for playing pitches and changing rooms are set out in the Wolverhampton Playing Pitch Study. |

- the most consistently high quality sites can be found in the Tettenhall Analysis Area. The poorest quality site is located within the North Analysis Area.

- although there are significant shortfalls in quantitative terms in the Bilston Analysis Area, the majority of sites are of good quality

- there is also a cluster of high quality sites towards the north of Wednesfield Analysis Area, hence residents in this area are well provided for in terms of outdoor sports facilities.

**Area specific application of the local quality, quantity, and accessibility standards**

7.36 Although the typology of outdoor sports facilities is very broad, it is possible to consider the distribution of provision based on the application of the local accessibility, quality and quantity standards.

7.37 In order to address the quantitative shortfall in outdoor sports facilities there is a need for further provision across the City. In terms of locating priority areas for new facilities, new provision should be targeted at those areas outside of the distance thresholds where these areas contain sufficient people to justify new provision. In this instance, it is evident from the overview map that almost all residents within Wolverhampton are within the distance threshold for outdoor sport facilities. However, there are a number of areas that are currently on the periphery of existing facility catchments and which would benefit from more localised provision of outdoor sport facilities. Consideration should also be given to the type and variety of facilities provided, as where possible residents should be within the catchment of variety of different facilities.

7.38 Additionally, residents moving into the area (and population increases) are likely to place greater demand on existing facilities and will generate the need for new facilities.

| OSF 4 | Ensure that all new developments of 10 or more dwellings contribute towards the provision of outdoor sports facilities, either in terms of new provision or alternatively through improvements to the quality of existing sites. |
SECTION 7 – OUTDOOR SPORT FACILITIES

7.39 Within Analysis Areas that have a good distribution of provision, the other priority for new provision is localised areas of deficiency. These exist where a large residential neighbourhood may have some form of local provision, but where these facilities are too small to satisfy local need.

7.40 The most appropriate remedial action to address quantitative shortfalls in outdoor sport facilities is to address the issues in each Analysis Area, as set out below.

Bilston Analysis Area

7.41 The area with the largest requirement for further provision in order to satisfy local demands for outdoor sport facilities is the Bilston Analysis Area (requirement for a further 21.70 hectares by 2021 to meet the local quantity standard). The Playing Pitch Study supports this, suggesting that there are insufficient pitches to meet demand. The regeneration of parts of the Bilston Analysis Area will provide opportunities to meet this demand, with space for new provision within the Bilston Urban Village.

7.42 Within Bilston Analysis Area, the south and eastern areas (Bilston East and Ettingshall) are less well served in terms of outdoor sports facilities, as the majority of outdoor sports facilities are located in the centre of Bilston. Those areas where provision of outdoor sports facilities is lower are illustrated in the maps above. It can be seen that there are some disused sites within the Analysis Area.

OSF 5

In light of shortfalls of provision in the Bilston Analysis Area, consideration should be given to the development of new facilities and / or the reinstatement of disused or failing sites. The Bradley and Lunt areas currently contain a lower variety of facilities. All opportunities generated to maximise playing facilities through the Bilston Urban Village should be seized.

Central and South Analysis Area

7.43 The area with the second largest requirement for further provision in order to satisfy local demands for outdoor sport facilities is the Central and South Analysis Area (with a requirement for a further 16.15 hectares by 2021 to meet the local quantity standard).
7.44 Whilst the south of Central and South Analysis Area (the ABCD area) is well served by outdoor sport facilities, and plans are in place for further development of facilities, the area towards the centre of the City and around West Park contains fewer facilities – and there are small pockets of residents outside of the 720m distance threshold. In such a densely populated area, there is little potential to create new open spaces and related outdoor sport and recreation facilities. The central area is likely to see significant growth of high-density housing and new outdoor sports provision is therefore essential in this area.

**OSF 6**

In light of population growth and the current distribution of facilities, investigate the opportunities for provision of further outdoor sports facilities within the City centre.

7.45 The Whitmore Reans area, whilst containing a number of small outdoor sport facilities has no grass pitch provision.

**OSF 7**

Investigate the demand for grass pitch facilities in Whitmore Reans - it may be possible to enhance / extend amenity green space to a more formal sports facility. This may be particularly important as participation and consequently demand increases.

7.46 Also in the Central and South Analysis Area, facilities at Bradmore Recreation Ground and All Saints Games Area are perceived to be used infrequently. Consideration should be given to the reasons behind these low levels of usage and these should be addressed accordingly.

**Tettenhall Analysis Area**

7.47 Tettenhall Analysis Area has only a small quantitative requirement for further outdoor sport facilities up to 2021 to meet the local quantity standard. Provision is almost sufficient to meet the needs of the existing population.

7.48 The land in the south of the Tettenhall Analysis Area (Merry Hill and Penn) contains only a limited amount of outdoor sport facilities. In the context of the dense residential development in the area, the delivery of further sites could be problematic.
7.49 The North Analysis Area has the greatest quantity of outdoor sport facilities per 1,000 population, with a level of provision that is above the recommended local quantity standard. Despite this it is important to note that this area contains the fewest number of sites (30). However, it is considered that within this area that no major accessibility deficiencies exist and the emphasis should be on improving the quality of existing provision.

7.50 It can be seen that a number of areas in the North Analysis Area (Bushbury area) are served by only a limited number of outdoor sport facilities. Despite the application of the quantity standard suggesting there is sufficient provision, consideration should therefore be given to any opportunities to increase provision.

7.51 As a consequence, these sites are a particularly valuable element of the green space network. Improving their quality, particularly where some sites are of lower quality, could be seen as a higher priority than making quality improvements in areas already well served by outdoor sport facilities (even if these sites scored lower on the quality assessments).

| OSF 8 | Improve the quality of facilities in the North Analysis Area where they are of particular value to the local community. |

**Summary**

7.52 Participation in sport and physical activity is poor in Wolverhampton compared to other areas of the country according to both Active People and national FA participation statistics. This was also reflected through the on street survey, with less than 15% of respondents indicating that they use outdoor sports facilities.

7.53 Consultation highlights that the quality of outdoor sports facilities across Wolverhampton is perceived to be good and site assessments confirmed this, although there were some variations in quality across the city.

7.54 The Playing Pitch Study highlighted that while there were sufficient facilities to meet demand overall, there are shortfalls of mini and junior pitches. Bilston was the only Analysis Area where there was an overall shortfall of all pitches.

7.55 The application of the quantity and accessibility standards highlights that the distribution of outdoor sports facilities is uneven across the City, with high levels of provision (in terms of hectares) in the North Analysis Area compared to other Analysis Areas. Despite this, all residents are able to access a minimum of one type of outdoor sports facility within the recommended distance threshold.

7.56 While there are no accessibility deficiencies and therefore no clear priorities for new provision, consideration should be given to providing new facilities in
areas where there is currently little variety. Furthermore, it should be ensured that new facilities are provided alongside new residential developments.

7.57 Finally within the consultation and through the findings of the Playing Pitch Study it is evident that the private sports grounds across the City eg bowling and tennis sites are highly valued by the local community and it is essential that these sites are afforded protection through this study and the Playing Pitch Study. Investment should be sought to improve the quality of existing facilities and for the long term planning of new facilities in areas where residents do not currently have access.
Amenity green space

Introduction and definition

8.1 This section relates to amenity green spaces and sets out the definition and background of the typology, strategic context, consultation and current provision. Recommended local standards have been established and these are then applied. It also includes recommendations for the future development of amenity green space within Wolverhampton.

8.2 This type of open space is most commonly found in housing areas. It includes informal recreation spaces and green spaces in and around housing, with a primary purpose of providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work, enhancing the appearance of residential or other areas. Amenity green space provides more of a visual amenity for older residents and a meeting place for young people.

8.3 There are a number of benefits in providing this type of open space including recreation value, a meeting place or focal point for communities. It is also important to recognise and take account of the secondary functions of amenity green space, in particular the visual benefits.

8.4 Amenity green spaces can play an integral role in increasing participation in physical activity across the City, providing local opportunities to participate in activity and informal sport.

8.5 A small percentage of respondents to the on-street survey stated that they use this type of open space most frequently (3%), although 21% of respondents to the IT young people survey highlighted this type of open space as their most frequented.

8.6 Table 8.1 considers the strategic context for amenity green spaces.
### Table 8.1 - Strategic Review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan 2006</td>
<td>The UDP highlights the value of open space in contributing towards visual amenity or landscape value, an area which is often a function of sites falling into the amenity green space typology</td>
<td>Amenity green spaces provide a number of functions, including visual amenity. This is especially important in the context of this study where Wolverhampton is an urban area and amenity green spaces can help to break-up the urban texture of an area. This will be considered within the analysis of provision for this typology.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wolverhampton Unitary Development Plan 2006</td>
<td>The UDP seeks to deliver 2.6 hectares of recreational open space per 1000 residents in each Neighbourhood Park Area - to include 0.8 hectares of “other accessible open space, including formal and informal outdoor playing space for children and accessible natural green space”</td>
<td>Amenity green spaces can fulfil a number of purposes. Whilst its primary purpose is to offer accessible informal green space, it can also provide areas for children, meeting places, informal kick-about areas or opportunities to formalise into other types of space including natural spaces and formalised park facilities. This will be considered in light of existing standards and recommended standards and analysis of their application in relation to other types of open space.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SECTION 8 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

Current position – quantity

8.7 There are currently 436 amenity green space sites in Wolverhampton. The current provision is summarised in Table 8.2 below:

Table 8.2 – Amenity green space in Wolverhampton in comparison with District Park and Neighbourhood Park provision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Areas</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Amenity green space (Total Hectares)</th>
<th>District Parks (Total Hectares)</th>
<th>Neighbourhood Parks (Total Hectares)</th>
<th>Total Parks and AGS (Hectares)</th>
<th>Amenity green space (Hectares per 1000 population)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>18.62</td>
<td>12.39</td>
<td>23.05</td>
<td>54.06</td>
<td>0.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>33.47</td>
<td>24.59</td>
<td>26.08</td>
<td>84.14</td>
<td>0.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>26.45</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>45.69</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>32.61</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>31.49</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,361</td>
<td>36.38</td>
<td>20.48</td>
<td>13.95</td>
<td>70.81</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>235,590</td>
<td>147.53</td>
<td>64.52</td>
<td>140.26</td>
<td>352.31</td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.8 The provision of amenity green space should be closely linked with the provision of District Parks and Neighbourhood Parks in each Analysis Area as both fulfil similar roles in terms of providing recreational open space. Both District and Neighbourhood Parks provide a wider variety and generally a higher quality of facilities than amenity green spaces and are therefore frequently more attractive to the user when offered a choice of amenity spaces or parks.

8.9 Neighbourhood Parks or Pocket Parks providing an array of facilities may also fulfil the role of amenity green spaces and residents may place increased importance on these sites rather than dispersed amenity green spaces. In areas without park provision, amenity green space will have increased significance in providing local recreational opportunities for residents.

8.10 The quantity of amenity green space is varied across the five Analysis Areas. Tettenhall Analysis Area contains considerably lower provision in quantitative terms than other areas. Even when this is considered in the context of District Park and Neighbourhood Park provision the Tettenhall Analysis Area still has the lowest quantitative levels with a total of 54.06 hectares including amenity green space.

8.11 The Analysis Area with the highest levels of amenity green space provision is Bilston Analysis Area (0.88 hectares per 1000 population) which is more than double that of Tettenhall Analysis Area (0.36 hectares per 1000 population). The Bilston area however contains a lower overall level of district and neighbourhood parks and the total open space dedicated to informal recreation is only average for the city.

8.12 The provision of amenity green space alongside parks is considered at a Ward level in Table 8.3.
Table 8.3 – Distribution of Parks and amenity green space by Ward

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ward</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>All Parks (Hectares)</th>
<th>AGS (Hectares)</th>
<th>Total Parks and AGS (Hectares)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bilston East</td>
<td>11478</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>16.45</td>
<td>17.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston North</td>
<td>11810</td>
<td>8.36</td>
<td>8.22</td>
<td>16.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blakenhall</td>
<td>11301</td>
<td>8.34</td>
<td>5.76</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushbury North</td>
<td>12021</td>
<td>23.15</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>30.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bushbury South and Low Hill</td>
<td>14103</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>17.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Park</td>
<td>10452</td>
<td>20.33</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>24.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ettingshall</td>
<td>10839</td>
<td>7.65</td>
<td>12.98</td>
<td>20.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fallings Park</td>
<td>10996</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>12.57</td>
<td>13.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graiseley</td>
<td>11691</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>5.38</td>
<td>7.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heath Town</td>
<td>10876</td>
<td>4.28</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>13.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merry Hill</td>
<td>11893</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>8.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oxley</td>
<td>12848</td>
<td>24.44</td>
<td>7.03</td>
<td>31.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park</td>
<td>12844</td>
<td>31.24</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>34.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penn</td>
<td>12392</td>
<td>8.47</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>9.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Springvale</td>
<td>12588</td>
<td>13.11</td>
<td>5.86</td>
<td>18.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Peter's</td>
<td>14472</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>11.44</td>
<td>13.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall Regis</td>
<td>12000</td>
<td>13.45</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>16.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall Wightwick</td>
<td>10832</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield North</td>
<td>10978</td>
<td>4.54</td>
<td>10.84</td>
<td>15.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield South</td>
<td>11195</td>
<td>13.74</td>
<td>7.94</td>
<td>21.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OVERALL</strong></td>
<td><strong>237609</strong></td>
<td><strong>204.78</strong></td>
<td><strong>147.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>352.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.13 The main comments arising from these tables are:

- In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those Wards where local needs are not met, quantity and accessibility deficiencies need to be considered in parallel.
a similar pattern continues when analysing provision of both amenity green space and parks at a Ward level, with a large variation in the levels of provision of amenity green space and parks across the Wards. The Wards with least provision (less than 15 hectares of combined amenity green space and Parks) are Blakenhall, Fallings Park, Graiseley, Heath Town, Merry Hill, Penn, St Peter’s Ward and Tettenhall Wightwick. The largest amount of combined provision (over 25 hectares) can be found Oxley, Bushbury North, and Park Wards. However it must be noted that this does not take account of whether a Ward falls within the catchment of a District or Neighbourhood Park.

there is little correlation between Analysis Areas with large quantities of amenity space and those wards that are well provided for in terms of parks. Analysis of the table above does however provide an indication of areas of the City where amenity green spaces are particularly highly valued as there are no or limited Parks provision; specifically Tettenhall Wightwick, where amenity green space provides the only resource for residents, as was also highlighted in section three.

8.14 Very few people stated they use amenity green space as their most frequently visited open space and 88% of respondents stated that they do not use amenity green space at all. However many residents may not realise they have used amenity green space sites and may not have acknowledged the visual amenity they offer.

8.15 However, within a dense urban area like Wolverhampton those residents within the accessibility catchment of a District Park and / or Neighbourhood Park are less likely to use amenity green spaces due to their comparatively limited functionality. These spaces are likely to be particularly important in terms of visual amenity and this was a key issue reflected in consultations. 21% of children and young people use amenity green space, again reinforcing the value that young people and children place on local provision, particularly as they are free to use and are a good place to meet friends.

8.16 In total, 45% of residents stated that there are sufficient amenity green spaces within the City and only 14% felt that more should be provided.

Current position – quality

8.17 The quality of amenity green space sites across Wolverhampton is summarised below in Table 8.4.

Table 8.4 – Quality of amenity green spaces in Wolverhampton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Areas</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Range of scores</th>
<th>Average Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>76% – 92.5%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>67%-93%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>72.5% – 92.2%</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>72%-91.2%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>48% - 94%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ble 8.4 on the previous page, and consultations undertaken as part of the study demonstrate that:

- there is a greater variation in the quality of amenity green spaces than any other type of open space in the City, with analysis of the quality scores indicating that sites range from 48% to 94%. This suggests that amenity spaces are of poorer quality than some other types of open spaces.

- this was reflected in consultation, where the quality of this type of open space was an ongoing issue raised by residents living in all areas of the City. A number of people suggested that the Council should seek sponsorship of open spaces to increase the level of funding available to maintain sites – something that could be applicable for improving amenity green spaces, in particular the larger sites in the City.

- specific issues raised related to declining quality over the years specifically (e.g. Tettenhall Village Green) with regard to the grass-cutting and varying maintenance regimes. Other recurring general comments were concerned litter, dog fouling and anti-social behaviour. Despite this, site assessments highlighted few issues with dog fouling, litter and vandalism, although concerns over the level of maintenance were echoed through site visits, where maintenance was the most frequently poorly rated element.

- issues with noise at sites, and poor quality pathways and vegetation also emerged through analysis of site visits as a key issue for amenity green spaces across the City.

- many residents suggested that the anti-social behaviour and resulting vandalism and graffiti is linked to the use of these spaces by young people and a perception that there is a lack of alternative activities for children to do. This is reflected in the findings of the IT young people survey.

- it was suggested that a major downfall of amenity green spaces is uncertainty over their primary purpose and function if they are intended to serve children and young people as play spaces then there is a need for them to be designed and maintained accordingly.

- site visits echoed this concern to an extent, as some sites contained no ball game sites, prohibiting informal recreation and many sites were perceived to be small pieces of amenity space with a limited function other than visual amenity.

**Current position – access to amenity green spaces**

8.19 90% of respondents to the on street survey across Wolverhampton indicated that they would expect to walk to amenity green spaces, reinforcing the local nature of these facilities and the role that they play. All responding residents in Bilston Analysis Area would expect to walk to all of these sites. The highest levels of reliance on cars could be found in Tettenhall Analysis Area, where car ownership is the highest in the City and as a consequence, 16% would expect to drive to amenity green spaces.
8.20 This highlights how easy access is key to the function of such spaces, an issue reflected within the findings of the IT young people survey, where it was apparent that residents use these spaces due to the close proximity of their houses.

8.21 Although site assessments suggest that amenity green spaces are accessible to local residents, it can be seen that paths within some sites are less accessible. Some larger amenity green spaces also contained parking, facilitating access for those who wished to drive.

**Setting local standards**

8.22 Local standards for amenity green spaces have been set taking into consideration national, regional and local standards and the findings of the local needs assessment and existing consultation. The recommended standards are derived from the findings of the local needs assessment and existing audit and are therefore directly representative of local needs.

8.23 A full assessment of local needs both Citywide and within each Analysis Area has been undertaken for Wolverhampton, and the key messages emerging from this assessment, coupled with an evaluation of the existing audit have been used to determine provision standards required to meet local needs.

8.24 The rationale behind each local standard, including assessment of local need, existing provision and consultation is provided in Appendices H, I and J. The recommended local standards have been summarised overleaf.
SECTION 8 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

Quantity standard (see Appendix H – standards and justification and worksheet)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing level of provision</th>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.62 hectares per 1000 population</td>
<td>0.62 hectares per 1000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Justification

The current level of provision is equivalent to 0.62 hectares per 1000 population. Of those residents who expressed an opinion (on street survey) only 9% think that the level of provision is insufficient, whilst 36% think that the level of provision is about right. Whilst consideration has been given to a standard that is lower than the current level of provision, consultation highlights the importance of these sites for recreational and landscape purposes in breaking up the urban texture and providing green space in what would otherwise be a built up area. Therefore a standard equivalent to the existing level of provision is recommended. This will enable the Council to focus on improvements to the quality of sites to ensure that each area fulfils a role that is complementary to the surrounding green space network.

The recommended local standard shows that the greatest requirement for amenity green space is within Tettenhall and Central and South Analysis Areas. However, in terms of the application of the recommended quantity standards, it is important to consider the provision of amenity green spaces alongside the provision of District Parks and Neighbourhood Parks. Amenity green spaces are smaller facilities that tend to attract only local users. Those residents living within close proximity to a Neighbourhood / District Parks may have no need for local amenity green space as well although this type of open space will still be important in the context of visual amenity. Therefore whilst locational deficiencies may exist within Tettenhall and Central and South Analysis Areas, it is important to remember that these areas are well served by either District or Neighbourhood Parks.
Accessibility standard (see Appendix J)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 minute walk time (240 m)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Given the large emphasis on walking rather than driving in terms of the expectations of respondents it is suggested that a walking standard is set. The expressed desire for local amenity green space supports the perception that a standard based on travelling on foot is most appropriate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At a City-wide level, the 75% threshold level from the on street survey of a 10 minutes walk is higher than the modal response (5 minutes). Whilst setting a standard based on the 75% threshold level of a 10-minute walk time has been considered, this has to be rationalised against the local nature of amenity green spaces. This point was made through the IT young people’s survey, with the majority of those surveyed currently walking less than 5 minutes. In the absence of other forms of open space, sport and recreation provision within close proximity to residents, the value of localised amenity green spaces is particularly important. Applying a lower walk time will highlight real priority areas of deficiency. Furthermore, whilst having a smaller distance threshold will reveal a larger number of accessibility deficiencies, within these areas the provision of alternative forms of open space can often substitute for provision of informal amenity green spaces and new amenity green spaces will not also be a priority in these areas. A smaller accessibility catchment is also more appropriate given the urban nature of Wolverhampton and will ensure all residents have local access to some type of open space, facilitating delivery of increased participation. The importance of local provision to break up the urban landscape should not be underestimated.
**Quality Standard (see Appendix I)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“A clean and well-maintained green space site that is accessible to all. Sites should have appropriate ancillary furniture (litter-bins, etc.), and pathways and landscaping designed to provide a safe secure site with a spacious outlook that enhances the appearance of the local environment and provides a safe area for young people to meet. Larger sites should be suitable for informal play opportunities and should be enhanced to encourage the site to become a community focus, while smaller sites should at the least provide an important visual amenity function.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The local consultation reveals that amenity green spaces are one of the least used types of open spaces in the area. This suggests that whilst areas serve an important visual purpose, they provide little recreational and usable functions for local areas. The importance of their visual amenity function further emphasises the need to ensure the quality of these sites.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Provision of amenity green space needs to be considered in the context of District and Neighbourhood Parks, to ensure that they are complimentary to the wider green space network and increasing their level of usage. For this reason, it is particularly important for larger sites to contain informal play opportunities and for smaller sites to provide an important visual amenity function and promote a sense of ownership. |

Amenity green spaces can serve an important function in urban areas, breaking up the urban fabric. As a consequence, one of the important aspects in the vision is for a spacious outlook. This is also reflective of local consultation comments stating that sites are often confined to small cramped areas that aren’t of sufficient size to enable informal play or more formalised play facilities. The standard incorporates both public and council aspirations and has been designed to promote best practice encouraging informal play where sites are large enough - it is also designed to link in with the Green Flag criteria where appropriate. |

**Applying local standards**

8.25 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those Analysis Areas where local needs are not met, the quality, quantity and accessibility standards are applied and interpreted together.

8.26 It is important to consider the provision of amenity green spaces in the wider context of open space across the City, in light of the overlapping roles that this space has with Parks, natural areas and provision for children and young people.

8.27 The map overleaf highlights the catchments served by amenity green spaces across the City. The second map provides an indication of the distribution of the facilities and the relative quality of these sites.

8.28 Table 8.5 overleaf illustrates the results of an application of amenity green space in each Analysis Area of the City, providing an indication of where new quantitative provision is required to meet the identified local standards.
Table 8.5 – Quantity of amenity green spaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Current provision per 1,000 population</th>
<th>Local Standard</th>
<th>Surplus / Deficiencies (ha) - Current</th>
<th>Surplus / Deficiencies (ha) - Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>-13.61</td>
<td>-14.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>-2.02</td>
<td>-2.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>0.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>4.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>10.74</td>
<td>10.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>-1.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.29 Table 8.5 above highlights that:

- whilst the current level of provision of amenity green space across the City is sufficient to meet the local standard, population growth will result in a slight shortfall by 2021.

- provision in the Tettenhall Analysis Area is significantly below the level required to meet the recommended local standard and an additional 14.34 ha will be required by 2021.

- in contrast, provision within the Bilston and Wednesfield Analysis Areas are significantly above the required standard, indicating that in quantitative terms, there is sufficient provision to meet the identified local demand.

- when considering the provision of amenity green space in the overall context of Neighbourhood and District Parks, only the Tettenhall and Central and South Analysis Areas have insufficient quantitative provision to meet local standards.
8.30 It can be seen from Figures 8.1 and 8.2 that:

- whilst there are large quantities of amenity green space across Wolverhampton, there remains some residents who fall outside the recommended catchment for amenity green spaces. The catchment of 240m (a five minute walk) recognises the desire for local facilities.

- high numbers of residents in the Tettenhall and Central and South Analysis Areas of the City are outside of the catchment for amenity green spaces, this is also reflected in the application of the quantity standards where these areas are both considered to be deficient.

- despite the application of the quantititative standards indicating that there is sufficient provision within the Bilston, Wednesfield and North Analysis Areas, it can be seen that there are still some residents outside of the accessibility catchment for these facilities.

- analysis of the distribution of facilities in terms of quality highlights that in a similar fashion to some other types of open space, there are more higher quality amenity spaces in the North Analysis Area than in the southern parts of Central and South, Tettenhall and Bilston Analysis Areas. There is also a cluster of poorer quality facilities within the Wednesfield Analysis Area.

AGS 1

In light of the importance placed on local provision by residents, and the opportunities that these sites provide in terms of increasing participation in physical activity, the role of all poor quality sites should be reviewed and those considered valuable to the local community (in terms of level of use) should be enhanced.

8.31 Consultation highlighted varying perceptions of the overall quality and value of amenity green spaces. As a consequence, all providers of amenity green spaces should strive to achieve the recommended quality vision at all sites, in order to ensure that amenity spaces meet the needs of the local community.

8.32 As previously highlighted, in light of the overlapping roles of amenity green space and Parks, consideration has been given to the provision of these sites in relation to each other. This can be seen in the map overleaf.

8.33 The distribution of the population (mastermap base data) has been removed from the map in order that the interrelationship between Parks and amenity green spaces can be clearly defined.

8.34 Whilst it is important that shortfalls in the provision of amenity green space are identified, the findings of the consultation clearly highlight the importance of Parks over more localised amenity green. Recommendations for new park provision, with a greater range of facilities, should be prioritised over the development of new amenity green spaces. However, the value of amenity green spaces as visual amenities should be protected across the City.
8.35 It can be seen from the previous maps that many amenity green space sites are located in areas where residents do not have access to Neighbourhood Parks. These sites are therefore particularly important as a local recreational resource and should be protected.

| AGS 2 | Protect all amenity green space sites from development where they are the only recreational open space within the locality, this is particularly an issue in Bilston Analysis Area, southern parts of Tettenhall Analysis Area and pockets within the other three Analysis Areas |

8.36 The role of amenity green spaces in terms of providing a visual amenity should not be underestimated. These spaces are particularly important in the landscaping of dense urban areas.

| AGS 3 | The importance of the wider benefits of amenity green space, including the visual amenity these sites provide should be recognised and acknowledged. |

8.37 While the presence of amenity green space in local areas within the Analysis Area does not mitigate the need for local Park provision, as a minimum it ensures that all residents are able to access a minimum of one type of local recreational open space. Areas where residents are outside of the catchments for Parks and amenity green spaces should therefore be prioritised for new provision of open space.

| AGS 4 | Prioritise appropriate improvements to key green amenity areas where suitable to meet the needs of residents, where they live outside of the recommended accessibility catchments for any type of open space and any planned new provision. |

8.38 The following sections provide an indication of priorities and issues that have emerged from the application of the quantity and accessibility standards through the site assessment scores within each of the Analysis Areas of the City:

**Tettenhall Analysis Area**

8.39 The largest deficiencies of amenity green space in quantitative terms are located within the Tettenhall Analysis Area (in both Tettenhall Regis, Tettenhall Wightwick and Merry Hill Wards). Although the distribution of amenity green spaces within this area is even, there are significant numbers of residents outside of the catchment of any amenity green space, as illustrated above. Despite this, the average quality of sites is the highest of all Analysis Areas of the City.
8.40 While the far north of the Tettenhall Analysis Area is well provided for in terms of Parks and amenity green spaces, the southern part of the Analysis Area is less so. It can be seen (across) that there are many residents outside of the catchment of any recreational open space, and some residents who are only able to access amenity green space sites.

**AGS 5** Identify opportunities to provide amenity green spaces in the South Merry Hill/South Penn area of Tettenhall Analysis Area which is devoid of any facilities. Priority should be given to those areas deficient in parks open space, specifically the western areas of Tettenhall Regis and Tettenhall Wightwick areas. The Council should address some of these deficiencies through the development of a District Park at Tettenhall Upper Green.

**AGS 6** Protect all amenity green spaces within the south and western area of Tettenhall as they provide important recreational resources for local residents. Consider the conversion of Martham Drive Open Space to form a Pocket Park (in Tettenhall Wightwick) in order to address deficiencies in this area and provide a wider variety of recreational amenities for residents across a larger catchment.

**AGS 7** In light of the high value placed on amenity green spaces in south Tettenhall Wightwick / Merry Hill (in the absence of any current parks), consideration should be given to enhancing facilities of lower quality.

8.41 Despite the quantitative shortfalls of amenity green space provision in Tettenhall Analysis Area, there are several amenity green spaces sites with overlapping catchments (particularly in Oxley) and therefore serving the same residents. Despite the high quality of all of these sites, in light of the overlapping catchments consideration should be given to the value of these sites in their current role.

**AGS 8** Consider the value of the sites with overlapping catchments in the Tettenhall Analysis Area in the context of determining whether these may be more effective in meeting local needs if the primary purpose of the site was changed.
SECTION 8 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

Central and South Analysis Area

8.42 Application of quantitative standards to the Central and South Analysis Area also suggests that additional provision is required to meet quantitative standards. This is further reflected when considering the distribution of facilities, similarly to Tettenhall Analysis Area, there are residents outside of the catchment for amenity space sites. Despite this, the majority of people residing within this Analysis Area have access to either amenity space or District or Neighbourhood Park; primarily due to the presence of the largest site in the City: West Park. The area of this Analysis Area without access to either type of open space is illustrated across. In light of changing trends of housing in this area, and the increase in high-density flats in the City centre (meaning greater number of people with no private facilities) deficiencies in this area could be considered to be of high importance.

AGS 9

Investigate the feasibility of providing amenity green space in the Penn/Goldthorn/Blakenhall area of the City to meet the needs of residents who do not currently have access to any type of open space. This area was also highlighted as a key priority for the provision of Pocket Parks was considered. This area is also deficient in provision for children play facilities.

8.43 In some areas of the Central and South Analysis Area, amenity green space is the only type of recreational open space accessible to local residents within the relevant thresholds. In these instances, the amenity green space is of particular importance and should be protected and enhanced where appropriate. The site illustrated below is of the greatest significance as it is the nearest open space for a number of residents living outside of the catchment for any facility and is therefore likely to be highly valuable to the local community.

North Analysis Area

8.44 The quantity of amenity green space provision in the North Analysis Area of the City is sufficient to meet minimum quantity standards and furthermore, the quality of these sites is also high. Despite this, again there are residents outside of the distance threshold for amenity green spaces.

8.45 Within the North Analysis Area, there are also perceived to be insufficient District Parks and not enough Neighbourhood Parks. However, the combined quantity of provision is considered to be about right to satisfy the local standard. The development of Oxley Neighbourhood Park as part of the redevelopment of the former Goodyear site may alleviate this deficiency. The development of Pendeford Open Space may also alleviate deficiencies across the north area. In light of local priorities, this should be prioritised over the provision of any further amenity green space.
In the parts of the North Analysis Area currently devoid of recreational open space, new provision should be prioritised in the form of the new Oxley Neighbourhood Park, development of a new neighbourhood park at Pendeford Open Space or new amenity green space.

Like other areas of the City, the North Analysis Area contains a number of residents for whom amenity green space is the only type of accessible recreational space. In light of the sufficient provision of amenity green space, the redesignation of some of these sites to support the development of Pocket Parks may provide an opportunity to address these deficiencies and better meet local needs. Amenity green spaces in the Fordhouses area of North Analysis Area are of particular importance, as there are no facilities for children located in this area and one or more of these amenity green space sites therefore offer the only opportunities for play.

Areas of amenity green space in the North Analysis Area which are currently the only type of recreational space should be protected. The appropriateness of the redesignation of some sites to Neighbourhood or Pocket Parks should be considered.

Like the Tettenhall analysis area, there are many amenity spaces with overlapping catchments. The value of these sites should be considered in the context of determining whether these may be more effective in meeting local needs if the primary purpose of the site was changed.

Provision of amenity green spaces in Bilston Analysis Area is the highest of all of the Analysis Areas when measured against the local standard. Regeneration opportunities through the Bilston Urban Village development will also provide further opportunities to tailor facilities to meet the needs of the local population. Perhaps unsurprisingly in light of high quantity of provision, the majority of residents in Bilston Analysis Area are able to access local amenity green space, with only residents in the very centre of the area (Ettingshall) and a small number of residents in Bilston East (pictured) falling outside of the catchment.

New amenity green space in the areas of Bilston Analysis Area currently devoid of local facilities should be considered alongside the proposals for Pocket Park developments.

Amenity green space is currently of particularly high value in the south of Bilston Analysis Area (Bilston East Ward), with residents living outside of the distance thresholds for both District and Neighbourhood Parks. All amenity
spaces are therefore of high value to these residents. This is further reinforced when considering amenity green space in the context of provision for children. This area of Bilston Analysis Area is particularly deficient in terms of provision for children and therefore amenity green space sites currently serve this role.

8.50 Similar to other Analysis Areas there are high numbers of small sites which are of limited recreational value. In the absence of a Park, this takes on greater significance. The presence of high numbers of these sites supports the opportunities (and recommendations in section three) for the redesignation of amenity green space to Neighbourhood and Pocket Parks. Potential opportunities are highlighted below:

| AGS 13 | Redesignate a large amenity green space site to offset unmet demand for a Park within the Lower Bradley area. |

8.51 In light of the high number of small sites in Bilston Analysis Area, consideration should be given to the long-term value of amenity green spaces to the local community. This is of particular relevance in the area illustrated opposite, where there are clusters of small sites with overlapping catchments, some of which are also of poor quality.

**Wednesfield Analysis Area**

8.52 Like Bilston Analysis Area, provision of amenity green space in Wednesfield Analysis Area is sufficient to meet local needs in quantitative terms, particularly towards the eastern edges of the City boundaries where there are numerous sites. However there is no provision for children in this area and therefore these spaces are likely to take on increased importance to local residents.

8.53 There remain some residents outside of the catchment areas of an amenity green space as illustrated below, and any new provision of amenity spaces should be focused in these areas:
8.54 Amenity spaces in western Wednesfield Analysis Area are of particular value as residents in this area are currently outside of the catchments for Neighbourhood and District Parks. These sites should therefore be protected as amenity green space. Sites located on the periphery of the Wednesfield and North Analysis Areas may provide a good opportunity for the redesignation of amenity spaces to Pocket Parks.

| AGS 14 | Protect amenity green space sites to the West of the Wednesfield Analysis Area. Investigate opportunities to redesignate one of these sites as a Neighbourhood Park, serving residents in the north east of Wolverhampton. |

Summary

8.55 This type of open space is most commonly found in housing areas. It includes informal recreation spaces and green spaces in and around housing, with a primary purpose of providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work, enhancing the appearance of residential or other areas. Amenity green space provides more of a visual amenity for older residents and a meeting place for young people.

8.56 There are a number of benefits in providing this type of open space including recreation value, a meeting place or focal point for communities. It is also important to recognise and take account of the secondary functions of amenity green space, in particular the visual benefits.

8.57 Consultation with children and young people highlighted that amenity green space is their most frequently used facility. This reinforces the value of these sites. Despite this, some residents questioned the value of amenity spaces in the City, indicating that they are misused and have little recreational value, however their visual value should not be underestimated.

8.58 Consultations also highlighted that while the provision of amenity green space in most areas of the City is perceived to be sufficient, the quality of sites is more varied and many residents highlighted issues of vandalism, graffiti, antisocial behaviour and poor maintenance. Despite this, few problems were evident at amenity green spaces during site visits, although the quality of amenity green space sites was significantly lower than other types of green space in the City.

8.59 In light of the overlapping roles of amenity spaces and Neighbourhood Parks, provision of amenity green spaces has been considered both individually and within the context of the Park facilities (Both District and Neighbourhood Parks).

8.60 Analysis of the application of the recommended quantity standard suggests that while provision in Bilston, North and Wednesfield Analysis Area is sufficient to meet local needs, both the Tettenhall and Central and South Analysis Areas of the City have substantially less provision.

8.61 The application of accessibility standards supports this issue, indicating that there are areas of deficiency across the City, but primarily within the Tettenhall and Wednesfield Analysis Areas. Opportunities to address these
deficiencies should be considered, focusing primarily on areas where residents do not have access to any informal open space (including Parks) and many of the recommendations link with those already cited in previous sections of this report.

8.62 The importance of amenity green spaces to some residents is also evident, with analysis highlighting areas where amenity green space is the only type of informal open space provided and residents also have no access to facilities for children. In these instances, these spaces are likely to be particularly highly valued.

8.63 Overall it is recommended due to the dual role of amenity green space that these types of open space are protected and enhanced.
Indoor sport facilities

Introduction and definition

9.1 This section considers the provision of sports hall and swimming pool facilities in Wolverhampton. The methodology for the assessment of indoor facilities is slightly different to other PPG17 typologies in that specific demand modelling can be undertaken in line with Sport England parameters.

9.2 The provision of community halls in the context of sports halls has also been considered.

9.3 While indoor sports facilities have a key role to play in increasing participation and health, open spaces are also central to the achievement of these objectives as highlighted throughout this study.

Figure 9.1 – Aldersley Leisure Village

Strategic drivers for facility provision

Making the case for sport

9.4 Over recent years the role of sport and active recreation in delivering quality of life benefits has been increasingly recognised at a national level and is driven by Game Plan: a strategy for delivering Government’s sport and physical activity objectives (DCMS/Strategy Unit, December 2002). Game Plan outlines the Government’s long term vision for increasing participation and high performance in sport:

“by 2020 to increase significantly levels of sport and physical activity, particularly among disadvantaged groups, and to achieve sustained levels of success in international competition”

9.5 The Government wants to encourage the growth of a mass participation culture, with the ambitious target of ensuring that 70% of the population is active.

9.6 Game Plan’s remit is wider than sport alone. It recognises the link between physical activity and improving health and the importance of focussing on young people. In achieving these links and participation increases, there is recognition of the need for more innovative solutions to sport and recreation provision.
9.7 The Framework for Sport is a new strategic vision for the delivery of sport until 2012. It details how Sport England proposes to deliver Game Plan’s targets of increasing participation in physical activity and sport. Following from Game Plan, this strategy also recognises the wider role that sport can have and outlines seven main outcomes of change:

- increasing participation in sport and physical activity
- improving levels of performance
- widening access
- improving health and well-being
- creating stronger and safer communities
- improving education
- benefiting the economy.

Active people

9.8 Sport England recently undertook a comprehensive survey researching participation levels in sport and physical activity. The first year report found that the percentage of adults participating in at least 30 minutes moderate intensity sport and active recreation (including recreational walking) on three or more days a week in Wolverhampton City Council is 13.2% compared to 21% nationally. This indicates that there is a poor level of participation in physical activity across the City.

9.9 In contrast, the report also states that the level of volunteers within the City is similar to the national average, at 4.8% of the population compared to 4.9% nationally.

The drive towards sustainable communities

9.10 The case for sport is further illustrated in Sport Playing Its Part: The Contribution of Sport to Building Safe, Strong and Sustainable Communities (Sport England, 2005) which outlines how sport and active recreation has the potential to contribute to strengthen community involvement, engagement, identity and civic pride.

9.11 Sport and other cultural (or leisure) services can be a powerful tool to engage all sections of the community and break down barriers between them. The report notes that marginalised groups are often more willing to engage in such activities than other government funded initiatives.

9.12 ‘Physical activity and sport can be used as a means of bringing people together from different communities to share positive experiences and gain greater understanding of each other’s ways of life’ Community Cohesion – An Action Guide, Local Government Association, 2004.
9.13 Reinforcing the role that sport can play in meeting wider corporate objectives, the report outlines a number of areas that sport contributes to, including:

- strengthening community involvement, engagement, identity and pride
- improving community cohesion
- reducing crime and anti-social behaviour
- improving quality of built and natural environment and creating a sense of place
- encouraging sustainable travel.

9.14 At a national level the Department for Communities and Local Government’s aim is to create prosperous, inclusive and sustainable communities for the 21st century, places where people want to live, that promote opportunity and a better quality of life for all. At the core of all of its activities is one overarching aim – to create thriving, vibrant, sustainable communities which will improve everyone’s quality of life.

9.15 The Sustainable Communities Plan, ODPM\(^1\) (2003) was launched in 2003 and outlines a £38 billion programme of action for economic, social and environmental development in both urban and rural areas in England.

9.16 One key requirement for this plan is the provision of good quality local public services including education and training opportunities, health care and community facilities especially for leisure. This is central to what the Council aspires to provide the local community. The analysis and subsequent recommendations will ensure that the Council is providing high quality local public leisure services in the long term.

9.17 PPS1 further reinforces this concept, highlighting the importance of planning for sustainable development.

Health Improvement

9.18 Sport Playing Its Part: The Contribution of Sport to Healthier Communities (Sport England) notes that improving the health of the nation and tackling health inequalities are high priorities with clear messages about the importance of preventative health, and on the contributions that sport and physical activity can make. Regular participation in sport can:

- decrease the likelihood of ill health and illness such as cardio-vascular disease, diabetes, some types of cancer and decreasing mortality risk
- help tackle obesity
- assist with recovery and prevent recurrence of health problems after illness or injury

---

\(^1\) Now the Department for Communities and Local Government
• support healthy growth in young people, encouraging adoption of a healthy lifestyle and a decrease in specific health issues such as substance abuse and teenage pregnancy

• contribute to older people leading more independent lives.

9.19 These messages link directly to the health policy context and the Choosing Health Government White Paper (2004), which identifies overarching priorities to which sport directly contributes, namely increasing exercise and reducing obesity. In addition there are many examples of how sport can also be used as the platform through which to deliver other important health related messages, for example, sexual health messages for young people.

9.20 Following from this the Choosing Activity Plan aims to promote activity for all, in line with the Chief Medical Officers' recommendations – 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least five times a week. The key outcomes of the action plan include:

• improve information and raise awareness of the benefits of activity

• support activity in the community by addressing barriers such as safety, cost and locality

• support activity in early years and schools and improve community access to school facilities

• support and encourage everyday activities like walking and cycling.

9.21 The local context for indoor leisure facilities in Wolverhampton is set out in Table 9.1 overleaf:
Table 9.1 – Regional and local strategic context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Sign up for sport – A regional plan for sport in the West Midlands (2004-2008) – Sport England West Midlands | Sign up for sport is a plan for sport and physical activity in the region. Its formulation has involved national, regional and local consultations with key stakeholders, agencies and organisations across the private, public and voluntary sectors that fully understand the strategic issues and local needs of the region. The plan highlights the following seven main outcomes:  
• to increase levels of participation in club and community sport  
• to improve levels of sports performance  
• widening access to sport  
• improving the health and well being of people through sport  
• creating safer and stronger communities through sport  
• improving education through PE and Sport  
• benefiting the economy through sport | The delivery of indoor sports facilities that meet local and national standards will be key to the delivery of the plan’s objectives. These objectives are also central to local policy. Long term planning for the delivery of indoor sports facilities is vital to ensure the successful achievement of increased participation. |
| Active People Survey | Active People Survey found that only 13.2% of the local population participate in 30 minutes moderate intensity sport and active recreation on 3 or more days a week. In relation to this the ‘Department of Health’ Health Profile for Wolverhampton highlights that the general health of the population is poor when compared with England; approximately 1 in 10 adults surveyed reported feeling in poor health. The percentage of GP patients recorded as diabetic is significantly higher than average, correlating with low levels of physical activity. There is limited information for levels of physical activity in children, young people and adults. | The above figures provide a positive baseline position for the area in terms of the leisure market and suggest that there may be significant latent demand within Wolverhampton. Should this demand increase, facilities will need to increase at the same rate to accommodate this level of demand. |
**SECTION 9 – INDOOR SPORT FACILITIES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents reviewed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CPA Performance Indicators</td>
<td>Despite the low levels of participation, comprehensive Performance Assessment indicators for Quality of Life show that 93.94% of the total population thinks that over the past three years, sport and leisure facilities have either got better or stayed the same. In comparison to neighboring authorities (geographical), Wolverhampton has the second highest level of satisfaction with facilities in the local area. The quality of facilities is improving across the City and developments in the next few years may enhance this further. High quality facilities will encourage residents to participate.</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
| Sport and Recreation Strategy for ABCD area     | The Best Value Performance Plan provides results on the Council’s performance based against a series of performance indicators. These indicators have been created and based around the key themes of the Community Plan and the strategic priorities highlighted in the Corporate Plan (2005-2008). Specific performance indicators related to this study include:  
  • number of people accessing sport and recreation services  
  • satisfaction with sport and leisure facilities.  
 Provision of the right quantity and quality of facilities is paramount in achieving these specific indicators laid out in the Best Value Performance Plan.                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| Wolverhampton City Council Community Plan       | Consultation undertaken as part of the Council’s Community Plan highlights that people want to be more active in leisure and sports activities and reinforces the need for facilities to be local community facilities providing sports opportunities for all sectors. Research and consultation suggests that there are vastly differing levels of participation across different sectors of the City population.  
 The creation of a healthy City is one of the key themes of the community plan. Other priorities of the Council set out in the community plan include the development of new leisure facilities, increasing the range of facilities offering discounts and increasing access to facilities for all sectors of the community. The community plan targets an increased range of facilities and activities within ten years.  
 Provision of the right quantity and quality of facilities is paramount in achieving targets laid out in the Community plan. The provision of high quality indoor sports facilities will be integral to the achievement of many of the themes of the plan. |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
### Documents reviewed
- **Black Country Sports Partnership**

### Summary of key strategic drivers
- The Black Country Sports Partnership (BCSP) is an emerging sub-regional strategic agency working within the governance framework of the Black Country Consortium. It consists principally of the 4 Local Authorities, Sport England and the Black Country Consortium, who are committed to working together to support the development of sport. The Black Country Sports Partnership is currently in the process of developing a sports facility strategy across the four local authorities, considering the strategic distribution of facilities across the region. This will fit within the wider West midlands Regional strategy which will shortly be underway. The Black Country partnership aims to deliver the 7 key outcomes set by Sport England; specifically:
  - increasing participation
  - improving performance
  - widening access
  - improving health and well being
  - improving Education through PE and Sport
  - creating Stronger and Safer Communities
  - benefiting the Economy

### Links to open space, sport and recreation study
- A regional approach to facility distribution will ensure that residents in Wolverhampton have access to both high quality local facilities and regionally important facilities. It will ensure a strategic approach to investment, ensuring that the most appropriate types of facilities are provided in the right locations. The work of the Black Country Sports Partnership will increase the level of demand for sports facilities and widen access to facilities for local residents across the City.
The Black Country Sports Facility Strategy (BCSFS) aims to identify future facility needs and priorities and help quantify the long-term investment needed. The strategy identifies a number of issues relating to the different sports facilities in the Black Country:

- **swimming** – there are major issues relating to the quality and distribution of pools. The BCSFS supports the development of a high quality swimming network as a way of increasing participation and contributing to regeneration.

- **sports halls** – an emphasis on a network of local halls to meet local community needs is recognised as crucial in supporting increased provision.

- **health and fitness** – the increased provision of health and fitness facilities is acknowledged as a key element of increasing participation across the Black Country. An increase in provision of 600 stations will be provided by 2031.

- **synthetic turf pitches** – the strategy proposes the provision of three new pitches by 2031, with strong links to schools identified.

- **indoor bowls** – there is currently no indoor bowls centre in the Black Country. Four new six rink facilities will be provided by 2031.

- **indoor tennis** - the provision of indoor tennis is good with a similar level to the national average. Nine courts will be provided by 2031 and commercial facilities will be encouraged which allow local access for the community.

- **open space and children’s play** – the strategy identifies the value of open space and children’s play facilities and focuses upon the improvement of access to the sports facility network.

This strategy supports the shortfalls identified at a local authority level and ensures there is a higher level strategic approach to the development of large sports facilities ensuring the sustainability of new indoor sports facilities in the future.
### Building Schools for the Future / Extended Schools

Building Schools for the Future and extended schools (BSF) will offer important opportunities and investment potential to improve the quality and quantity of facilities available to the community over the next few years through refurbishment and reconfiguration. The Extended Schools programme will ensure that all schools are extended (i.e. offer facilities for community use) which is likely to include providing community access to indoor sports facilities.

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<td>These programmes offer opportunities for the delivery of new and improved facilities to better meet curricular and community need across Wolverhampton City.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Wolverhampton City Council Swimming Strategy

The Wolverhampton City Council Swimming strategy recognises the role that swimming plays in improving the health of residents and considers the facilities required to meet the needs of residents and young people. The strategy also sets out the Summer Splash Free initiative, which promotes free swimming for children during the summer holidays. Over 6000 children applied for free passes during the first year of the strategy.

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<td>The strategy ensures that opportunities to maximise participation in swimming across the City are taken, whilst ensuring that there are sufficient facilities to meet demand. The strategy sets out the priorities for the Council in the delivery of swimming in future years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Current position

9.22 A review of indoor sport and recreation facilities has been undertaken to guide future planning within Wolverhampton. A range of research methods and information sources have been used to ensure a comprehensive audit of provision including:

- existing audit databases
- Active Places power
- internet research
- telephone consultation
- face to face consultations.

9.23 Calculations regarding the supply and demand of facilities have been taken from Active Places Power and amended where appropriate to take into account local developments, such as facility closures and new facility development.

9.24 On completion of this open space, sport and recreation study, Active Places Power will be updated by PMP, to ensure that an accurate record of facility provision at the current time in Wolverhampton is provided and is available online through www.ActivePlaces.com

9.25 This section sets out the provision of sports halls and swimming pools across the City and sets local standards for these facilities. Consideration is then given to the application of these standards and any resulting surpluses / deficiencies.

9.26 The quality of facilities is also considered below.

Quality

9.27 The PPG17 Companion Guide reinforces that design and management are factors integral to the successful delivery of a network of high quality sport and recreation, stating that:

"Quality depends on two things: the needs and expectations of users, on the one hand, and design, management and maintenance on the other"

9.28 Sport England Technical Design Guidance Notes and Quest Best Practice Standards provide some detail on the quality aspects that should be considered for indoor sports facilities, relating to design and technical and management and operation:

9.29 All new build and refurbishment schemes for indoor sports facilities should be designed in accordance with Sport England Guidance Notes, which provide detailed technical advice and standards for the design and development of sports facilities.
9.30 Sport England CPA accessibility indicator reinforces the importance of quality through the implementation and application of the standard:

- % of population that are within 20 minutes travel time (urban areas – by walk; rural areas – by car) of a range of 3 different sports facility types of which one has achieved a quality assured standard, specifically;
  - Quest
  - Green Flag
  - ISO 9001:2000
  - Investors in Excellence
  - Chartermark

9.31 Consultation further highlighted the importance of the provision of quality facilities, with frequent specific references to the cleanliness and maintenance of sites. Residents at the over 50’s forum also raised concerns regarding the technical specification of some facilities.

9.32 The quality vision should reflect the views and aspirations of the local community and should be linked to the national benchmarking and design criteria. The views and aspirations of the community were highlighted arising from the consultations highlighted that the most important features of a good quality indoor facility to residents in Wolverhampton are:

- maintenance
- clean changing rooms
- a range of facilities
- welcoming staff
- accessible sites.

9.33 The recommended quality vision, based on local aspirations which should be targeted at all sites is therefore:

_A clean and well-maintained indoor sports facility providing a wide range of activities and good value for money. They should encompass adequate changing facilities, cycle and car-parking and be easily accessible by public transport and by all sectors of the community._

9.34 In addition to the consideration of the needs and expectations of users, it is also important to take into account the design, technical, management and operational elements of indoor sports facility provision. The remaining element of the quality standard is therefore subdivided into two components:

- QS1 – design and technical
- QS2 – management and operational.
9.35 It can be seen that some elements of the quality vision derived from local needs and aspirations are linked to the specifications detailed in QS1 and QS2.

9.36 QS1 is set out below and a brief explanation follows.

**QS1: Quality standard (design and technical)**

All new build and refurbishment schemes for indoor sports facilities to be designed in accordance with Sport England Guidance Notes, which provide detailed technical advice and standards for the design and development of sports facilities.

9.37 A full list of Sport England Design Guidance Notes are available to download free from the Sport England website:

9.38 The space requirement for most sports depends on the standard of play; generally the higher the standard, the larger the area required. Although the playing area is usually of the same dimensions, there is a need to build in provision for increased safety margins, increased clearance height, spectator seating, etc. Similarly, design specification varies according to level of competition with respect to flooring type and lighting lux levels, for example.

9.39 Sport England Design Guidance Notes are based on eight standards of play. Consideration should be given to the desired specification of the facility and the likely level of competition it will be required to host at the outset.

**QS2: Quality standard (facility operation and management)**

9.40 Quest is the UK Quality Scheme for Sport and Leisure, which defines industry standards and good practice and encourages their application and development in a customer-focused management framework. Quest is recommended by the British Quality Foundation for Self Assessment in Sport and Leisure Operations.

9.41 Quest Facility Management is aimed at Sports and Leisure Facilities, in the commercial, voluntary and public sectors. The Facility Management Manager’s Guidance Pack provides the industry standards against which managers can assess their own operation, and provides best practice information and examples to aid continuous improvement.

9.42 Quest sets out industry Best Practice Principles in relation to:

- Facilities Operation
- Customer Relations
- Staffing and Service
- Service Development and Review.

9.43 These principles form the basis of the QS2 overleaf:
QS2: Quality standard (facility operation and management)

QS2: All leisure providers to follow industry best practice principles in relation to a) Facilities Operation, b) Customer Relations, c) Staffing and d) Service Development and Review. The detail of the internal systems, policies and practices underpinning implementation of these principles will correlate directly to the scale of facility, varying according to the position of the facility within the levels of the established hierarchy.

9.44 Wolverhampton City Council has recently achieved Quest Accreditation at Central Baths. The staff at Aldersley Leisure Village are also working towards this Quest accreditation. The Sport and Recreation Service as a whole has achieved Investors in Excellence. This will contribute towards improved achievements measured against CPA targets and will also ensure the delivery of quality experiences for leisure centre users.

9.45 It should therefore be ensured that in addition to meeting the quality vision identified though local consultation, any existing and new facilities strive to achieve the best practice guidelines set out above.

Sports halls – The context

Active Places Power

9.46 Active Places Power is one of Sport England’s strategic planning tools for sports facilities. It provides indicative quantitative information for local authorities compared to national and regional averages.

9.47 The model uses the following parameters which are used to determine the level of provision required to meet demand:

- 60% visits during peak time
- average visit duration = 1 hour
- normal peak periods = 40.5 hours per week
- at one time capacity = 5 people per badminton court.

Sport England Facility Calculator

9.48 The Sport England Facility calculator is a further tool developed by Sport England which uses the same parameters as Active Places Power but includes one additional demand parameter called the ‘comfort factor’. This assumes that each hall will operate on average at 80% peak time capacity to provide comfort for users and allow for a balanced programme providing different types of activity. Once this 80% capacity has been exceeded it assumes that people will choose not to use the facility and will either not participate, or will travel to an alternative facility.
9.49 The demand for sports hall provision in Wolverhampton according to each strategic planning tool is set out below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Tool</th>
<th>Demand in Wolverhampton</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Places Power</td>
<td>53 courts, which equates to 39.4m² per 1,000 population, where one court is equal to 170.775m² (or one 4 court hall is 554m²)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport England Facility Calculator</td>
<td>67.43 courts, which equates to 0.29 courts per 1,000 population or 49.52 m² per 1,000 population.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.50 This will be returned to later, in the context of setting and applying local standards.

**Sports halls – current position**

9.51 There are currently sixteen sports halls in Wolverhampton containing four more courts. Sports with less than three or more courts are excluded from calculations as they are of insufficient size to sustain a wide variety of sports. They are not included within Active Places calculations. The presence of these facilities, alongside community sports halls will be considered separately. Map 9.1 later in this section illustrates the distribution of these halls.

9.52 Aldersley Leisure Village is the largest facility in Wolverhampton, providing a total of 16 courts, attracting visitors from outside Wolverhampton City, and frequently staging national events. This venue is perceived to be of regional significance within the West Midlands as a whole. In addition to the stock of sports halls, there are 25 local community facilities located throughout the cities which provide local sport and recreation opportunities as well as serving as a focal point for the local community.

9.53 Graiseley Recreation Centre, a centre designed for sporting and community activities plays a key role in the provision of local sporting opportunities such as martial arts and health and fitness in the ABCD area of the City. Running concurrently with this study is a further study being undertaken by PMP looking into the sports facility provision within the ABCD area, as part of the draft recommendations of this study is the need for a further sports hall within the ABCD area.

9.54 The Wolverhampton Sports Arena (a private facility open to non members) hosts five-a-side and indoor cricket league within the large studio at the site. While this has not been included within the audit due to the restricted uses at the site it will offset some demand for sports hall facilities in other areas of the City.

**Quantity**

9.55 A full list of facilities is summarised below in Table 9.2. The distribution of these facilities is illustrated in Figure 9.1.
9.56 Schools permitting public access have also been considered within this section. Where schools allow formal community use of their facilities out of hours, these facilities are classified as dual use sites. Where facilities are accessible to clubs, but do not operate as formal leisure centre catering for individual users, these have been considered to be club use facilities. The level of use at each site has been ascertained through phone calls to the schools outside curriculum time. The majority of school facilities within Wolverhampton are club use facilities. University of Wolverhampton Sports Centre can be considered to be dual use, although there are restrictions on usage.

Table 9.2 – Sports hall provision across Wolverhampton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Key Sites</th>
<th>Total Provision (courts)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Centres</td>
<td>Aldersley Leisure Village</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bilston Education Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities with public access on school or college sites (four court halls or greater)</td>
<td>University of Wolverhampton</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Colton Hills School Sport Complex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Northicote Recreation Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pool Hayes Community School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>City of Wolverhampton College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Heath Park High School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kings School Sports Facilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Our Lady and St Chad Catholic School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St Edmunds RC School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St Peters Collegiate School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moseley Park School Sports Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aldersley High School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.57 Recent changes in leisure provision within the City mean a series of significant changes regarding sports halls have taken place, including:

- Compton Park (dual use centre) – Closure (loss of 4-court sports hall)
- Heath Town Leisure Centre - Closure (loss of 4-court sports hall)
9.58 The closure of Bilston Leisure Centre will result in a redeveloped facility, which is scheduled to contain a sports hall. This is anticipated to take place in 2009.

9.59 The City of Wolverhampton College is also planning the development of a new flagship 8-court hall facility to open in 2009. This new facility will contribute to significant quality improvements across the City. The impact of these closures will be discussed in relation to the standards set.

9.60 Additionally as mentioned previously the ABCD study is also recommending a new sports hall within the New Deal for Communities area.

9.61 Active Places Power provides further information regarding the current provision of sports halls in the context of other areas in the UK and West Midlands.

9.62 The national ratio of halls per 1000 population is equivalent to 47.27msq (at the time of this report). The West Midlands ratio of sports halls per 1000 population is slightly below the national average, at 46.43m sq. This considers the provision of only four court halls or above. Using the same parameters, Wolverhampton’s current facility stock is equal to 46m sq2 per 1,000 population. This will increase marginally if the new facility at Wolverhampton College goes ahead. Pool Hayes Community School is located on the periphery of the Wolverhampton City Council boundary.

9.63 The low levels of participation recorded in the Active People Survey reinforce the need for the effective provision of indoor sports facilities across Wolverhampton City, ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to participate. Benchmarking statistics derived from Active Places Power indicate that provision of sports halls in quantitative terms is in line with other areas of the West Midlands, although this is likely to decrease with future changes in sports hall provision.

9.64 Key issues arising from Table 9.2, Active Places Power statistics and consultation undertaken regarding indoor sports facilities relating to the quantity and access to provision include:

- the significance of Aldersley Leisure Village is clear, as this is the largest facility in the City. This site has been identified by the Black Country Sports Partnership as being of regional importance in terms of the provision of indoor sports hall space

- school sites play an important role in the provision of indoor sports facilities within the local community. While there are few facilities available at public sites with the exception of Aldersley Leisure Village), there are many schools providing locally accessible facilities, either on a dual or club use basis

- according to Active Places Power, provision of sports halls in Wolverhampton is marginally below the national average when measured against figures per 1000 population and marginally below the West Midlands national average also. This decreases further when taking into account closures, although future developments will increase the facility stock
reflecting the results of the Active People Survey in Wolverhampton, which indicated that participation is lower than may be expected, the findings of the on street survey exhibit similar issues with 68% having no opinion on the current levels of provision of indoor sports halls. Of the remaining respondents, 21% felt that current levels of provision were sufficient and 6% suggested that there was more than enough. Only 13% feel that provision is insufficient, suggesting that there is an overall perception across the City that current supply meets demand.

supporting the views of the respondents to the on street survey, over half of all current users of leisure centres feel that provision is sufficient or exceeds current demand as can be seen below, with 55% suggesting that the level of provision is about right and only 25% feeling there to be insufficient

despite the findings of the surveys, many local residents participating in drop in sessions expressed the value of sports halls to the local community. Residents attending the over 50s forum were particularly vocal regarding the need to maintain current sports hall provision and the need for additional provision to meet demand

of those respondents to the surveys who felt that the current supply of sports halls was below the level required to meet demand, reasons stated included a lack of awareness of any facilities in their area and concerns over the availability and restrictions of facilities at schools

local efforts to increase participation and to liaise and involve groups with traditionally lower levels of participation have suggested that local informal facilities have a higher degree of success rate. Many residents feel intimidated and insecure using larger facilities and are more likely to participate at facilities closer to home – it was highlighted that this issue should be addressed when planning the future provision of indoor sports facilities in the City

the importance of small community halls to local residents was further evident in consultations, with many residents attending local classes available at community halls rather than travelling across the City to reach larger facilities

according to the on-street survey, a significant amount of people (88%) stated that they do not use sports halls within Wolverhampton reflecting low levels of participation. 8% of people stated that they use this type of facility once a week or more, whilst 4% use them once a month or less frequently (4% in total)

the on street survey highlights that there are different expectations in terms of the preferred mode of reaching a sports hall across the City. It can be seen that residents in areas of higher mobility (and lower indices of deprivation) expect to travel by car to reach facilities while other residents demand more local facilities

considering Wolverhampton as a whole, statistical responses suggest that 27% would walk to a sports hall while 62% would expect to drive to a sports hall
7% of Children and Young People responding to the IT Young People survey stated that indoor sports facilities are their most frequented type of open space/facility. Children indicated that they were more likely to use indoor sports facilities if they are located close to their homes. Many residents also highlighted the importance of public transport links.

Swimming pools

Active Places Power

9.65 Similar to the provision of sports halls, Active Places Power provides indicative quantitative information for local authorities compared to national and regional averages for swimming pools.

9.66 The model uses the following parameters which are used to determine the level of provision required to meet demand:

- 63% visits during peak time
- average visit duration = 64 minutes
- normal peak periods = 52 hours per week = 49 peak sessions
- at one time capacity = 6m2 per person.

Sport England Facility Calculator

9.67 The Sport England Facility calculator again uses the same parameters as Active Places Power but includes the one additional demand parameter called the ‘comfort factor’. This differs slightly from those parameters used for sports halls, and assumes that each pool will operate on average at 70% peak time capacity to provide comfort for users and allow for a balanced programme providing different types of activity. Once this 70% capacity has been exceeded it assumes that people will choose not to use the pool and either find an alternative pool or not participate in the activity.

9.68 The demand for swimming provision in Wolverhampton according to each strategic planning tool is set out below:

Swimming pool demand in Wolverhampton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning Tool</th>
<th>Demand in Wolverhampton</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Active Places Power</td>
<td>1684.1m sq/7.9 pools needed to serve the population of Wolverhampton – this equates to 7.1m sq per 1000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport England Facility Calculator</td>
<td>2405.86m sq / 11.32 pools needed to serve the population of Wolverhampton which equates to 10.21m sq per 1000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9.69 This will be returned to later, in the context of setting and applying local standards.

Swimming pools – current position

9.70 There are currently eleven swimming pools across Wolverhampton (see Table 9.3). The recently closed Bushbury Swimming Pool and Heath Town Swimming Pool have been replaced by the new Bentley Bridge PFI Centre. This is recognised as a leisure water facility of both regional and local importance. The Compton Park Pool has also recently closed.

9.71 The new Bilston Leisure Centre (opening in 2009) will replace the existing Bilston Leisure Centre and is likely to increase the level of water provided. It is the intention that this facility will be a healthy lifestyles centre, linked with the PCT and operating a series of healthy living initiatives.

9.72 Central Baths has been identified as the key competition venue for swimming across the City. This is a Quest accredited competition venue with spectator accommodation.

9.73 There is also a series of swimming pools at school sites, although there is limited access to these facilities and some fall below the standard 25m pool size.

9.74 Only those facilities equivalent in size to a 25 metre pool will be considered as part of the application of standards, although the role other facilities play in the delivery of curricular swimming and extra curricular swimming lessons is also recognised.

9.75 In addition, the role of facilities at private health and fitness clubs, such as Esporta, should not be underestimated. Users of these facilities are less likely to use public venues and a reduction in demand will therefore be evident.

Quantity

9.76 A full list of facilities is contained in Appendix K and the overall stock of swimming pools is summarised below in Table 9.3. The distribution of these facilities has been illustrated graphically in Figure 9.2 previously in this section.

9.77 Where schools have formal community use, these facilities have been classified as dual use sites. Where facilities are accessible to clubs, but do not operate as formal leisure centres catering for individual users, these have been considered to be club use facilities.
Table 9.3 – Swimming pool provision across Wolverhampton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Key Sites</th>
<th>Pool area (m sq)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Centres</td>
<td>Central Baths</td>
<td>1000 (will alter when the new Bilston Leisure Centre is formed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bilston Leisure Centre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bentley Bridge PFI</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School venues equivalent to 25 m pools (included in calculations)</td>
<td>Colton Hills School</td>
<td>1060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aldersley High School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aldersley High School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kings School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller Pools</td>
<td>Wednesfield High School</td>
<td>Pools smaller than - 25m pools – equivalent to approx 500m sq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Esporta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coppice Performing Arts School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parkfield High School</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Current position**

9.78 The national ratio of swimming pools is 17.45 m sq per 1000 population (at the time of this report), and the West Midlands Region ratio is slightly below the national average at 14.41m sq.

9.79 According to Active Places, the current demand being met in England for Swimming Pools is 172.59% - suggesting that current capacity outweighs demand by 72.59%. These figures include all pools including smaller facilities where lane swimming can take place. For consistency with Active Places, Wolverhampton has been measured in the same light. It is recognised however that pools below 25m sq offer less opportunities.

9.80 Following closures and the opening of the Bentley Bridge Leisure Centre, Wolverhampton’s current facility stock is 10.7m sq per 1,000 population at the current time (taking into account the closures). This is above the 10.21sqm standard recommended through the facility calculator but below the West Midlands and National average. It must be however noted that this includes facilities smaller than 25m.

9.81 Both Bushbury Swimming Pool and Heath Town Swimming Pool have recently closed, allowing increased focus and investment in a new facility at Bentley Bridge and ongoing support for Central Baths. Compton Pool has also closed and has therefore been excluded from calculations. The closure of Bilston Leisure Centre in 2009 will be replaced by a 25m eight-lane pool, at
this time which will be of substantially higher quality than the current facility. It is intended that Central Baths is a competition pool of regional significance.

9.82 There are no local standards for provision of swimming facilities in Wolverhampton although a Facilities Planning Model report was commissioned by the Council to inform the closures, which have now taken place. Swimming is a high priority on the Council’s agenda and a Wolverhampton Swimming Strategy has been adopted (2006) and is now being implemented. This document aims to encompass the corporate aims of the Council including social justice and inclusion and the commitment to improving the quality of life for residents, with specific targets on increasing the number of people that swim. The document also highlights a number of pools which have no community use but are of high value to the schools at which they are located.

9.83 Links with schools are a key focus of the Council in the forthcoming years and it is intended that leisure centre staff will work with the Education Department to reduce the degree to which children have to travel and ensure that all schools are able to deliver swimming as part of their curriculum.

9.84 Consultation highlights that:

- of those residents who indicated that there were insufficient facilities, there were high levels of concern surrounding the closure of facilities. As a consequence of the closures, many resident expressed concerns regarding the distances they would need to travel to reach swimming pools. Other issues raised included the age of facilities (a qualitative issue) and problems with overcrowding.

- 31% of respondents to the on street survey felt that provision was sufficient, with the majority of others questioned having no opinion. Over half (58%) of all current users of leisure centres also feel that provision is sufficient or exceeds current demand although 41% felt that provision was insufficient.

- in a similar fashion to the on street survey, other consultations were dominated by concerns surrounding the closure of swimming pools and the resulting fears that this would result in a lack of provision and the loss of local facilities.

- children at the young people's workshop highlighted that they particularly enjoy swimming and many children had taken advantage of free swims offered by the Council during school holidays. Provision of swimming pools therefore provides an excellent opportunity to increase and sustain participation across the City.

- according to the on-street survey, a higher percentage of people use swimming pools than sports halls, although 72% of residents still suggested that they do not use pools. Of the people that do use them, 12% of people use them once a week or more, 10% once a month or more and 5% less than once a month. Like the current expectations for sports halls, there are significant variations in the expectations of local residents with regards the suggested travel times to pools. Residents in areas of lower mobility place a greater emphasis on the
Importance of local facilities, specifically facilities that are accessible on foot.

- Considering the overall opinions of residents across the City, there is an even split between those that would expect to walk and those that would expect to drive. There is also a degree of reliance on public transport routes to reach pools, emphasising the importance of these links.

### Setting Local Standards

9.85 In setting local standards for indoor sports facilities, like all open space typologies there is a need to take into account any national or existing local standards, current provision, other local authority standards for appropriate comparison and consultation on local needs. The IT Young People Survey, neighbourhood drop in session and children’s workshops were particularly important in determining local needs.

9.86 A full assessment of local needs both Citywide and within each Analysis Area has been undertaken for Wolverhampton, and the key messages emerging from this assessment, coupled with an evaluation of the existing audit have been used to determine provision standards required to meet local needs.

9.87 The process for setting each type of standard is outlined in section one. The rationale for each recommendation, including assessment of local need, existing provision and consultation is provided in Appendices L and M. The recommended local standards have been summarised overleaf.
Indoor sports facilities

**Sports halls - Quantity standard (see Appendix L – standards and justification and worksheet)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing level of provision</th>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46m sq per 1000 population</td>
<td>54m sq per 1000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

The underlying theme emerging from consultations is a perception that the current level of provision is sufficient to meet demand (only 13% suggesting there to be insufficient) although there are identified shortfalls of local facilities. This suggests that future investment should focus on the provision of local facilities and maintaining the quality of larger sites. In light of the low levels of participation across the City and the evident disinterest, provision of facilities to meet local needs is critical if participation targets are to be achieved. Research and local experience suggests that local facilities are more successful in encouraging people to participate, reinforcing the need to focus on the provision of local facilities. Current provision of sports halls is equivalent to 78 courts. Much of the increase required to meet local standards will be provided through the planned development at City of Wolverhampton College.

Sports hall provision is essential if participation is to increase across the City and it is suggested that facilities are delivered as a network of City wide and local provision. All residents should have access to smaller halls fulfilling a range of functions and providing a range of opportunities as well as having the opportunity to travel further to use larger facilities if desired.

The recommended standard set reflects the consultation findings and the focus on providing local facilities. The standard for sports halls is above the projected level of provision and is in line with the Sport England Facility Calculator standards that reflect the recommended minimum level of provision. If participation is to increase alongside regional and national targets this level of provision will be required.

The need for local community facilities was particularly apparent across all consultations. Usage of larger scale facilities should be monitored, promoted and maintained to encourage new users, but consultation suggests people are more likely to visit local leisure centres. Building Schools For the Future and extended schools will offer a key opportunity to refurbish and reconfigure existing facilities ensuring there is sufficient access to both local and City wide provision for all resident and sectors of the community.

Additional sports hall provision should be delivered through this route and appropriate locations considered in conjunction with the application of accessibility standards. In light of the target set by Wolverhampton City Council to ensure that all residents are within 1.5 miles of a primary school, the delivery of improved sports facilities with appropriate design at primary schools may offer important opportunities to provide the additional local facilities required. This additional provision should be delivered in a phased approach, as participation grows. Access to all facilities should be maintained.
Swimming pools - Quantity standard (see Appendix L – standards and justification and worksheet)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing level of provision</th>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.66m sq per 1000 population</td>
<td>12.2m sq per 1000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Justification

Despite concerns regarding the recent closures of swimming pools in the City, statistical consultation findings suggest that there is an overall perception that the quantity of swimming pools of City is adequate (only 17% feel there to be insufficient). The majority of those residents suggesting there are insufficient were concerned about pool closures and indicated that their key concerns surround access to facilities and the loss of facilities within their immediate locality.

Assessment of the recommended quantity standard in relation to the implementation of accessibility standards will be critical in understanding locational deficiencies.

The current low levels of participation should not be underestimated and significant increases would be required to meet national targets. Consultation suggests that there is spare capacity in the current pool stock to accommodate some degree of additional use.

Given the concerns over locational deficiencies, capacity of swimming pools should be monitored and opportunities for new / refurbished should be considered. This will ensure that any locational deficiencies are addressed and that action can be taken to ensure that all residents have appropriate access to swimming facilities in the City. It will also permit a focus on qualitative improvements on existing sites, addressing a key concern of many residents.

Consultation confirms a degree of satisfaction with current provision, which is equivalent to 10.6m² per 1000 population. This overall level of provision exceeds recommended standards on the facility calculator (10.21m² per 1,000 population) although not all facilities included are 25m in size. It is below national and regional average levels of provision according to Active Places. Although there is spare capacity at existing pools, given the need to increase participation, it is recommended that a standard above currently programmed levels of provision is applied.
**Accessibility standard (see Appendix M) – Sports halls**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
<th>20 minute walk time (960 m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Justification</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While 62% of respondents to the on street survey suggest that they expect to drive to facilities, opinions vary significantly across the City. In light of high levels of deprivation and low levels of participation, it is important to consider the need for local facilities. This is also addressed through the quantity standards. A walking standard is therefore recommended.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In line with the 75% threshold of those respondents who suggested that they would walk to sports halls it is recommended that the local accessibility standard should be set at a 20 minute walk time. This is also in line with the CPA criteria for an urban area such as Wolverhampton.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport England guidance on the implementation of the national CPA standards suggests that the range of facilities is essential in giving people a choice. Greater choice in the different types of facilities which people have access to and the proximity of these facilities to where they live will increase the likelihood that people will visit and become more active.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Accessibility standard (see Appendix M) – Swimming pools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
<th>20 minute walk time (960 m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Justification</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>While a slightly higher proportion of respondents suggest that they expect to drive to facilities, opinions vary significantly across the City. In light of high levels of deprivation and low levels of participation, it is important to consider the need for local facilities. A walking standard is therefore recommended.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In line with the 75% threshold and the recommended CPA standard, it is recommended that a 20 minutes walk standard is set.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Applying local standards**

9.88 The quantity of sports halls and swimming pools and access to these facilities when measured against the local standards are considered in the following text. This enables consideration as to the adequacy of the existing facility stock and identifies areas of shortfall where appropriate.

9.89 While the use of the national standards defined by Sport England (Facility Calculator and Active Places Power) provide an indication of the minimum range of provision of facilities (considering the amount that should be provided if a facility operates at capacity, and at a comfortable level), PPG17 advocates that local needs should be considered first.

9.90 Local standards for both swimming pools and sports halls have been set above the existing level of provision.
9.91 Despite low levels of demand in Wolverhampton, as a result of low levels of participation in the City, it is important to strive to increase demand and to raise participation. In order to achieve this, it will be essential to ensure that the facility stock is sufficient.

9.92 The current provision of sports halls when measured against the quantitative standard is set out in Table 9.4 below. Access to sports halls is illustrated in Figure 9.1 overleaf.

**Table 9.4 – Quantitative provision of sports halls**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Supply</th>
<th>Local Standard</th>
<th>Surplus / Deficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46 sqm per 1,000 population</td>
<td>54 sqm per 1,000 population</td>
<td>Deficiency equivalent to approx 12 courts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 9.1 – Access to sports halls

Wolverhampton: Sports Hall Facilities

Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study – Wolverhampton
9.93 As can be seen from the application of the quantity and accessibility standards:

- there is a deficiency when measured against the quantitative local standards suggesting that there is a need for increased provision of sports halls

- furthermore, a large proportion of the sports hall stock is at schools facilities – community use of these sites should be ensured as a priority

- the distribution of sports halls across the City appears even. While community halls are well distributed, there is a significant cluster of these sites located centrally within the City. There is limited access to community facilities for residents in the Tettenhall Analysis Area.

- analysis of the accessibility to sports halls indicates that while there is limited access to public facilities within the recommended distance threshold, most residents have access to either a school or public facility. The public facilities are located evenly across the City and are therefore well placed to serve as many residents as possible. The key areas of deficiency (and hence focuses for new provision) are in the southern part of Tettenhall Analysis Area and in Wednesfield Analysis Area. Colton Hills Sports Complex is particularly important in serving the needs of residents in the south of the local authority area and Wednesfield Community Centre plays a particularly important role for residents in Wednesfield Analysis Area.

- community halls play a particularly important role in meeting the needs of residents, particularly in the Central and South Analysis Area and in the ABCD area of the City. Access to larger facilities in this area is difficult for residents.

- there are numerous sports halls located just outside the City boundaries in the on the eastern side of the authority which provide additional opportunities for residents in the Wednesfield and Bilston Analysis Areas. This is particularly important for residents of Wednesfield Area who do not have access to local facilities.

9.94 While Active Places Power considers all sports halls of sufficient size regardless of ownership and community access, industry practice dictates that consideration to the level of access should be given at each facility.

9.95 A large proportion of sports halls in Wolverhampton are located at schools sites and therefore have reduced access for local residents. Indeed some facilities may only be accessible to clubs who organise block bookings and have no casual access. Table 9.5 overleaf below sets out the implications of reducing the supply at these facilities to reflect the reduced access at these sites.
Table 9.5 – Supply of sports halls considering access to facilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Total Supply</th>
<th>Supply considering reduced access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Facilities</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Use/ Club Facilities</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>City of Wolverhampton Sports Complex, University of Wolverhampton Sports Centre, Northycote Recreation Centre and Colton Hills School Complex indicated that facilities are dual use. If supply at these sites is reduced by 25% as per industry guidelines, supply would reduce to 12 courts. If all other facilities are perceived to be club use and reduced by 50%, supply would be equivalent to 21 courts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.96 As can be seen above, should the level of access at each site be considered, supply reduces to the equivalent of 36m² per 1000 population, a level significantly below the local standard set. This highlights the importance of ensuring casual public access to these facilities.

9.97 The reduced level of access to halls further emphasises the importance of providing local halls.

Summary of need for sports halls

9.98 The local standard for quantity is set at just above the existing level of provision. This recognises the need for increased provision across the City whilst acknowledging that some existing facilities are not currently operating at capacity.

9.99 The key issues for the provision of sports halls arising from the application of the local standards are therefore set out below.
SECTION 9 – INDOOR SPORT FACILITIES

Summary of Need for Sports Halls

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The quantity standard has been set above the current standard of provision, highlighting the need for further facilities. While the presence of community facilities meets some of this demand, it should be ensured that there is sufficient quantity of sports halls to enable increased levels of physical activity.</td>
<td>Aldersley Leisure Centre is of regional significance and plays a key role in the delivery of indoor sporting opportunities across Wolverhampton. The new Bilston Leisure Centre and the hall at Wolverhampton City College will also provide high quality facilities.</td>
<td>Analysis of the recommended accessibility standard highlights a number of residents outside of the catchment for sports halls. This is particularly apparent in Tettenhall and Wednesfield Analysis Areas and the ABCD area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Recommendations

SH1: Continue to support the local community centres. Sports Development Teams should work with management committees at these sites to ensure the availability of a wide variety of activities, ensuring all resident have local opportunities to participate.

SH2: Undertake a promotional exercise to ensure that all residents are aware of activities available both at local halls, school facilities and public facilities. This is particularly important in light of the issues surrounding a lack of awareness that were raised through consultation

SH3: Consider opportunities to alleviate existing shortfalls in sports hall provision across the City; focusing on the Wednesfield and Tettenhall Analysis Areas and the ABCD area. The Building Schools for the Future programme represents a key opportunity for the Council to provide additional facilities which are accessible to the local community.

SH4: Support the City of Wolverhampton College in the planned development of an eight court sports hall with public access

Swimming pools

9.100 The current provision of swimming pools when measured against the quantitative standard is set out in Table 9.6 below. Access to swimming pools is illustrated in Figure 9.2 overleaf.

Table 9.6 – Quantitative provision of swimming pools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Supply</th>
<th>Local Standard</th>
<th>Surplus / Deficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.66 sqm per 1000 population</td>
<td>12.2 sqm per 1000 population</td>
<td>Equivalent of 1.5 standard sized swimming pools (average size 212 sqm)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Figure 9.2 – Access to swimming pools across Wolverhampton**

**Wolverhampton: Swimming Pool Facilities**

[Map showing access to swimming pools across Wolverhampton with numbers and coordinates for various facilities.]
9.101 As can be seen from the application of the quantity and accessibility standards:

- the supply of swimming pools across the City is marginally below the recommended quantity standard. Despite this, some existing pools are not operating at full capacity.

- there is a sporadic distribution of facilities across the City, with many facilities at school sites located close to the City boundary.

- like sports halls, it is evident that there are many residents outside of the distance threshold of a swimming pool. This is particularly evident in the North Analysis Area of the City following the closure of Bushbury Pool. There are also some residents outside of the catchment for a swimming pool in the south of Tettenhall Analysis Area.

- Central Baths is a centrally located facility which meets the needs of many people who work in the City centre and visit the area for shopping as well as the local residents.

9.102 While Active Places Power considers all swimming pools regardless of ownership and community access, industry practice dictates that consideration to the level of access should be given at each facility.

9.103 A large proportion of pools in Wolverhampton are located at school sites and therefore have reduced access for local residents. Indeed some facilities may only be accessible to clubs who organise block bookings or for swimming lessons.

9.104 Table 9.7 details those facilities with reduced access. It can be seen that when taking this into account, provision in Wolverhampton falls significantly below that set out in the local standard.

**Table 9.7 – Provision of swimming pools considering access to facilities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Type</th>
<th>Total Supply</th>
<th>Supply considering reduced access</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Facilities</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>1000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Use / Club Facilities (considering only those 25m or greater)</td>
<td>1060</td>
<td>795 (reducing overall supply by 25% to reflect reduced access). All facilities smaller than 25m have been excluded.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.105 As can be seen, if only facilities equivalent to 25m or above are included and the level of access is taken into account, provision is reduced to less than 1000 sqm, equivalent to just 5sqm per 1000 population. This serves to highlight the importance of swimming pools on school sites and the role that these facilities play in meeting the needs of the local community.
Summary of need for swimming pools

9.106 The local standard for quantity is set at just above the existing level of provision. This recognises the need for increased provision across the City whilst acknowledging that some existing facilities are not currently operating at capacity.

9.107 The key issues for the provision of swimming pools arising from the application of the local standards are therefore set out below:

### Summary of need for swimming pools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Accessibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The supply of swimming pools is lower than the recommended standard (by approx 1.5 pools). Despite this, some pools within the City are not currently operating at full capacity. This highlights significant opportunities to increase participation.</td>
<td>Following the opening of the Bentley Bridge PFI swimming pool, the quality of pools has improved significantly, with Central Baths meeting the needs of more formal competitive swimming and Bentley Bridge providing excellent opportunities for leisure and fun.</td>
<td>Consideration of accessibility to swimming facilities indicates that there are many residents outside of the catchment area for a local facility. This deficiency is particularly apparent to the North Analysis Area following the closure of Bushbury Swimming Pool. There are large numbers of swimming pools on the periphery of the border to the east of the City, although there are few facilities to the West of Wolverhampton.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Recommendations

- **SP1**: Continue to implement the Wolverhampton City Council Swimming Strategy, maximizing the use of both existing leisure centres and ensuring that provision continues to meet local needs. The ongoing promotion of free swimming for children during school holidays will be instrumental in the achievement of local targets for increased participation.

- **SP2**: Address deficiencies in swimming provision where there is perceived to be demand. Consider providing free transport to access swimming facilities to those residents outside of the distance threshold.

- **SP3**: Ensure casual access to local swimming pools at school sites outside school hours. These school facilities are also essential in the provision of swimming lessons.

- **SP4**: Maintain Central Baths as a high quality competitive facility.
Summary

9.108 This section has set out local standards for both swimming pools and sports halls and considers the potential surpluses and deficiencies of these facilities. These standards support and guide the priorities for future indoor sports facility provision in the City.

9.109 The local standards and the priorities identified should complement those set out in the emerging Black Country Sports Strategy and the existing Wolverhampton City Council Swimming Strategy.

9.110 It is particularly important to not only protect and enhance existing indoor sports facilities, but also take opportunities to increase public access to school / college facilities through Community Use Agreements.

9.111 A key issue is that the additional cost of opening indoor and outdoor sports facilities for community use is not provided for in education budgets, consequently any community use needs to be self financing. Where facilities are developed/refurbished using external funding a Community Use Agreement is sometimes required. A review of existing Community Use Agreements is needed to establish the current range of uses and accessibility of facilities.
Allotments

Introduction and definition

10.1 This typology includes all forms of allotments with a primary purpose to provide opportunities for people to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion. This type of open space may also include urban farms.

10.2 Like other open space types, allotments can provide a number of wider benefits to the community in addition to their primary purpose. These include:

- bringing together different cultural backgrounds
- improving physical and mental health
- providing a source of recreation
- making a wider contribution to the green and open space network.

10.3 Allotments can be particularly important in dense, urban environments where many residents do not have private gardens. Allotments are also becoming increasingly popular as an alternative means of physical activity.

Context

10.4 Only 2% of those questioned as part of the on street survey indicated that they were interested in owning/managing an allotment in Wolverhampton. Despite this, other consultations highlighted the importance of allotments and cited the important opportunities that allotments bring and in 2006 there was 93% occupancy of all the allotments sites across the City.

10.5 The City Council are a key provider of allotment sites in the City, and of the 38 allotment sites owned by the Council 22 have full occupancy, several sites have no occupancy whilst the remaining have varied levels of usage.

10.6 The strategic context of allotments in Wolverhampton is examined in Table 10.1 overleaf.
## Table 10.1 - Strategic review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UDP</td>
<td>UDP highlights that for every 1,000 residents in Wolverhampton there is access to 3.6 hectares of recreational open space inclusive of 0.16 ha of allotments.</td>
<td>The Council has a statutory duty to provide allotments, although in recent years there has been a decline in their use. This study will assess the demand for allotments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allotment Development Plan</td>
<td>The Council has a responsibility to consider provision on a needs basis and enhance plots on a need basis where resources and local amenity allow.</td>
<td>The nature of this typology is very much demand led. Any enhancement to existing provision should be matched with sufficient demand in order to sustain a high quality site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenspace Strategy</td>
<td>The Greenspace Strategy recognises the role of allotments in the City and a key objective of the strategy is to promote and sustain allotments within the City.</td>
<td>Providing high quality allotment sites will help to increase the occupancy of this type of open space. Good quality allotments can be a key driver in the achievement of increased participation in varying activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Plan</td>
<td>Safeguard and improve allotments by 2010.</td>
<td>The community plan highlights the need to safeguard and improve existing provision of allotments. This follows through from community-needs and will be built on through the consultation within this study.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Current position - quantity

10.7 The current provision of allotments is summarised in Table 10.2 below:

Table 10.2 – Quantity of allotments in Wolverhampton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Hectares</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Range in sizes</th>
<th>Hectares per 1000 population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.46 – 2.83</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>9.98</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.1 – 3.65</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40630</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.15 – 2.41</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.1 – 2.24</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,461</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.19 – 0.24</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>235,590</td>
<td>35.26</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.1 – 3.65</td>
<td>0.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.8 The main comments arising from Table 10.2 above and the consultations are as follows:

- There is a large difference in the level of provision across Wolverhampton, ranging from 14.4 hectares in Tettenhall Analysis Areas to 0.63 within Bilston Analysis Area. Cross-referencing the level of provision in each Analysis Area to the findings of the on street survey indicates that there is little correlation between local perceptions of inadequate provision and the actual number of sites. For example, whilst having a relatively low level of existing provision, residents in the North and Wednesfield Analysis Areas expressed the lowest level of interest in allotments and there was limited evidence of the need for additional provision. This reinforces the demand-led nature of allotments.

- Provision in terms of number of sites is significantly higher in the Tettenhall and Wednesfield Analysis Areas of the City. There are only three sites in Bilston Analysis Area, all of which are small in size.

- Analysis of the range of size of sites illustrates that with the exception of Bilston Analysis Area, all Analysis Areas of the City contain an array of allotments of different sizes.

- Although the majority of residents had little opinion on allotment provision, of the 8% of respondents to the on street survey that perceived there to be insufficient provision, the main reasons cited for this included waiting lists, lack of knowledge and location of facilities, rather than a conclusive lack of provision.

- Although spatial distribution of sites serves as a valuable indicator of provision, demand for new sites should be determined primarily on indicators such as waiting lists rather than strict adherence to accessibility and quantity deficiencies.
Current position - quality

10.9 The quality of each site has been assessed through a detailed site visit and the completion of a detailed pro forma described in section two and provided in detail in Appendix D. It is important to note that the quality score represents a snapshot in time and records only the quality of the site at the time of the site visit. The quality of allotments in Wolverhampton is summarised in Table 10.3 below. All scores are detailed in percentages. Some allotments were not accessible at the time of site visit and have therefore not been allocated a quality score.

Table 10.3 – Quality of allotments across Wolverhampton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Areas</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Range of scores (%)</th>
<th>Average Score (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>86-93.8</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>88-92</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>90-92.5</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>81-95</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>81-95</td>
<td>89.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.10 It can be seen from Table 10.3 above that the quality of allotments is consistent across most sites. Quality is poorest on the eastern side of the City, in the Wednesfield and Bilston Analysis Areas, where a large proportion of regeneration and development will take place in the coming years.

10.11 Wednesfield Analysis Area contains both the highest and lowest quality sites, contributing to the greater range of scores in this area. Despite this, no allotment sites obtain a score of lower than 80%, indicating that all functioning sites are of good quality and should be highly valued by the local community.

10.12 Detailed analysis of site assessment scores highlights that the overall management and maintenance of all allotment sites is good, and there are few problems with vandalism, graffiti and litter. There are however few ancillary facilities at allotment sites, particularly benches, bins and toilets, although it is only practical to expect such provision at the larger allotment sites. Consultations highlighted that paths and fences are key requirements for allotments. Site visits highlighted that security was a key feature of many allotments, with many sites locked and overlooked by houses.

10.13 Analysis of usage has also indicated that those sites with good quality parking and soils have proved to be more popular.

| ALL 1 | Strive to achieve the quality vision at all sites across Wolverhampton and ensure that previous success factors are replicated across all sites where possible. |
10.14 Few reasons for not using allotment plots were attributed to the quality of sites, with most residents indicating that there was a lack of awareness of provision or a lack of local facilities.

**Accessibility**

10.15 Consultation highlighted that key reasons for low levels of interest in allotments related to a lack of awareness of local facilities.

| ALL 2 | Undertake a promotional campaign marketing the benefits of allotments particularly in areas of underused and disused sites. |

10.16 Signposting and provision of clear routes to allotments, particularly on ‘backland’ sites, could further raise the profile and increase awareness of the opportunities available. This is particularly important as the majority of residents indicated that they expect to travel on foot to allotment sites, further reinforcing the importance of the provision of local facilities.

**Setting local standards**

10.17 In setting local standards for allotments there is a need to take into account any national or local standards, current provision, other Local Authority standards for appropriate comparison, site assessments and consultation on local needs. Full justifications for the local standards are provided within Appendices H, I and J. The recommended local standards have been summarised overleaf in context with the allotment sites in Wolverhampton.
**SECTION 10 – ALLOTMENTS**

*Quantity standard (see Appendix H – standards and justification and worksheet)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing level of provision</th>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.15 hectares per 1000 population</td>
<td>0.15 hectares per 1000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

Allotment provision is unevenly spread, with the highest levels evident in Tettenhall Analysis Area. Within those Analysis Areas with the lowest levels of provision (Bilston, North and Wednesfield) there was limited local demand for further provision. More generally, consultation suggests that the current level of supply is adequate in Wolverhampton, with only 2% of on street survey respondents interested in owning / managing an allotment.

Allotments are very much a demand led typology and the quantity standard should be treated as a minimum standard. A standard equivalent to the current level of provision has been recommended, enabling the identification of locational deficiencies. Whilst this standard is below the Council’s current target of 0.2 hectares per 1000 population, local consultation undertaken suggests that there is insufficient demand to sustain this approach.

Indicatively, the recommended local standard would require further provision within Bilston, North and Wednesfield Analysis Areas. However, analysis of waiting lists will help to pinpoint where locational deficiencies across the City are particularly significant.

*Accessibility standard (see Appendix J)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 minute walk time (720 m)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

The provision of allotments is very much a demand led typology that should be reflected in the application of the accessibility and quantity standards. As such any deficiencies that are highlighted through the application of the study should be assessed further to indicate if there is any demand in that area.

However, as a guide a standard has been set at 15 minutes walk time. Residents responding to the on street survey indicated that they would expect to walk to allotments and a walk time has therefore been used in line with living a healthy lifestyle and targets to reduce the reliance on private transport. Given the 75% threshold level is for a 15 minute walk, setting a standard at this level is in accordance with the PPG17 Companion Guide.
**Quality standard (see Appendix I)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘A clean and well-kept secure site that encourages sustainable development, bio-diversity, healthy living and education objectives, with appropriate ancillary facilities (e.g. provision of water and toilets) to meet local needs, clearly marked pathways and good quality soils. The site should be spacious, providing appropriate access for all and clear boundaries.’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

Provision of allotments is demand driven. However, in times when the wider health agenda is important such sites need to be promoted. Good quality allotments with appropriate ancillary facilities that promote sustainable development will help attract more people to allotment sites and in turn make sure that the allotment sites within Wolverhampton are being operated at capacity.

### Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas

10.18 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those Analysis Areas where there is potential unmet demand we apply both the quantity and accessibility standards together. The quantity standards identify whether areas are quantitatively above or below the recommended minimum standard and the accessibility standards will help to determine where those deficiencies are of high importance.

**Table 10.4 - Level of allotment provision**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Popn</th>
<th>Current provision</th>
<th>Number of sites</th>
<th>Current provision per 1,000 popn</th>
<th>Local Standard</th>
<th>Allotment Surplus / Deficiency (ha) – 2007</th>
<th>Allotment Surplus / deficiency (ha) – 2021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>6.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>9.98</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
<td>-1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-1.61</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,361</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-5.57</td>
<td>-5.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>235,590</td>
<td>35.26</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10.19 Due to the demand led nature of allotments, specific deficiencies should be investigated in detail in order to understand the real level of demand in the area at any one time. If new allotment sites are developed, community involvement in the management and maintenance of the sites should be considered. This both follows national good practice and also takes account of...
one of the key themes emerging through consultations, which highlighted the value of past and current successes of community involvement.

| ALL 3 | Support the Wolverhampton Leisure Gardens Association, and the formation of Self Managed sites and other community initiatives which aim to increase community involvement. |

10.20 The distribution of allotments across Wolverhampton and the catchment areas these sites serve is illustrated in Figure 10.1 overleaf.

10.21 Application of the quantity standard indicates that provision of allotments within the North, Wednesfield and Bilston Analysis Areas of the City is insufficient to meet demand at the current time. By 2021, the requirement for allotments is likely to be greater.
Wolverhampton OSS: Allotments

This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Licence number 100013937. 2009. Non-Scale [m] = 0.5609m.
10.22 Analysis of the distribution of sites highlights that a significant proportion of residents have access to allotments across the City within the recommended distance threshold. Allotments are therefore well distributed. While there remain small pockets of residents outside of the catchment, the vast majority of residents within the Wednesfield and Northern Analysis Areas of the City are well served by allotments. This is perhaps surprising, given that provision in these areas is insufficient to meet the quantity standard. Consideration should be given to the adequacy of the number of allotment plots within each site. In light of shortfalls in provision in the North Analysis Area, Sandy Lane Allotments in Bushbury (where quality was lower than other sites) should be enhanced.

10.23 A similar situation exists in Tettenhall Analysis Areas, where Oxbarn Allotments and Jeffcock Road Allotments are perceived to be of poorer quality than other sites around the City. However the Jeffcock Road site is private and therefore there is limited improvements that the Council can undertake at the site, despite the importance of this private site. Despite high quantities of provision in the Tettenhall Analysis area, there remain accessibility deficiencies. In light of these deficiencies, consideration should be given to the demand for improvements existing sites and the need for new provision should be assessed.

10.24 Despite identified deficiencies within the North Analysis Area of the City, Emerson Road Allotments are not used, due to inadequate access to the site. Blakeley Green Allotments in Tettenhall Analysis Area are also perceived to have lower levels of use again due to restricted access, however this is reported to be improving through the clearing and preparing of vacant allotment plots and marketing of the site.

10.25 Although there are quantitative deficiencies in provision in Wednesfield Analysis Area, the majority of residents have access to allotments within the required distance threshold. Despite this, some of the poorest quality sites in the City are located in Wednesfield Analysis Area, specifically Heath Town Allotments and Lichwood Road Allotments.

10.26 The Central and South Analysis Area will see significant population growth over the coming years, occurring as a result of the development of high-density residential dwellings located in areas previously dominated by commercial outlets. The nature of these dwellings suggests that occupiers may have limited or no private garden space and demand for allotments in this area may increase as a consequence. There remain deficiencies in the City centre areas at the current time (although these are focused around areas where there are few residents) and in light of anticipated population growth it will be important to monitor demand and address deficiencies (or provide additional plots on current sites) to cater for the likely increase in demand.
10.27 As discussed when considering the quantitative supply of allotments across the City it is the Bilston Analysis Area (where soils are also poorer) where provision is sparser. Few residents living within the Bilston Analysis Area have access to allotments within the recommended catchment. In light of significant regeneration schemes underway in this area of the City, demand for allotments should also be investigated. New development occurring as part of the Bilston Urban Village may provide opportunities to address the issues in this Analysis Area. Car ownership in the Bilston Analysis Area is the lowest of all areas of the City, further reinforcing the importance of local facilities.

10.28 The Bilston Analysis Area of the City will see the development of a new leisure facility in 2009, which will be designated as the healthy lifestyles centre for the City. New allotment provision should be considered as an opportunity to complement this facility, offering an alternative opportunity for physical activity which is accessible to all sectors of the community. Primary Care Trusts across UK are promoting the benefits of allotments in healthy living and reinforcing the concept of “green gyms”.

Summary

10.29 According to the on street survey allotments are one of the less popular types of open spaces in Wolverhampton, with only 2% of residents indicating that they would like to own or manage an allotment. However 2006 allotment figures suggest contrary to this with 93% occupancy rates.

10.30 The key barriers identified for those who would like an allotment but do not currently have one focused primarily on access to the sites, particularly a lack of awareness and a lack of sites in the locality. Local facilities were perceived to be particularly important as the majority of residents would expect to walk to their allotment plot.

10.31 Allotments are a demand led typology and it is therefore inappropriate to identify areas of deficiency. The distribution of allotments is even across the City, and most residents have access to provision. Despite this, several areas of the City have been identified as important for further investigation, particularly the Bilston Analysis Area where few residents have access to local facilities.
10.32 The quality of allotments was perceived to be good and few issues were identified. Future investment in allotments should focus on the delivery of high quality ancillary facilities at sites.
Cemeteries and churchyards

Introduction and definition

11.1 Churchyards are encompassed within the walled boundary of a church while cemeteries are burial grounds outside the confines of a church. According to PPG17, this typology includes private burial grounds, local authority burial grounds and disused churchyards.

11.2 While the recognised primary purpose of this type of open space is for burial of the dead and quiet contemplation, the amenity and visual benefits should also be recognised, in addition to the opportunities to promote wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

Figure 11.1 – St Peter’s Church

Context

11.3 Churchyards and cemeteries make a significant contribution to the provision of urban greenspace, offering a quiet sanctuary for both people and wildlife. They therefore represent a real opportunity for new kinds of conservation and green space policy. Cemeteries can provide some of the functions of parks and, unlike parks, the reassuring presence of people is generally guaranteed. Some are visited by significant numbers of tourists, and they can be important to family history researchers.

11.4 There are no current strategies for cemeteries and churchyards within Wolverhampton, however this type of open space has been the focus of improvements within the City recently with the Council investing in improvements to address safety issues.
Current position - quantity

11.5 A total of 22 cemetery and churchyard sites have been audited across Wolverhampton. The distribution of these sites is set out below in Table 11.1

Table 11.1 – Quantitative distribution of cemeteries and churchyards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Population 2001</th>
<th>Hectares</th>
<th>Hectares per 1000 pop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall Area</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>25.51</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South Area</td>
<td>57248</td>
<td>7.94</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Area</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>15.02</td>
<td>0.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield Area</td>
<td>44361</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston Area</td>
<td>41361</td>
<td>10.21</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>235,590</td>
<td>62.52</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11.6 The distribution of cemeteries and churchyards is largely opportunity led. While cemeteries/ churchyards may provide a local open space, many residents will also travel significant distances to reach the facility of their choice. Consultation highlighted their value to some residents and the benefits they serve for wildlife, particularly in the context of the urban nature of the City were also recognised.

11.7 Wolverhampton City Council provides and manages seven public cemeteries and four closed churchyards. The public cemeteries are at Beacon Hill, Bilston, Bushbury, Danescourt, Hall Green, Merridale and Penn. It can be seen from Table 11.1 above that provision is relatively unevenly distributed across the City, with almost half of the total provision being located in the Tettenhall Analysis Area.

11.8 The quality of cemeteries and churchyards is perhaps more important than the quantity. Table 11.2 examines the highest and lowest quality cemeteries and churchyards across the City.

Current position – quality

11.9 The top and bottom scoring sites are outlined overleaf in Table 11.2. As can be seen, the quality of cemeteries and churchyards are perceived to be in reasonable condition, with no sites falling into the poor or very poor categories. However there have been complaints made about the four closed churchyards in recent years.

11.10 At the time of site visits, few issues were identified with cemeteries and churchyards and there was little evidence of vandalism / graffiti or litter. However other consultation indicated issues with dog fouling and some vandalism. The key areas identified for improvement were the provision of bins and additional seating.
SECTION 11 – CEMETERIES AND CHURCHYARDS

Table 11.2 – Quality of cemeteries and churchyards across Wolverhampton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>V good</th>
<th>90% to 100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Peters Square (Central and South) 91.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beacon Hill Cemetery (Central and South) 91.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Peters Churchyard (Central and South) 90.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>50% to 81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Mary's Churchyard (North) 80.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Thomas Churchyard (Wednesfield) 80%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Orchard (Bilston) 60%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Setting local standards

11.11 The process for setting standards is outlined in section two. Whereas provision standards for quality, quantity and accessibility are set for other open space typologies, PPG17 Annex recommends that only a quality vision is established for cemeteries and churchyards stating "many historic churchyards provide important places for quiet contemplation, especially in busy urban areas, and often support biodiversity and interesting geological features. As such many can also be viewed as amenity greenspaces. Unfortunately, many are also run-down and therefore it may be desirable to enhance them. As churchyards can only exist where there is a church, the only form of provision standard which will be required is a qualitative one."

11.12 In line with PPG17 and the Companion Guide, only a quality vision has therefore been set:

**Quantity standard (see Appendix H – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Existing level of provision</th>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Local Standard to be set</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

No quantity standard has been set in line with PPG17.

**Accessibility standard (see Appendix J)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Local Standard to be set</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Justification**

There is no realistic requirement to set catchments for such typologies as they cannot easily be influenced through planning policy and implementation.
SECTION 11 – CEMETERIES AND CHURCHYARDS

Quality standard (see Appendix I)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“A clean and well-maintained site providing long-term burial capacity (where appropriate), an area of quiet contemplation and a sanctuary for wildlife. Sites should have clear pathways and varied vegetation and landscaping and provide appropriate ancillary accommodation (e.g. facilities for flowers, litter-bins and seating).”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is essential that sites be regularly maintained with clear footpaths so as to increase the ease of access and safety for those who visit the sites. It is important that good practice is promoted throughout the City.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Applying local standards

11.13 In addition to offering a functional value, many cemeteries and churchyards have wider benefits including heritage, cultural, natural and landscape values. Cemeteries offer opportunities for quiet recreation as well as acting as important wildlife sanctuaries. Cemeteries and churchyards may also break up the urban landscape texture.

11.14 As it is inappropriate to set quantity and accessibility standards for cemeteries and churchyards, it is not possible to comment on areas of deficiency for this type of open space. It can however be seen that there is a relatively uneven distribution of cemeteries and churchyards across the City with high levels of provision in the Tettenhall and North Analysis Areas.

11.15 The value of cemeteries and churchyards should however be recognised and opportunities to promote these sites sensitively for both human and wildlife use should be seized. The quality of cemeteries and churchyards in the city is considered reasonable. There has been significant investment over the past year at a number of sites and there are further sites that are in need of improvement.

| CC1 |
| Stakeholders should recognise and promote the nature conservation value of closed cemeteries and churchyards and consider working towards developing more awareness of ecological management of cemeteries and churchyards. |

11.16 Assessing quality and value is fundamental to effective planning. The quality vision and quality benchmark should guide the future development and improvement of cemeteries and churchyards across the city, particularly closed cemeteries and churchyards.

| CC2 |
| The Council should work in partnership with other providers (e.g. the Churches, Friends of Church Groups) to improve and maintain the quality of closed cemeteries and churchyards in line with the quality vision. |
Summary

11.17 There is a relatively uneven distribution of cemeteries and churchyards across the City with high levels of provision in the Tettenhall and North Analysis Areas. Cemeteries offer opportunities for quiet recreation as well as acting as important wildlife sanctuaries and are effective in breaking up the urban landscape texture.

11.18 The quality of cemeteries and churchyards in the City is considered reasonable with a number of sites considered to be in need of improvement (The Orchard, St Mary’s and St Thomas). Some problems with the maintenance and misuse of closed churchyards were identified.

11.19 The distribution of cemeteries and churchyards is largely opportunity led. While cemeteries/ churchyards may provide a local open space, many residents will also travel significant distances to reach the facility of their choice. Consultation highlighted their value to some residents and the benefits they serve for wildlife, particularly in the context of the urban nature of the City were also recognised.

11.20 Assessments of quality and value are fundamental to effective planning. Consideration should also be given to the wider benefits offered by cemeteries and churchyards. Local standards for accessibility and quantity have therefore not been set. Instead, achievement of the quality vision should guide the future improvement of cemeteries and churchyards across the City. Partnership working will be essential to effectively deliver high quality sites across the City which includes working with the Churches and Friends of Church Groups.
Green corridors

Introduction and definition

12.1 Green corridors are linear features of mostly open character, including canal towpaths, footpaths, cycleways and bridleways, which act as wildlife corridors and attractive, safe off-road links between residential areas, open spaces, urban centres, leisure facilities and employment areas. They also give residents access to natural green space and the open countryside and provide opportunities for recreation. Green corridors increase in value if they are linked to form a network which extends within and beyond the City boundary.

12.2 Local networks of high quality and well-managed and maintained open spaces, sport and recreational facilities help create urban environments that are attractive, clean and safe. Therefore the connectivity of all spaces through the provision of "green corridors" in Wolverhampton is an important strategic consideration.

12.3 PPG17 states that the need for green corridors arises from the need to promote environmentally sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling within urban areas. This means that there is no sensible way of stating a provision standard, just as there is no way of having a standard for the proportion of the land in an area which it will be desirable to allocate for roads. Instead, planning policies should promote the use of green corridors to link housing areas to the Sustrans national cycle network, town and City centres, places of employment and community facilities such as schools, shops, community centres and sports facilities. In this sense, green corridors are demand-led. However, planning authorities should also take opportunities to use established linear routes, such as the canal towpaths, roads, river banks, as green corridors, and supplement them by proposals to 'plug in' access to them from as wide an area as possible.

Figure 12.1 - Birmingham Canal Navigations Old Main Line
Context

12.4 The on street survey highlights that 28% of respondents use this type of open space throughout the year, and green corridors are the third most frequently used type of open space.

12.5 Green corridors are a key component of the green infrastructure of Wolverhampton and provide important links to the neighbouring local authorities for residents.

12.6 The strategic context of green corridors is discussed in Table 12.1 overleaf.
**Table 12.1 - Strategic context**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document reviewed</th>
<th>Summary of key strategic drivers</th>
<th>Links to open space, sport and recreation study</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UDP</td>
<td>Reference is made in the UDP to the association of green corridors, citing the importance of linking open spaces together through footpaths, canal towpaths, cycleways and bridleways between residential areas, open spaces, urban centres, leisure facilities and employment areas.</td>
<td>Green corridors are highlighted as an important feature of open space within the UDP with potential links between different areas and functions of the City.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Centre Strategy and Action Plan</td>
<td>Improvement to pedestrian corridors and links is also highlighted as a key action within the City Centre Strategy and Action Plan.</td>
<td>Green corridors within an urban area, particularly in the City centre are an important feature of open space provision. Linking open spaces together and additional routes will encourage and facilitate sustainable transport in the City. Key actions will be highlighted within this report to ensure there is a coordinated network of green corridors in Wolverhampton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenspace Strategy</td>
<td>The Greenspace Strategy recommended the development of walking and cycling routes, as well as developing “Walking for Health” routes in major parks and green spaces.</td>
<td>This provides the opportunity to link in with improving the general quality of green corridors to facilitate the actions of the strategy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston Canal Corridor Enhancement Strategy</td>
<td>The strategy has the following objectives: protect and enhance the existing corridor, create an integrated which incorporates the canal character, improve actual and perceived security along the waterway, highlight the importance of the existing wildlife corridor along the canal and incorporate this within the new development, improve access points to the canal towpath and links to Bilston and surrounding areas and provide new recreation facilities adding to those already existing within the area. The canal towpath should be upgraded and re surfaced to provide an appropriate route to Access for All.</td>
<td>Whilst this strategy is specific to Bilston, all efforts should be employed to enhance the canal network within the City. It is a unique part of Wolverhampton and provides valuable opportunities to link open spaces together and provide a network of integrated footpaths.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Current position

12.7 The Wolverhampton Greenway network (see map overleaf) includes the canal network, watercourses, disused railway lines and linear open spaces such as Valley Park. According to the adopted UDP, given the lack of open space in urban areas like Wolverhampton and the potential to contribute towards regeneration, the development of a comprehensive Greenway network is a priority in Wolverhampton. The Council and other partner agencies, including British Waterways, have already undertaken substantial work to enhance the network’s value for recreation and wildlife and increase its continuity and extent, by making use of existing linear features, such as canals and disused railway lines. Further work will be undertaken over the lifetime of the Plan, including extensions to the network.

12.8 British Waterways highlighted a series of improvements to the canal networks in Wolverhampton and additional funding to assist in improvements. They also commented that an approach adopted in the management of other canals that has had great success is the adoption of a “Canal Champion”. This is something that could potentially link with health initiatives around cycling and walking. Current regeneration initiatives in the City centre include the improvement to canals in the City, particularly around Broad St Canal Basin and Wharf, where it is intended to develop the canal into an accessible and desirable area for local residents. Other canal sites of importance in Wolverhampton include the Valley Park.

12.9 The Bilston Canal Enhancement plan will further enhance the value of the network, providing a valuable amenity for residents and enhancing the green infrastructure network of the City.

12.10 Existing and proposed Greenways are protected from development that would narrow or sever them under Policy R6. Parts of the Greenway network are also given protection under Policy N5: Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation and Landscape Features of Value for Wildlife and Policy HE22: Canals.

12.11 Figure 12.1 on page 211 overleaf illustrates the green infrastructure of Wolverhampton, detailing the existing green spaces and the corridors and linkages between these spaces.
Key issues arising from consideration of the green infrastructure of Wolverhampton include:

- the canal network offers an expansive green corridor provision within Wolverhampton including examples such as Smestow Valley, with future developments linking Smestow Valley through Gorsebrook to Broad Street Canal Basin in the City Centre.

- the existing and proposed greenways in Wolverhampton fall predominantly in the Bilston and Tettenhall Analysis Areas. In contrast, there are very few greenways in the other Analysis Areas of the City and spaces are therefore more isolated. The longest continuous corridor (current / proposed) runs across the west of Wolverhampton from south to north Tettenhall Analysis Area.

- within the Tettenhall and Bilston Analysis Areas a number of the largest open space, sport and recreation facilities fall along the linear greenway.

- highest aspirations of users who frequently use green corridors include footpaths (13%), dog walking facilities (12%), litter bins (11%), clean and litter free (11%) and nature features (8%). The majority of respondents indicated that there are few problems with quality at these sites with the exception of dog fouling, which was reported as a minor problem.

- green corridors were mentioned throughout consultation and appear to be well-used and valued by the public, especially for recreational use for walking and cycling. It was suggested that the general maintenance of footpaths is good, although more specifically the canals suffer from fly-tipping and this can detract from the use of canal towpaths and the overall user experience.

- it was also commented that links with neighbouring authorities should be more explicit, leading to an integrated green infrastructure. This is one of the key policies of the cycling strategy.

**Setting local standards**

In light of the nature of green corridors it is inappropriate to set quantity and accessibility standards for green corridors. Annex A of PPG17 supports this, stating that there is no sensible way of setting an appropriate provision standard.

PPG17 goes on to state that:

"Instead planning policies should promote the use of green corridors to link housing areas to the Sustains national cycle network, town and City centres, places of employment and community facilities such as schools, shops, community centres and sports facilities. In this sense green corridors are demand-led. However, planning authorities should also take opportunities to use established linear routes, such as disused railway lines, roads or canal and river banks, as green corridors, and supplement them by proposals to 'plug in' access to them from as wide an area as possible."
12.15 Only a quality vision has therefore been set for green corridors. Further enhancement of the green corridor network should be undertaken through the development of a green infrastructure strategy. However, site assessments have not been undertaken for green corridors, as it is not feasible to assess the length of all footpaths/corridors. However, the quality vision should be used as an aspiration for the introduction of new linkages.

**Quality standard (see Appendix I)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommended standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“Linear open spaces should be clean and litter-free, safe and convenient corridors with clear pathways, linking major residential areas, open spaces, urban centres, leisure facilities and employment areas, that promote sustainable methods of transport. Appropriate ancillary facilities such as litter and dog bins, seating in appropriate places and signage to and within the sites should be provided to encourage access for all. The corridor should also seek to encourage biodiversity and wildlife habitats, enabling the movement of both wildlife and people between open spaces, linking in specifically with natural areas of open space.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is important that any new provision meets this local quality standard that incorporates all Council visions and public aspirations. Ultimately sites need to be safe with clear pathways and well maintained to encourage usage. These routes also need to be well lit and secure. While green corridors have an important recreational role, it is important to ensure that there is a balance between recreational and wildlife / biodiversity to maximise the role these assets play. This was recognised by local residents, particularly when considering the value of local linkages between natural and semi natural areas.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12.16 The rationale surrounding the development of recommended local standards for green corridors is set out below.

**Applying local standards**

12.17 Given that it is not appropriate to set any local quantity or accessibility standards. It is also not appropriate to state areas of deficiency or need.

12.18 The aim is to provide an integrated network of high quality green corridors linking open spaces together and opportunities for informal recreation and alternative means of transport. Consideration should also be given to the provision of effective wildlife corridors, enabling the migration of species across the City. Provision of wildlife corridors should be considered in conjunction with the findings and targets of the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

12.19 Improvements to the accessibility and desirability of the canal area will lead to increased usage and value placed on these areas in future years. This should be encouraged, and if successful in the Broad Street Wharf area, consideration should be given to undertaking further work across City to develop the canals further, this is part of the wider Black Country emphasis.
on urban regeneration and opening up whole lengths of the canal and addressing safety issues on the canal towpaths.

Summary and recommendations

12.20 Green corridors provide opportunities close to peoples’ homes for informal recreation, particularly walking and cycling, as part of every day routines, for example, travel to work or shops. The development of a linked green corridor network will help to provide opportunities for informal recreation and improve the health and well-being of the local community. Green corridors are key to the achievement of increased participation targets.

12.21 There are already a number of footpaths and green corridor networks within the study area and consultation indicates that they are well-used and valued. Future enhancement of green corridors, particularly in the central area and in Bilston Analysis Area is likely to increase the value placed on these amenities by residents.

12.22 Future development needs to encompass linkage provision between large areas of open space, create opportunities to develop the green corridor network and utilise potential development sites such as dismantled railway lines and cross country nature trails that already exist in the City. Development should consider both the needs of wildlife and humans.

12.23 A network of multi-functional greenspace will contribute to the high quality natural and built environment required for existing and new sustainable communities in the future. An integrated network of high quality green corridors will link open spaces together to help alleviate other open space deficiencies and provide opportunities for informal recreation and alternative means of transport.

| GC1 | Emphasis should be placed on developing the City’s natural green corridors i.e. the canal towpaths to maximise their use as green corridors linking urban areas throughout the City. Further investment in safety of the canal towpaths is required along with consideration to the designation of a canal champion, in partnership with British Waterways. |
| GC2 | The Council should work in tandem with all delivery partners in order to maximise the use of green corridors and ensure the successful implementation of the Public Rights of Way Improvement and Action Plan. |
| GC3 | Actions arising from the UDP regarding the development of greenways should be implemented. Involvement of community groups to help contribute, enhance and maximise the provision of green corridors should be encouraged. |
| GC4 | Linking existing green corridors with open spaces in Wolverhampton should be a key priority for the Council to provide opportunities for informal recreation and alternative means of transport, by linking all types of open spaces. |
| GC5 | Consider the development of a green infrastructure study to expand on this open space study and link with the biodiversity action plan to maximise the linkages of open spaces and create a network of multi-functional greenspace in Wolverhampton. |
Overview of open space, sport and recreation provision in Wolverhampton

13.1 The Wolverhampton Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study has been completed in accordance with the requirements of the latest Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 and its Companion Guide. The Study was undertaken alongside a Playing Pitch Study, which considers provision of football, cricket, rugby and hockey pitches and bowling greens and tennis courts in more detail. The bulk of the Study was carried out during summer 2007.

13.2 The aims of the Wolverhampton Open Space, Sport and Recreation study were to:

- provide the Council with a local audit and needs assessment of open space, sport and recreation provision in the City that meets the needs and requirements of PPG 17
- carry out a comprehensive assessment of current and future needs for different types of open space, sport and recreation facility in Wolverhampton
- carry out a City-wide audit of the quantity, accessibility and quality of existing open space, sport and recreation facilities, allocating each area or building to one of 10 open space, sport and recreation typologies.
- provide a robust evidence base justifying the development of local provision standards (quantity, quality and accessibility) for 8 different types of open space and facility, to underpin the Council’s open space, sport and recreation forward planning (UDP/LDF policies) and future policy and strategy decisions
- using these standards, identify current and projected surpluses and deficiencies of different types of open space and facility across the City and within five Analysis Areas

13.3 Sections 3-12 of this report consider each open space, sport and recreation typology in turn. Each typology section sets out:

- an introduction and typology definition
- the context, based on the findings of the local needs assessment and strategic review
- the current position in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility, as identified through the audit and site assessments
- recommended quantity, quality and accessibility standards with supporting evidence and justification
- an analysis of the implications of applying the quantity, quality and accessibility standards to existing provision, resulting in a series of recommendations at both City-wide and Analysis Area level
- a summary
13.4 To supplement the typology specific analysis, this Summary attempts to draw together the Study results and recommendations relating to each Analysis Area. This is essential in order to:

- support urban renaissance – local networks of high quality and well managed and maintained open spaces, sports and recreation facilities together help create urban environments that are attractive, clean and safe. Therefore the connectivity of all spaces in Wolverhampton is an important strategic consideration.

- promoting more sustainable development – by ensuring that open spaces sport and recreational facilities are easily accessible by walking and cycling and that more heavily used or intensive sport and recreation facilities are planned for in locations well served by public transport. This is particularly important in urban areas. Analysis of all open spaces, sport and recreation facilities in Wolverhampton will allow for initial consideration of their relationship with public transport networks.

- maintaining an adequate overall supply of open space, sports and recreation facilities – an overview of overall levels of open space surplus and deficiency in different Analysis Areas can form the basis for a review of the purpose of specific open spaces, including the potential for changing typology.

- ensuring consistent quality of spaces – providing an indicative analysis of the open spaces and sport and recreation facilities most in need of enhancement in each Analysis Area.

Recommended local standards

13.5 The following standards have been set as step 3 of the PPG 17 process, based on the audit of provision and detailed analysis of local needs. Evidence and justification for the recommended standards can be found in relevant sections and appendices.

**Quantity Standards**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Quantity standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District Parks</td>
<td>0.27 ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Parks</td>
<td>0.60 ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and semi natural open space</td>
<td>1.50 ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for children</td>
<td>0.05 ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for young people</td>
<td>0.05 ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor sports facilities</td>
<td>1.50 ha per 1,000 population (of which 0.53 ha should be actual pitch area)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor sports facilities</td>
<td>Sports Halls – 54 sq m per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Swimming Pools - 12.2 sq m per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Quantity standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amenity green space</td>
<td>0.62 ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allotments</td>
<td>0.15 ha per 1,000 population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Corridors</td>
<td>PPG17 recommends that only a quality vision is established for green corridors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemeteries and Churchyards</td>
<td>PPG17 recommends that only a quality vision is established for cemeteries and churchyards.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Accessibility Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Accessibility Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District Parks</td>
<td>20 minute walk time (960 m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood Parks</td>
<td>10 minute walk time (480 m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural and semi natural open space</td>
<td>15 minute walk time (720 m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for children</td>
<td>10 minute walk time (480 m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provision for young people</td>
<td>20 minute walk time (960 m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdoor sports facilities</td>
<td>15 minute walk (720 m) to local outdoor sports (grass pitches, tennis and bowling greens)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20 minute drive (8 km) to synthetic turf pitches and golf courses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenity green space</td>
<td>5 minute walk time (240 m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor sports facilities</td>
<td>20 minute walk time (960 m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allotments</td>
<td>15 minute walk time (720 m)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Corridors</td>
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</table>

### Quality Standards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Quality Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District Parks</td>
<td>A welcoming, clean and litter free site providing a one-stop community facility which is accessible to all and has a range of facilities and other types of open space within it. District Parks should be attractive, well designed and maintained, providing well-kept grass, flowers and trees, adequate lighting and other appropriate safety features, as well as suitable ancillary features.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Typology | Quality Standard
--- | ---
**accommodation** (including seating, toilets, litter bins and play facilities). Sites should be safe and secure and easily accessible. Where appropriate, the Park Ranger scheme should be implemented to enhance the quality of the environment and facilitate community interaction. Encouraging community involvement through organised events should help to increase usage and activities. Sites should promote the conservation of wildlife and the built heritage and provide links to the surrounding green infrastructure.

**Neighbourhood Parks** | Striving to achieve a national standard for quality, all Neighbourhood Parks should be a facility serving the immediate needs of local people for active recreation. They should provide a welcoming, clean and litter free environment. Maintenance should focus on providing well-kept grass, flowers and trees and encourage wildlife to flourish with the use of varied vegetation through appropriate management. Park Rangers should work with the community and other organisations to provide a hub of interest, activities and local events as well as establishing a safe network of local open spaces. Good quality and appropriate ancillary facilities (toilets, litter bins, dog bins and benches) should be provided to facilitate the needs of users and encourage greater use.

**Natural and semi natural open space** | A clean and litter free site with clear and obvious pathways that provide opportunities to link other open spaces together and where appropriate link in to the outlying countryside. Where possible sites should encourage wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental awareness, maximised through appropriate natural features. Litter bins, dog bins, benches and picnic areas should be provided where possible and there should be a clear focus on balancing recreational and wildlife needs, whilst ensuring public access to all. Increased community involvement through management, maintenance and promotion of these sites should be encouraged where possible.

**Provision for children** | A well designed, well-maintained, clean site of sufficient size to provide imaginative formal equipment and/or an enriched play environment in a safe and convenient location. Equipped play spaces should be fun and exciting and should have clear boundaries with dog free areas and include appropriate ancillary facilities such as seating, litter-bins and toilets in the locality of larger sites. Sites should also comply with appropriate national guidelines for design and safety and safeguard the amenity of neighbouring land users. The site should also be accessible to all.

**Provision for young people** | A well designed, high quality site that provides a meeting place for young people, encompassing the needs of all users with varied formal and informal equipment / space. The site should be located in a safe environment that is accessible to all, without compromising neighbouring land users. The focus should be on providing a well-maintained, clean and litter free area with appropriate lighting and shelter, promoting a sense of community ownership.

**Outdoor sports facilities** | A well-planned, clean and litter free sports facility site that sits in harmony with its surroundings. The site should be well maintained to an appropriate match play standard, with good grass coverage and well-drained quality surfaces. Appropriate ancillary accommodation should be provided at sites with consideration given to providing toilets, changing rooms and car parking.
### Typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typology</th>
<th>Quality Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Community-use synthetic turf pitches</td>
<td>Community-use synthetic turf pitches should be floodlit to comply with quality standards and maximise usage. Meeting places should be provided for both formal and informal sports pitch sites inclusive of sheltered areas and benches, encouraging participation and access for all. The site should be managed appropriately to ensure community safety and provide a local amenity that is close to people’s homes, contributing to the health agenda.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amenity green space</td>
<td>A clean and well-maintained green space site that is accessible to all. Sites should have appropriate ancillary furniture (litter-bins, etc.), and pathways and landscaping designed to provide a safe and secure site with a spacious outlook that enhances the appearance of the local environment and provides a safe area for young people to meet. Larger sites should be suitable for informal play opportunities and should be enhanced to encourage the site to become a community focus, while smaller sites should at the least provide an important visual amenity function.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indoor Sports Facilities</td>
<td>A clean and well-maintained indoor sports facility providing a wide range of activities and good value for money. The site should provide adequate changing facilities, cycle and car-parking and be easily accessible by public transport and by all sectors of the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allotments</td>
<td>A clean and well-kept, secure site that encourages sustainable development, biodiversity, healthy living and education objectives, with appropriate ancillary facilities (e.g. provision of water and toilets) to meet local needs, clearly marked pathways and good quality soils. The site should be spacious, providing appropriate access for all and clear boundaries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Corridors</td>
<td>Linear open spaces should be clean and litter-free, safe and convenient corridors with clear pathways, linking major residential areas, open spaces, urban centres, leisure facilities and employment areas, that promote sustainable methods of transport. Appropriate ancillary facilities such as litter and dog bins and seating in appropriate places with signage to and within the sites should be featured to encourage access for all. The corridor should also seek to encourage biodiversity and wildlife habitats, enabling the movement of both wildlife and people between open spaces, linking in specifically with natural areas of open space.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cemeteries and churchyards</td>
<td>A clean and well-maintained site providing long-term burial capacity (where appropriate), an area of quiet contemplation and a sanctuary for wildlife. Sites should have clear pathways and varied vegetation and landscaping and provide appropriate ancillary accommodation (e.g. facilities for flowers litter bins and seating).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Current position – quantity

13.6 The current provision, in hectares, of all open space, sport and recreation facilities in Wolverhampton is summarised in Table 13.1. Table 13.2 sets out the current (2007) surplus or deficiency of open space, by typology and Analysis Area, when measured against the recommended quantity standard. Table 13.3 sets out the projected surplus and deficiency position for 2021, given increases in population. The negative figures indicate a deficiency against the standard. Further information is provided in the main body of the report and in Appendix H1.
Table 13.1  Current Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities in Wolverhampton by Typology and Analysis Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Population (2007)</th>
<th>District Parks (ha)</th>
<th>Neighbourhood Parks (ha)</th>
<th>Natural &amp; Semi Natural Open Space (ha)</th>
<th>Amenity Green Space (ha)</th>
<th>Provision for Children (ha)</th>
<th>Provision for Young People (ha)</th>
<th>Allotments (ha)</th>
<th>Outdoor Sport Facilities (ha)</th>
<th>Total existing open space (ha)</th>
<th>Provision Required to meet total open space standard of 4.74 ha per 1,000 population - 2007 (ha)</th>
<th>Surplus / deficiency - 2007 (ha)</th>
<th>Surplus / deficiency - 2021 (ha)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>12.39</td>
<td>23.05</td>
<td>83.05</td>
<td>18.62</td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>76.91</td>
<td>229.81</td>
<td>246.43</td>
<td>-16.62</td>
<td>-22.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>24.59</td>
<td>26.08</td>
<td>53.32</td>
<td>33.47</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>9.98</td>
<td>76.34</td>
<td>227.41</td>
<td>271.36</td>
<td>-43.95</td>
<td>-50.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>4.86</td>
<td>45.69</td>
<td>48.44</td>
<td>26.45</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.21</td>
<td>74.84</td>
<td>207.64</td>
<td>192.59</td>
<td>+15.05</td>
<td>+10.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>31.49</td>
<td>30.87</td>
<td>32.61</td>
<td>1.51</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>64.98</td>
<td>171.07</td>
<td>210.27</td>
<td>-39.20</td>
<td>-43.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,361</td>
<td>20.48</td>
<td>13.95</td>
<td>129.47</td>
<td>36.38</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>45.12</td>
<td>248.38</td>
<td>196.05</td>
<td>+52.33</td>
<td>+47.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>235,590</td>
<td>64.52</td>
<td>140.26</td>
<td>345.15</td>
<td>147.53</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>7.15</td>
<td>35.26</td>
<td>338.19</td>
<td>1084.31</td>
<td>1116.70</td>
<td>-32.39</td>
<td>-57.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13.7 The main findings regarding quantity of provision are as follows:

- when all of the local quantity standards are considered collectively, Bilston and North are the only two Analysis Areas where current provision (ha) is greater than the provision required (ha) to meet the total open space quantity standard

- the Tettenhall, Central and South and Wednesfield Analysis Areas all have deficiencies in overall provision of open space (ha). The Analysis Area which would require the largest increase in provision to satisfy the total open space quantity standard is Wednesfield Analysis Area – which would require a 27% increase in the existing level of provision. The main contributing factor is the small size of the existing District Park in Wednesfield Analysis Area and an undersupply of Neighbourhood Parks and natural and semi natural green space compared to other Analysis Areas.

- across the typologies the greatest quantitative shortfall is in provision for children and provision for young people, which require in the region of a 75% increase to meet quantity standards.

- overall the City is 32.4 ha deficient in open space, sport and recreation provision, requiring an increase of 3% to meet the total open space quantity standard. However, as specified throughout this report, quantity standards need to be applied in conjunction with accessibility standards to fully understand areas of surplus and deficiency.
### Table 13.2 Surplus / Deficiency of Open Space (ha) Against Local Quantity Standards by Typology and Analysis Area (2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>District Parks</th>
<th>Neighbourhood Parks</th>
<th>Natural &amp; Semi Natural</th>
<th>Amenity Green Space</th>
<th>Provision for Children</th>
<th>Provision for Young People</th>
<th>Allotments</th>
<th>Outdoor Sport Facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>51,990</td>
<td>-1.65</td>
<td>-8.14</td>
<td>5.07</td>
<td>-13.61</td>
<td>-1.70</td>
<td>-2.11</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>-1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>57,248</td>
<td>9.13</td>
<td>-8.27</td>
<td>-32.55</td>
<td>-2.02</td>
<td>-1.28</td>
<td>-0.81</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>-9.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>40,630</td>
<td>-6.11</td>
<td>21.31</td>
<td>-12.51</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
<td>-1.03</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
<td>13.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>44,361</td>
<td>-9.78</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>-35.67</td>
<td>5.11</td>
<td>-0.71</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>-1.61</td>
<td>-1.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>41,361</td>
<td>9.31</td>
<td>-10.87</td>
<td>67.43</td>
<td>10.74</td>
<td>-0.96</td>
<td>-0.83</td>
<td>-5.57</td>
<td>-16.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>235,590</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>-1.10</td>
<td>-8.24</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>-5.53</td>
<td>-4.63</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-15.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 13.3 Surplus / Deficiency of Open Space (ha) Against Local Quantity Standards by Typology and Analysis Area (2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis Area</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>District Parks</th>
<th>Neighbourhood Parks</th>
<th>Natural &amp; Semi Natural</th>
<th>Amenity Green Space</th>
<th>Provision for Children</th>
<th>Provision for Young People</th>
<th>Allotments</th>
<th>Outdoor Sport Facilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tettenhall</td>
<td>53,162</td>
<td>-1.96</td>
<td>-8.85</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>-14.34</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>-2.17</td>
<td>6.43</td>
<td>-2.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central and South</td>
<td>58,539</td>
<td>8.78</td>
<td>-9.04</td>
<td>-34.49</td>
<td>-2.82</td>
<td>-1.35</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>-11.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North</td>
<td>41,546</td>
<td>-6.36</td>
<td>20.76</td>
<td>-13.88</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>-0.93</td>
<td>-1.08</td>
<td>-1.02</td>
<td>12.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesfield</td>
<td>45,361</td>
<td>-10.05</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>-37.17</td>
<td>4.49</td>
<td>-0.76</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>-3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilston</td>
<td>42,293</td>
<td>9.06</td>
<td>-11.43</td>
<td>66.03</td>
<td>10.16</td>
<td>-1.00</td>
<td>-0.87</td>
<td>-5.71</td>
<td>-18.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>240,901</td>
<td>-0.52</td>
<td>-4.28</td>
<td>-16.20</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td>-5.80</td>
<td>-4.90</td>
<td>-0.88</td>
<td>-23.16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Current provision – quality

13.8 The quality of all open space sites is illustrated overleaf. In general the quality of open spaces is good, however there remains scope for improvements. In particular:

- there are a number of opportunities to improve the range of facilities at Neighbourhood Parks and there is a need for improvements at some of the District Parks to meet the criteria for Green Flag status

- there are site specific issues on a number of natural and semi natural open spaces and emphasis on further designation of Local Nature Reserves. The creation of further LNRs should be explored, including Northycote Farm, Bushbury, extensions to existing Smestow Valley Local Nature Reserve, parts of Goldthorn Wedge, Brook Point Pool, Monmore Green disused railway, Ladymoor Pool, Peascroft Wood, Springvale Park, The Gorge, Cinder Hill and Bowman’s Harbour

- there are issues with quality at some of the cemeteries and churchyards across the City. However, the Council has been investing in these facilities over the past year

- there is a greater variation in the quality of amenity green spaces than any other type of open space in the City, with quality scores ranging from 48% to 94% - indicating this type of open space is of poorer quality and in need of enhancement or review.
Wolverhampton OSS: Quality Scores - All Typologies

Quality Scores (Percentages)
- 88 to 100
- 88 to 68
- 68 to 88
- 58 to 68
- 48 to 58

Analysis Areas

Mastermap

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Current provision – accessibility

13.9 The main findings regarding accessibility are as follows:

- the parts of Wolverhampton that are best served (irrespective of typology) in terms of open space, sport and recreation facilities are the centre of the Bilston Analysis Area and the north west of the North Analysis Area.

- whilst each Analysis Area is served by a District Park, many residents live outside the acceptable catchment threshold of these facilities. However, many of these residents have access to a Neighbourhood Park.

- catchments for natural and semi natural open space cover the majority of the City, with the exception of small pockets in the Wednesfield Analysis Area and central parts of the Central and South Analysis Area.

- Residents outside of the catchment for children’s provision are concentrated in the Central and South Analysis Area, North Analysis Area and Bilston Analysis Area.

- there is very limited provision for young people in Tettenhall Analysis Area, with many households living outside of a catchment area.

- outdoor sports facilities are well distributed in terms of the accessibility catchment, although this takes in a drive time for certain facility types.

- allotments are relatively evenly spread across four of the Analysis Areas. It is only the Bilston Analysis Area where there are significant accessibility deficiencies.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS - SUMMARY

Summary and recommendations by Analysis Area

13.10 Throughout this report the analysis of the application of the quantity, quality and accessibility standards has been undertaken and a series of summaries and recommendations produced on a typology basis. This information is now summarised below by Analysis Area.

**North Analysis Area**

13.11 Overall the North Analysis Area has sufficient open space, sport and recreation provision in quantitative terms. However more specifically when we examine the application of the quantity standard on its own it can be seen that there are shortfalls in the provision of:

- district parks

- natural and semi natural open space

- provision for children

- provision for young people
### Parks and gardens

13.12 As mentioned throughout this report it is essential that the quantity standard and accessibility standard are applied together to determine geographical areas of deficiency and consequently the priority areas for the development and enhancement of open space. In the case of the North Analysis Area, the priorities are summarised below combined with some of the key recommendations from the separate typology sections:

**Parks and gardens**

13.13 Within the North Analysis Area, there is perceived to be insufficient quantity of District Parks coupled with sufficient provision of Neighbourhood Parks. The combined quantity of provision is considered to be about right to satisfy the local standard. There are areas of locational deficiencies however the redevelopment of the Goodyear site and the transformation of part of this into Oxley Neighbourhood Park will serve to address this deficiency in future years. Upgrading Pendeford Open Space into a District Park will further address deficiencies. A further gap in provision is in the area of Tennyson Road Open Space, currently natural and semi-natural open space, which could be upgraded to a Neighbourhood Park whilst retaining much of its natural features.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PG 8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recommend upgrading Pendeford Open Space to a District Park and creating a new Neighbourhood Park at Tennyson Road Open Space. Pursue provision of a new Oxley Neighbourhood Park within the former Goodyear site to serve the Oxley area of the City.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PG 9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investigate reasons behind the low levels of use at Bushbury Memorial Recreation Ground and enhance to become a more successful Neighbourhood Park. Bushbury Hill could be re-designated as a natural and semi-natural open space in favour of Tennyson Road Open Space becoming a new Neighbourhood Park to serve the needs of the Scotlands area (see also PG8 and PG14).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Natural and semi natural open space

13.14 There are only 11 natural and semi natural sites located within the Analysis Area the majority are small and some are not of the highest quality, these sites are well distributed and there are few residents outside of the catchment of natural sites. Many residents in this area are served by centrally located natural and semi natural open space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NSN 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explore opportunities to provide further natural and semi natural open space provision at/around Northycote Farm in the North Analysis Area.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Provision for children**

13.15 Residents in Bushbury North are outside of the distance threshold for children’s facilities. It can however be seen that there are several amenity green spaces in this area. The location of provision for children and young people on an existing amenity space site should be considered in the first instance. All amenity spaces in this area are of high quality and therefore offer valuable recreational resources to residents.

**C6**

The north part of the North Analysis Area should be considered as a priority for new provision for children and young people as opportunities arise.

13.16 Another accessibility deficiency exists to the south west of the North Analysis Area where it borders with the north of the Central and South area and there are small clusters of residents outside of the catchment area of provision for children. Despite this, the majority of residents have access to amenity spaces, all of which are good quality and provide informal recreation. These sites provide an opportunity to locate a facility for children in the area.

**C7**

Recommend that new children’s play facilities are provided within the new Oxley Neighbourhood Park to serve the south west part of the North Analysis Area.

13.17 The area to the northwest of the North Analysis Area (Fallings Park Ward) is also currently lacking in children’s play facilities. Similar to other areas, there are several amenity green space sites providing the opportunity to locate provision for children at these sites.

**C8**

Recommend that new children’s facilities should be provided to serve the north east part of the North Analysis Area, preferably within the Tennyson Road Open Space / Scotlands area.

**Allotments**

13.18 While there remain small pockets of residents outside of the catchment, the vast majority of residents within the North Analysis Areas of the City are well served by allotments. This is perhaps surprising, given that provision in this area is insufficient to meet the quantity standard. Consideration should be given to the adequacy of the number of allotment plots within each site. In light of shortfalls in provision in the North Analysis Area, Sandy Lane Allotments in Bushbury (where quality was lower than other sites) should be enhanced.

**Indoor sports facilities**

13.19 The supply of swimming pools across the City is marginally below the recommended quantity standard. There is a sporadic distribution of facilities, with many at school sites located close to the City boundary. Like sports halls,
it is evident that there are many residents outside of the distance threshold of a swimming pool. This is particularly evident in the North Analysis Area of the City following the closure of Bushbury Pool.

Tettenhall Analysis Area

13.20 Overall the Tettenhall Analysis Area has insufficient open space, sport and recreation provision, in quantitative terms, to meet local needs. There are shortfalls in the following typologies:

- district parks
- neighbourhood parks
- amenity green space
- provision for children
- provision for young people
- outdoor sports facilities
- indoor sports facilities

13.21 As mentioned throughout this report it is essential that the quantity standard and accessibility standard are applied together to determine the geographical areas of deficiencies and consequently the priority areas for development and enhancement of open space. In the case of the Tettenhall Analysis Area, the priorities are summarised below combined with some of the key recommendations from the separate typology sections:

**Parks and Gardens**

13.22 Within the Tettenhall Analysis Area, the application of the local quantity standard suggests that there is a shortfall of both District Parks and Neighbourhood Parks. Similar to the North Analysis Area, there are a number of areas that are outside of the distance threshold of both these types of park, in particular areas located within Tettenhall Wightwick. However, the biggest priority for further provision would be those areas that also lack amenity green space, at the western edge of the analysis area. This area also exhibits shortfalls of provision for children and young people. Provision of a new park facility at the western edge would therefore provide an opportunity for a central location to meet all of the identified deficiencies.

| PG 10 | Provide a new Neighbourhood Park on the western edge of Wolverhampton, when/if the opportunity arises, to meet the needs of the part of Tettenhall Analysis Area currently lacking in any recreational open space. These deficiencies should be addressed through the development of a District Park at Tettenhall Upper Green, which would be maximised by investigating opportunities to make best use of adjoining sports grounds. Additionally consideration should be given to developing a Pocket Park in the Wightwick area through the expansion of Martham Drive Open Space. |
Provision for children

13.23 Although the quantity of play provision in the Tettenhall Analysis Area is superior to that in other Analysis Areas, there remain both accessibility and quantitative deficiencies when measured against the local standard. Only Tettenhall Regis Ward has sufficient provision for children to meet quantitative standards. There are accessibility deficiencies in Tettenhall Regis Ward and some residents are outside of the catchment for facilities. Additionally within the Tettenhall Wightwick Ward there are some residents unable to access facilities. Should a new Pocket Park be developed in this area (as identified in section three, parks and gardens) consideration should be given to locating play provision within this site in order to address the deficiencies. Should the park be inappropriately located to address provision for children, alternative sites should be found. There is only limited amenity space in this area, providing few opportunities to place children’s facilities on existing sites.

C12
Provide new facilities for children within the Tettenhall Wightwick area of the Analysis Area, giving consideration to the feasibility of locating provision within new or existing parks in the area.

C13
Provide new facilities for children where residents are outside of the catchment area and there are sufficient residents to justify new provision within the South Merry Hill/South Penn area.

C14
Consideration should be given to the closure of Laburnum Street Play Area and replacement with new provision located nearby, at Oak Street Open Space.

Provision for young people

13.24 The largest area of deficiency in provision for teenagers can be found in the Tettenhall Wightwick Ward. Given that this area has the fewest number of sites within this typology, it could be anticipated that it would have a larger number of accessibility shortfalls. This area should be considered a priority for further provision in order to meet the local quantity standard. At the present time the nearest provision of young people’s facilities for residents in this area is to the north at Pendeford Open Space (in the North Analysis Area). The Tettenhall Wightwick Ward is also deficient in Neighbourhood Parks.

13.25 As mentioned in section three the development of a Neighbourhood Park at Tettenhall Upper Green and a Pocket Park at Martham Drive Open Space is recommended and these sites could offer the opportunity for the development of teenage provision to meet the needs of local residents. An evident gap is that of a MUGA or skate park, but it is recommended that the type of provision is finalised through more detailed consultation with young people.

YP 2
Consideration should be given to the provision of facilities for young people in the Tettenhall Wightwick.
part of the Tettenhall Analysis Area. An evident gap is that of a Multi Use Games Area or skate park, but it is recommended that the type of provision is finalised through more detailed consultation with young people.

Investigate the feasibility (and demand for) new provision for young people within Windsor Avenue Playing Fields and/or Bradmore Recreation Ground in order to address deficiencies.

### Amenity green space

13.26 The largest deficiencies of amenity green space in quantitative terms are located within this Analysis Area (in Tettenhall Regis, Tettenhall Wightwick and Merry Hill Wards). Although the distribution of amenity green spaces within this area is even, there are significant numbers of residents outside of the catchment of any amenity green space. Despite this, while the quantity of provision in Tettenhall Analysis Area is insufficient to meet local needs, the average quality of sites is the highest of all Analysis Areas of the City.

#### AGS 5

Identify opportunities to provide amenity green spaces in the South Merry Hill/South Penn area of Tettenhall Analysis Area which is devoid of any facilities. Priority should be given to those areas deficient in parks and open spaces, specifically the western areas of Tettenhall Regis and Tettenhall Wightwick. The Council would address some of these deficiencies through the development of a District Park at Tettenhall Upper Green.

#### AGS 6

Protect all amenity green spaces within the south and western area of Tettenhall as they provide important recreational resources for local residents. Consider the conversion of Martham Drive Open Space to form a Pocket Park (in Tettenhall Wightwick) in order to address deficiencies in this area and provide a wider variety of recreational amenities for residents across a larger catchment.

#### AGS 7

In light of the high value placed on amenity green spaces in south Tettenhall Wightwick / Merry Hill (in the absence of any current parks), consideration should be given to enhancing facilities of lower quality.

### Indoor sports facilities

13.27 Analysis of the access to sports halls indicates that while there is limited access to public facilities within the recommended distance threshold, most
residents have access to either a school or public facility. The public facilities are located evenly across the City and are therefore well placed to serve as many residents as possible. One of the key areas of deficiency (and hence focuses for new provision) is in the southern part of Tettenhall Analysis Area, where there is limited access to community facilities.

13.28 The supply of swimming pools across the City is marginally below the recommended quantity standard. Despite this, some existing pools are not operating at full capacity. Like sports halls, it is evident that there are many residents outside of the distance threshold of a swimming pool. This is evident in two analysis areas, one being in the south of Tettenhall Analysis Area.

**Central and South Analysis Area**

13.29 Overall the Central and South Analysis Area has insufficient open space, sport and recreation provision in quantitative terms. These shortfalls can be found in the following typologies:

- neighbourhood parks
- natural and semi natural areas
- amenity green space
- provision for children
- provision for young people
- outdoor sports facilities.

13.30 In order to determine the geographical areas of deficiencies the quantity standard and accessibility standard are applied together to determine the priority areas for development and enhancement of open space. In the case of the Central and South Analysis Area, the priorities are summarised below combined with some of the key recommendations from the separate typology sections:

**Parks and Gardens**

13.31 West Park falls within the Central and South Analysis Area, and due to its size (ha) this means that the Analysis Area is above the minimum quantity standard for larger parks. However, the level of provision of Neighbourhood Parks, by hectares, is considerably below the quantity standard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PG 11</th>
<th>Recommend creation of a new Neighbourhood Park at Taylor Road Open Space to serve the neighbourhood to the east of the Birmingham New Road.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Provide a new Pocket Park, as the opportunity arises, within the Goldthorn Hill / Penn Road area of the City to meet the needs of residents who currently have little or no access to recreational open space. Additionally consider the development of Pocket Parks to serve the City Centre including Broad Street Canal Basin.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Natural and semi-natural open space**

13.32 Additionally, there are small segments of the population outside of the catchment for natural and semi natural sites. As with the area towards the north of the Central and South Analysis Area, these residents are also surrounded by small sites. Glentworth Gardens natural area was perceived to be of low quality and should therefore be enhanced.

**Provision for children**

13.33 The Analysis Area with the largest requirement for further provision in order to satisfy local requirements for children’s plays facilities is the Central and South Analysis Area, where there is a requirement for a further 1.35 ha up to 2021 to meet the local quantity standard. This represents an increase of 85% on the current level of provision.

13.34 In terms of locating priority areas for new facilities, new provision should be targeted at those geographical areas outside the distance threshold where there are sufficient people to justify new provision. Within the Central and South Analysis Area two of the largest accessibility deficiencies exist in the north west, Goldthorn Hill and Blakenhall areas.

**Provision for young people**

13.35 The main area of this Analysis Area where residents would have to travel further than 960m (the local accessibility standard) to reach facilities for young people is particularly in the Penn Ward, South Blakenhall and Springvale Ward area. Such areas were also identified as particularly deficient on the quantity of provision and opportunities should be sought to improve such facilities in the Muchall Park (Penn), Goldthorn Park and Springvale residential areas of the City. At the same time there are proposals for a new Multi Use Games Area within Blakenhall Gardens which will also go some way to addressing deficiencies in this area.
SECTION 13 – SUMMARY

| YP 3 | Investigate the feasibility (and demand for) new provision for young people within Muchall Park in order to address both qualitative and quantitative deficiencies in Central and South Analysis Area. |
| YP 4 | Provide a new facility for young people within the Springvale Neighbourhood Park / Goldthorn Park areas in order to address both qualitative and quantitative deficiencies. |

**Outdoor sports facilities**

13.36 This Analysis Area has the second largest requirement for further provision of outdoor sports facilities in order to satisfy local demands, with a requirement for a further 11.47 ha by 2021 to meet the local quantity standard.

13.37 Whilst the south of Central and South Analysis Area (the ABCD area) is well served by outdoor sport facilities, and plans are in place for further development of facilities, the area towards the centre of the City and around West Park contains less facilities – and there are small pockets of residents outside of the 720m distance threshold. In such a densely populated area, there is little potential to create new open spaces and related outdoor sport and recreation facilities. The central area is likely to see significant growth of high-density housing and new outdoor sports provision is therefore essential in this area.

13.38 Other areas of shortfall in provision include the Whitmore Reans area, whilst containing a number of small outdoor sport facilities the area has no grass pitch provision and facilities at Bradmore Recreation Ground and All Saints Games Area are perceived to be used infrequently.

| OSF 6 | In light of population growth and the current distribution of facilities, investigate the opportunities for provision of further outdoor sports facilities within the City Centre. |
| OSF 7 | Investigate the demand for grass pitch facilities in Whitmore Reans– it may be possible to enhance/extend amenity green space to a more formal sports facility. This may be particularly important as participation and consequently demand increases. |

**Bilston Analysis Area**

13.39 In quantitative terms Bilston Analysis Area has sufficient open space, sport and recreation provision. However when this is examined on a typology by typology basis there are apparent shortfalls in the following typologies:

- neighbourhood parks
- provision for children
- outdoor sports facilities
- allotments
13.40 The quantity standard and accessibility standard have been applied together to determine the priority areas for development and enhancement of open space in this Analysis Area. In the case of the Bilston Analysis Area, the priorities are summarised below combined with some of the key recommendations from the separate typology sections:

**Parks and Gardens**

13.41 Bilston Analysis Area is the location with the greatest variance in provision in terms of District and Neighbourhood Parks. It has the largest hectares per 1000 population of District Parks, but the lowest provision of Neighbourhood Parks indicating that many residents are outside of the catchment for local facilities. Importantly, the District Parks are known for their distinctive character and East Park has been flagged as a potential site for focussing on sporting excellence. There are three areas of priority for further provision of parks within the Bilston Analysis Area. The first area is to the south of Bilston Town Centre. The provision of a District Park as part of the Bilston Urban Village development would alleviate deficiencies of provision in this area, as well as serving the residents of 1,000 new dwellings. A second area of deficiency is located around the Ettingshall area where a new Neighbourhood Park needs to be provided as part of the provision of 600 new dwellings as part of the Ward Street Masterplan redevelopment. The third area of park deficiency is to the east of the analysis area, specifically the Lunt area.

| PG12 | Recommend provision of a new District Park as part of the Bilston Urban Village development and a new Neighbourhood Park as part of the Ward Street Masterplan development. |

**Provision for children**

13.42 The key areas of deficiency of children's facilities to the east of this Analysis Area and while residents do not have access to provision for children they are well served in terms of amenity green space.

13.43 Should a new park be developed as part of the regeneration and the Bilston Urban Village Masterplan, play provision located within this site may address accessibility issues for many residents. Provision of further play facilities within this area outside of the accessibility catchment would also ensure that residents are able to access facilities.

| C10 | Provide facilities for children to the east of the Bilston Analysis Area in geographical areas currently outside of the catchment area for existing facilities. Opportunities should be taken to provide new facilities through both the Bilston Urban Village and the Ward Street Masterplan developments. |
| C11 | Improve the quality of facilities in the Bilston Analysis Area where they do not currently meet the desired quality level. |
Outdoor sports facilities

13.44 The area with the largest requirement for further provision in order to satisfy local demands for outdoor sport facilities is the Bilston Analysis Area (requirement for a further 18.32 ha by 2021 to meet the local quantity standard). The Playing Pitch Strategy supports this, suggesting that there are insufficient pitches to meet demand. The regeneration of parts of the Bilston Analysis Area will provide opportunities to meet this demand, with space for new provision within the Bilston Urban Village.

OSF 5
In light of shortfalls of provision in the Bilston Analysis Area, consideration should be given to the development of new facilities and/or the reinstatement of disused or failing sites. The Bradley and Lunt areas currently contain a lower variety of facilities. All opportunities generated to maximise playing facilities through the Bilston Urban Village should be seized.

Wednesfield Analysis Area

13.45 The Wednesfield Analysis Area has insufficient open space, sport and recreation provision, in quantitative terms, to meet local needs. These shortfalls in provision are in the following typologies:

- district parks
- natural and semi natural areas
- provision for children
- outdoor sports facilities
- allotments
- indoor sports facilities.

13.46 As mentioned throughout this report it is essential that the quantity standard and accessibility standard are applied together to determine the geographical areas of deficiencies and consequently the priority areas for development and enhancement of open space. The priorities for Wednesfield Analysis Area are as follows.

Parks and Gardens

13.47 The Wednesfield Analysis Area has the largest quantitative shortfall in District Parks – only Wednesfield Park towards the centre of Wednesfield is a District Park. Additionally, similar to other parts of the City, some residents are outside of the catchment of both a District Park and Neighbourhood Park.

PG 14
Recommend improving access to Fowlers Park and upgrading to a District Park and designating Ashmore Park as a District Park because of the wide area it serves. Recommend development of a Neighbourhood
**SECTION 13 – SUMMARY**

| Park at Tennyson Road Open Space to serve the north-west of the Wednesfield Analysis Area which adjoins a dense residential area in the North Analysis Area. |

**Natural and semi natural open space**

13.48 The most significant deficiencies of natural and semi natural open space can be found in this Analysis Area. This occurs as a result of both a low level of provision in terms of hectares, but also as a result of the small number of sites in total.

| NSN 6 | Priority should be given to the provision of new natural and semi natural open space within the central Wednesfield Analysis Area should opportunity arise. |

**Provision for children**

13.49 Key priorities for children’s provision in this Analysis Area should include those areas currently outside of the accessibility catchment. Heath Town Ward, one of the three key wards making up the Wednesfield Analysis Area is currently well served in terms of the quantity of provision for children. There are few residents outside of the recommended accessibility catchment within this area of the City. The area to the east of the Wednesfield Analysis Area is the main area of deficiency, with residents in both the north and south unable to access provision for children. As illustrated in section five, both of these areas are well served in terms of amenity space and there are therefore opportunities to provide children’s facilities at these sites. The quantity of amenity space in these areas is currently above the minimum standard.

| C9 | A priority for new provision of children’s facilities should be the area to the east of the Wednesfield Analysis Area. |

**Outdoor sports facilities**

13.50 Although this Analysis Area has an insufficient area of outdoor sports facilities to meet the quantity standard, it has the third highest number of individual sports sites and therefore, from an accessibility perspective, is well served with an even spread of facilities. Further details can be found in the Playing Pitch Study.

**Allotments**

13.51 Bilston Analysis Area (where soils are also poorer) has the sparsest provision of allotments and the Wednesfield Analysis Areas has some of the smallest and poorest quality sites in the City. In light of regeneration schemes underway in this eastern part of the City, demand for allotments should be investigated. New development occurring, including Bilston Urban Village, may provide opportunities to address deficiency issues in these Analysis Areas.
**ALL 7**

Regularly review, investigate and monitor demand for allotment provision and look for opportunities where demand is improving / increasing.

Look for opportunities to provide medium/large sized allotment sites in deficient areas of demand within the City and ensure new housing developments allow for any increase in demand as opportunities arise.

13.52 Some of the poorest quality sites in the City are located in the Wednesfield Analysis Area, specifically Heath Town Allotments and Lichwood Road Allotments were noted as in need of improvement.

*Indoor sports facilities*

13.53 Analysis of the access to sports halls indicates that while there is limited access to public facilities within the recommended distance threshold, most residents have access to either a school or public facility. The public facilities are located evenly across the City and are therefore well placed to serve as many residents as possible. One of the key areas of deficiency (and hence focuses for new provision) is the Wednesfield Analysis Area. As such, Wednesfield Community Centre plays a particularly important role for residents in Wednesfield Analysis Area.

**Summary**

13.54 The recommendations highlighted above have been selected based on the quantitative, qualitative and accessibility priorities. Each section lists a series of recommendations highlighting other sites for development, enhancement and/or re-designation. Throughout the sections there is an emphasis on improving the quality as well as the distribution of open space, sport and recreational sites across Wolverhampton.

13.55 Green corridors and cemeteries and churchyards do not have quantity or accessibility standard set due to the nature of these facilities, however there are a series of recommendations in these two sections to address quality issues, particularly in the case of cemeteries and churchyards. In the case of green corridors emphasis is placed on the continuing enhancement of the canals and other green corridors to develop further and promote green networks.

13.56 Finally indoor sports facilities have been considered separately and local standards for swimming pools and sports halls have been set. The priorities identified should complement those set out in the emerging Black Country Sports Strategy and the existing Wolverhampton City Council Swimming Strategy.