

8 Summary

Introduction

8.1 This study was produced by consultants from The Landscape Partnership and Ploszajski Lynch Consulting following the five step methodology set out in PPG17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, as follows:

- Identifying local needs
- Auditing local provision
- Setting provision standards
- Applying provision standards
- Developing draft policies

8.2 A summary of existing provision in each category of open space, playing pitches and sports facilities by Parish can be found in Appendix 4. The following is a summary of the policy recommendations for each category of open space, playing pitch and sports facility.

Open space policy recommendations

8.3 Civic spaces are not covered within this strategy as none over the 0.2ha size threshold were identified within the District. Green corridors have been combined with natural and semi-natural green space due to the small number of green corridors identified and the overlap between the two types of open space.

8.4 Parks and Gardens proposed standards:

- Standards have not been set for either quantity or accessibility for parks and gardens.
- Quality - Essential:
 - Sites should be clean and litter-free
 - All parks should provide a range of horticultural or natural features appropriate to their size and character.
 - All parks should have appropriate signage particular to that place
 - All greenspace features and facilities should be well-maintained, including play equipment, footpaths, site furniture and soft landscaping
- Quality – Desirable:
 - Uttlesford District Council should work towards achieving 1 No. Park or Garden of Green Flag standard in the next three years.
 - All Parks and Gardens should work towards achieving the qualities described within the Green Flag standard in the longer term.
 - Sites should be managed to give natural surveillance to minimise fear of crime.
 - All parks should have a range of facilities, including those for young and older people, appropriate to their size and character.
 - Access to parks and gardens should be part of an integrated network of footpaths and cycleways, should be of high quality design and use materials appropriate to the setting.

8.5 Parks and Gardens proposed recommendations:

- Policy recommendations
 - RPG1 Seek opportunities to create new parks and gardens where they arise, to increase provision throughout the District

- Other recommendations
 - RPG2 Seek enhancements in cleanliness and accessibility to all sites
 - RPG3 Seek to attain 'Green Flag' award standards across all parks and gardens in the long term

8.6 Amenity Greenspace proposed standards:

- Quantity - 1.0ha per 1000 population
- Accessibility - Within 5 minutes walk (400m) in main settlements
- Quality - Essential:
 - Sites should be clean and litter-free.
 - Sites should be managed to give natural surveillance to minimise fear of crime.
 - All greenspace features and facilities where provided should be well-maintained, including play equipment, footpaths, site furniture and soft landscaping.
- Quality – Desirable:
 - Access to amenity greens should be part of an integrated network of footpaths and cycleways, should be of high quality and appropriate materials for the setting.
 - Site design should take advantage of any existing natural features including trees, shrubs or wildlife areas or these should be introduced where not existing, as appropriate to the size of the site.
 - Site boundaries should be appropriately defined.

8.7 Amenity Greenspace proposed recommendations:

- Policy recommendations
 - RAG1 Seek additional provision particularly in Barnston, Chrishall, Debden, Elmdon and Wenden Lofts, Great Chesterford, Hatfield Broad Oak, High Easter, Littlebury, Little Chesterford, Little Easton, Manuden, Newport, Radwinter, Stebbing, Wicken Bonhunt, Widdington to mitigate for existing and prospective quantitative and accessibility deficiencies
- Other recommendations
 - RAG2 Undertake a review of disabled access with appropriate user-groups across the amenity green provision and identify priorities for improvement.
 - RAG3 Undertake a review of signage and interpretation across the amenity green provision and identify priorities for improvement.
 - RAG4 Identify where existing smaller sites < 0.2ha could mitigate for existing deficiencies in quantity and accessibility
 - RAG5 Identify targeted improvements to sites currently identified as of poor quality or sites attaining poor or very poor for a number of criteria

8.8 Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace proposed standards:

- Quantity - a minimum of 7ha publicly accessible sites/1000 population
- Accessibility - At least one publicly-accessible site within 5 minutes walk time (300-400m) in main settlements
- Quality - Essential:
 - Sites should be clean and litter free
 - Sites should be of ecological value with appropriate amenity facilities

- Footpaths should be well-maintained and designed to minimise impact on the natural features and to maximise natural surveillance
- Site management processes should be maintained
- Quality – Desirable:
 - All major sites should have an active Management Plan in place
 - Signage should be provided at every site with contact details of managing organisation
 - All sites should seek to have interpretative facilities in place

8.9 Natural and Semi-natural Greenspace proposed recommendations:

- Policy recommendations
 - RN1 Seek additional publically-accessible provision in Arkesden, Barnston, Chrishall, Debden, Elmdon and Wenden Lofts, Elsenham, Felsted, Flitch Green, Great Easton and Tilty, Hempstead, Henham, High Easter, High Roding, Leaden Roding, Littlebury, Little Easton, Newport, Quendon and Rickling, Radwinter, The Sampfords, Swards End, Stansted, White Roding, Wicken Bonhunt, Widdington to mitigate for existing and prospective quantitative deficiencies
 - RN2 Seek improvements to PRoW network and bridleways in rural areas and the urban fringe to maximise amenity benefits of private sites even where these not accessible
- Other recommendations
 - RN3 Review quality of access and interpretation within publically-owned Natural and Semi-Natural sites and identify priorities for enhancement
 - RN4 Review role and identify enhancement needs as appropriate for Poor quality publically accessible sites, namely the Flitch Way and Marshall Piece, Stebbing
 - RN5 Identify areas for 'naturalisation' within other typologies e.g. amenity greens or boundary areas of sports pitches, to mitigate deficiencies where new sites cannot be created
 - RN6 Ensure all major sites have an active Management Plan in place

8.10 Provision for Children and Young People proposed standards:

- Quantity - a minimum of 0.2ha/ 1000 population
- Accessibility - Within 5 minutes walk (400m) in main settlements
- Quality:
 - All play areas must adhere to the Fields in Trust LEAP (Local Equipped Area for Play) and NEAP (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play) national standards.
 - All play spaces should have natural surveillance and be within sight of walking or cycling routes or desire lines
 - Facilities should be designed in consultation with local children and young people, be clean and litter free, have no vandalism and provide a mixture of formal and informal facilities.
 - Facilities for youth should seek to provide skate/BMX features, or other appropriate facilities, alongside youth shelter areas
 - All play spaces should be designed to maximise experience of natural features.

8.11 Provision for Children and Young People proposed recommendations:

- Policy recommendations

- RCYP1 Seek additional provision in line with the above standards in areas of proposed growth.
- Other recommendations
 - RCYP2 Identify priority sites where natural play elements can be incorporated within planned new or enhanced facilities.
 - RCYP3 Seek further information on community demand for the provision of skateparks and BMX tracks

8.12 Allotments proposed standards:

- Quantity - a minimum of 0.25ha/ 1000 population
- Accessibility - Within 10 minutes drive (4km) of whole population
- Quality - Essential:
 - Allotments should have secure fencing, a watering point, water storage facilities, containers for equipment, good quality soils, vehicle access to the allotment entrance and parking facilities.
 - Management of vacant plots
 - Provision for clearance/removal of rubbish and composting
- Quality – Desirable:
 - Pathways through the site

8.13 Allotments proposed recommendations:

- Policy recommendations
 - RA1 Seek additional provision particularly in Chrishall, Elmdon and Wenden Lofts, Great Chesterford, Hempstead, Priors Green - Little Canfield, Little Hallingbury, Radwinter, The Sampfords, Takeley e.g. through prospective development, to mitigate for existing and prospective quantitative deficiencies.
- Other recommendations
 - RA2 Seek further information on community need for allotment gardens.
 - RA3 Work with Allotment Associations or Trusts to seek enhancements in quantity, quality and access to sites, especially where demand or deficiencies have been identified locally.
 - RA4 Seek improvements to access from local communities to allotment sites where these have been identified as below average quality
 - RA5 Identify areas in existing sites within other typologies, especially amenity greens, but including formal parks or school grounds, where new sites could be created that cannot be delivered through development

8.14 Cemeteries and churchyards proposed standards:

- It is not applicable to set standards for either quantity or accessibility for cemeteries and churchyards.
- Quality - Cemeteries and churchyards should:
 - have well-kept grass or natural areas, with appropriate flowers, trees and shrubs
 - offer a clean and litter free environment with clear pathways
 - have appropriate and good quality ancillary facilities such as seating, signage and car-parking where appropriate

8.15 Cemeteries and churchyards proposed recommendations:

- Other recommendations
 - RC1 Seek enhancements in quality and accessibility to sites where these have been identified as being below average quality
 - RC2 Review greenspace design and management of Upper churchyard off The Street, Manuden, and put in place a plan for enhancements.

Sports facility policy recommendations

8.16 Adult football pitches proposed standards:

- Quantity - One adult pitch (1.2ha) per 4,000 people
- Accessibility - The whole population within 15 minutes drive or walk of the nearest pitch
- Quality - Qualitative improvements to ensure that all aspects of all pitches and ancillary facilities rate 'above average' or better

8.17 Adult football pitches proposed recommendations:

- Improve pitch quality at:
 - Hatfield Broad Oak Sports Club.
 - Jubilee Field (Clavering).
- Support site owners with funding applications to improve changing facilities, prioritising sites serving more than one pitch:
 - Alcott Playing Field (Stebbing).
 - Calves Pasture (Hatfield Heath).
 - Felsted Playing Field.
 - Hatfield Broad Oak Sports Club.
 - Herbert Farm Playing Fields.
 - Jubilee Field (Clavering).
 - Takeley Recreation Ground.
- Secure community access to pitches at Carver Barracks.
- Additional need will be met by surpluses in current provision.
- Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.

8.18 Junior football pitches proposed standards:

- Quantity - One junior pitch (0.75ha) per 3,450 people
- Accessibility - The whole population within 15 minutes drive or walk of the nearest pitch
- Quality - Qualitative improvements to ensure that all aspects of all pitches and ancillary facilities rate 'above average' or better

8.19 Junior football pitches proposed recommendations:

- Provide 4 additional junior pitches by:
 - Including pitches in the proposed new playing field development in Manuden and other proposed developments in Saffron Walden.
 - Converting adult football pitches in areas of the district where junior demand is highest.
- Support site owners with funding applications to improve changing facilities, prioritising sites serving more than one pitch:

- Felsted Playing Field.
- Herbert Farm Playing Fields.
- Laundry Lane Playing Field (Little Easton)
- Swards End Recreation Ground.
- Stansted Recreation Ground.
- Secure community access to pitches at:
 - Dame Bradbury's School.
 - Katherine Semar School.
- Secure the provision of 4 additional junior pitches in areas within 15 minutes drive of new developments, funded by developer contributions.
- Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.

8.20 Mni-soccer pitches proposed standards:

- Quantity - One mini-soccer pitch (0.2ha) per 5,000 people
- Accessibility - The whole population within 15 minutes drive or walk of the nearest pitch
- Quality - Qualitative improvements to ensure that all aspects of all pitches and ancillary facilities rate 'above average' or better

8.21 Mni-soccer pitches proposed recommendations:

- Secure community access to pitches at:
 - Dame Bradbury's School.
 - Katherine Semar School.
- Secure the provision of 3 additional mini-soccer pitches in areas within 15 minutes drive of new developments, funded by developer contributions.
- Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard

8.22 Cricket pitches proposed standards:

- Quantity - One cricket pitch (1.2ha) per 2,000 people
- Accessibility - The whole population within 15 minutes drive or walk of the nearest pitch
- Quality - Qualitative improvements to ensure that all aspects of all pitches and ancillary facilities rate 'above average' or better

8.23 Cricket pitches proposed recommendations:

- Support site owners with funding applications to improve changing facilities, prioritising sites serving more than one pitch:
 - Audley End House.
 - Clogham's Green CC.
 - Dunmow CC.
 - Elmdon CC.
 - Elsenham CC.
 - Elsenham CC
 - Hatfield Broad Oak CC.
 - Hatfield Heath CC.
 - High Roding CC.
 - Langley CC.

- Lindsell CC.
- Little Bardfield CC.
- Stansted Hall CC.
- Thaxted CC.
- Wenden's Ambo Recreation Ground.
- Secure community access to pitches at:
 - County High Sports Centre.
 - Friends School.
- Secure the provision of 7 additional cricket pitches in areas within 15 minutes drive of new developments, funded by developer contributions.
- Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.

8.24 Rugby pitches proposed standards:

- Quantity - One rugby pitch (1.2ha) per 26,000 people
- Accessibility - The whole population within 20 minutes drive or walk of the nearest pitch
- Quality – Qualitative improvements to ensure that all aspects of all pitches and ancillary facilities rate 'above average' or better

8.25 Rugby pitches proposed recommendations:

- Support Saffron Walden Rugby Club with funding applications to provide an additional pitch on land adjacent to their current site.
- Secure the provision of an additional rugby pitch land on adjacent to Saffron Walden Rugby Club's current site, funded by developer contributions.
- Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.

Playing pitch policy recommendations

8.26 Sports halls proposed standards:

- Quantity - One four-badminton court sports hall (33m x 18m x 7.6m) per 12,500 people
- Accessibility - The whole population within 15 minutes walk or drive of their closest sports hall
- Quality – Qualitative improvements to ensure that all aspects of all facilities rate 'average' or better

8.27 Sports halls proposed recommendations:

- Secure the provision of a new sports hall funded by developer contributions.
- Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.

8.28 Swimming pools proposed standards:

- Quantity - One 25m indoor swimming pool per 25,000 people (12 sq.m. of water space per 1,000 people)
- Accessibility - The population within 15 minutes walk or drive of their closest pool
- Quality – Qualitative improvements to ensure that all aspects of all facilities rate 'above average' or better

8.29 Swimming pools proposed recommendations:

- Secure the provision of a new learner pool at Great Dunmow Leisure Centre funded by developer contributions.

- Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.
- 8.30 Synthetic athletics tracks proposed standards:
- Quantity - One six-lane 400m synthetic track per 250,000 people
 - Accessibility - The whole population within 20 minutes walk or drive of the nearest track
 - Quality – All aspects of a track should rate 'above average' or better
- 8.31 Synthetic athletics tracks proposed recommendations:
- Keep local demand under review
- 8.32 Synthetic turf pitches proposed standards:
- Quantity - One full-sized floodlit synthetic turf pitch (101.4m x 63m) per 15,000 people
 - Accessibility - The whole population within 15 minutes walk or drive of their closest pitch
 - Quality – All aspects of all pitches and their ancillary facilities should rate 'above average' or better
- 8.33 Synthetic turf pitches proposed recommendations:
- Keep local demand under review and consider provision of small-sided 3G synthetic turf pitches/multi-use games areas in parts of the district that are most distant from current pitch provision.
 - Secure the provision of a new 3G synthetic pitch funded by developer contributions.
 - Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.
- 8.34 Indoor bowls facilities proposed standards:
- Quantity - One indoor bowling rink per 12,500 people (one 6-rink centre per 75,000 people)
 - Accessibility - The whole population within 20 minutes walk or drive of an indoor bowls facility
 - Quality – All aspects of all indoor bowls facilities should rate 'above average' or better
- 8.35 Indoor bowls facilities proposed recommendations:
- Keep local demand under review, particularly in the south central area
 - Secure the provision of an additional rink to the existing facility funded by developer contributions.
 - Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.
- 8.36 Outdoor bowls greens proposed standards:
- Quantity - One outdoor bowling green per 7,000 people
 - Accessibility - The whole population within 15 minutes walk or drive of their closest green
 - Quality – All aspects of all greens and their ancillary facilities should rate 'above average' or better
- 8.37 Outdoor bowls greens proposed recommendations:
- Support clubs to make external funding applications for disabled and general access improvements at all facilities.
 - Secure the provision of two bowling greens in areas with accessibility deficiencies in the south of the district, subject to local demand and funded by developer contributions.
 - Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.
- 8.38 Indoor tennis courts proposed standards:

- Quantity - One indoor tennis court per 40,000 people
- Accessibility - The whole population within 30 minutes walk or drive of the nearest courts
- Quality – All aspects of all indoor courts and their ancillary facilities should rate 'above average' or better

8.39 Indoor tennis courts proposed recommendations:

- Keep local demand under review, particularly in the eastern part of the district

8.40 Outdoor tennis courts proposed standards:

- Quantity - One outdoor tennis court per 2,200 people
- Accessibility - The whole population within 15 minutes walk or drive of their closest court
- Quality – Qualitative improvements to ensure that all aspects of all facilities rate 'average' or better

8.41 Outdoor tennis courts proposed recommendations:

- Support clubs to make external funding applications
- Secure the provision of public tennis courts in sub-areas within 15 minutes drive of new developments, with a pre-existing deficiency, funded by developer contributions.
- Support local clubs in making funding applications to the LTA to secure additional tennis courts at club sites.
- Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.

8.42 Squash courts proposed standards:

- Quantity - One squash court per 12,600 people
- Accessibility - The whole population within 20 minutes walk or drive of the nearest court
- Quality – Quality improvements to ensure that all aspects of all facilities rate 'above average' or better

8.43 Squash courts proposed recommendations:

- Refurbish courts at the Lord Butler Leisure Centre
- Secure the provision of a squash court in conjunction with the proposed new sports hall funded by developer contributions.
- Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.

8.44 Golf courses proposed standards:

- Quantity - One 18-hole golf course per 25,000 people, or one hole per 1,400 people
- Accessibility - The whole population within 30 minutes walk or drive of the nearest course
- Quality – All aspects of the courses and their ancillary facilities should rate 'average' or better

8.45 Golf courses proposed recommendations:

- Encourage Elsenham Golf and Leisure Centre to address the disabled access issues, with support for external funding application(s) if required
- Encourage the provision of a golf course by a commercial operator.
- Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard

8.46 Health and fitness facilities proposed standards:

- Quantity - One health and fitness facility with an average of 36 stations per 7,000 people
- Accessibility - The whole population within 15 minutes walk or drive of their closest facility
- Quality – Qualitative improvements to ensure that all aspects of all facilities rate 'average' or better

8.47 Health and fitness facilities proposed recommendations:

- Support disabled access improvements at Wilbur's Fitness Gym, Lord Butler Leisure Centre, County High Sports Centre and the Flitch Fitness Centre
- Encourage commercial operators to provide two new health and fitness facilities in areas with an accessibility deficiency.
- Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.

8.48 Village and community halls proposed standards:

- Quantity - One community/ village hall per 1,500 people
- Accessibility - The whole population within 10 minutes drive or walk of the nearest community/village hall
- Quality – Qualitative improvements to ensure that all aspects of all halls rate 'average' or better
- All new/extended halls to comply with Sport England recommended dimensions (18m x 10m x 6.1m)

8.49 Village and community halls proposed recommendations:

- Audit existing halls to establish their capacity to accommodate sports activities.
- Implement an improvement programme, prioritising facilities with the greatest potential to accommodate extra activity.
- Secure the provision of 8 additional village/community halls in conjunction with new developments, funded by developer contributions.
- Ensure that existing facilities continue to be maintained to 'above average' standard.