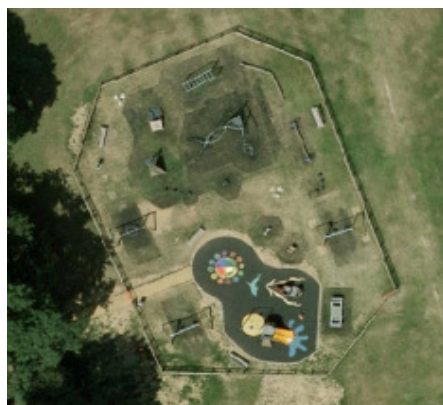


Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study

PPG17 Study: February 2012



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Executive Summary - Standards Proposed 1

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1.1 The following is a summary of the standards proposed throughout the document. These standards do not form Council policy unless adopted through the preparation of the Local Development Framework; however, they are still important and useful benchmarks against which to assess the current level of provision and any issues that may exist. The standards, their implementation and resulting key actions will be taken forward to help create an Open Space Strategy for Waverley, to help link the approaches taken to open spaces of all kinds by the Council's Planning, Leisure and other relevant services. It is anticipated that the Strategy will be adopted by the Council in July 2011.

Public Parks and Gardens

Quantity Standard - 0.2ha per 1000 people

Quality Standard - Parks and gardens should be welcoming, safe, clean and inviting spaces that are well maintained with a good mix of natural and built amenities.

Accessibility Standard - 15 minutes walk, approximately 800m

Natural and Semi- Natural Greenspaces

Quantity Standard - None set

Quality Standard - A natural open space with a focus on the retention and/or enhancement of natural features and conservation of flora and fauna, assisted where appropriate by the use of education facilities such as interpretation boards. They should be clean, litter free, well signed and with clear footpaths.

Accessibility Standard - 15-minute walk, approximately 800m

Green Corridors

Quantity Standard - None set

Quality Standard - Green corridors should be clean, litter free and clear to ensure that they are accessible. They should contribute to nature conservation particularly through the protection and enhancement of suitable planting and in urban areas enhance the linkages between green areas.

Accessibility Standard - None set

1 Executive Summary - Standards Proposed

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Outdoor Sports Facilities

Quantity Standard - 1.60 ha per 1,000 population. (May be revised once the results of the revised Playing Pitch Strategy are known.)

Quality Standard - Outdoor sports facilities should be clean and litter free, the pitches and playing surfaces should be maintained, safe, level and with good drainage. Toilets, changing facilities and parking should be of an acceptable standard and provided where possible. Bins should be provided to reduce the occurrences of litter and dog fouling problems.

Accessibility Standard - To be determined once the results of the revised Playing Pitch Strategy are known.

Indoor Sports Facilities

Quantity Standard - None set

Quality Standard - Indoor sports facilities should be of a good standard of appearance, well maintained, clean, and offer a range of facilities, including appropriate changing areas. Customer care, health and safety and security/ feeling of safety should be of a high standard. Appropriate and safe parking should be available for all users.

Accessibility Standard - 15 minute drive, approximately 5.8km

Amenity Greenspace

Quantity Standard - 0.8ha per 1,000 people

Quality Standard - Amenity greenspace should be well maintained, clean and litter free. It should be welcoming and provide a visually attractive environment. The management of dogs and any mess created needs to be integrated into the site.

Accessibility Standard - 15 minutes walk, approximately 800m

Provision for Children and Young People

Quantity Standard - 0.25 ha per 1,000 people of specific play equipment for children and young people, including both designated equipped play space, and informal play space.

Quality Standard - Sites should be clean/ litter free and provide a safe, fun and stimulating environment where possible for children of all ages. Areas should be set aside as dog free. Sites should be in areas easily accessible by foot to the local community they are intended to serve with limited barriers to access such as main roads.

Accessibility Standard - Fields in Trust standards are to be used:

- Local Areas of Play (LAPs): accompanied walking distance 100m (straight line distance 60m).
- Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAPs): walking distance 400m (straight line distance 240m).
- Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play (NEAPs): walking distance 1,000m (straight line distance 600m).

Allotments

Quantity Standard - None set until further investigation carried out.

Quality Standard - A well maintained, clean/ litter free site, level with good quality soil, drainage and access to a good water supply.

Accessibility Standard - 15 minutes walk, approximately 800m

Churchyards and Cemeteries

Quantity Standard - None set

Quality Standard - Churchyards and Cemeteries should be well maintained, clean and litter free. They should contain an appropriate mix of flowers / trees and shrubs to enhancement biodiversity and provide a pleasant and peaceful setting for those using the sites. Bins should be provided to reduce the occurrences of litter and dog fouling problems. They should be accessible to a wide range of people including those with mobility difficulties, with sufficient parking, seating and where appropriate, lighting.

Accessibility Standard - None set

Civic Spaces

Quantity Standard - None set

Quality Standard - Civic spaces must be clean, well maintained, inviting places that are considered and feel safe to those wishing to use them. Where appropriate and practical the provision of toilets and parking should be sought.

Accessibility Standard - None set

Introduction 2

Waverley Borough Council | Waverley Open Space, Sport and Recreation
Study

2 Introduction

Waverley Borough Council | Waverley Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study

Study Purpose

2.1 This is an assessment of open space, sport and recreation facilities in Waverley Borough. The purpose of this assessment is to identify and then audit the quality, quantity and accessibility of existing provision and help to determine future requirements.

2.2 This study has been undertaken to support the work by Waverley Borough Council on the *Local Development Framework (LDF)* and in order to fulfil the Government's objectives and policies set out in *Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (PPG17)*. It follows the 5-step methodology set out in *Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17*. The outcomes will help to inform the direction to be taken by Waverley in planning for future and existing open space, sports and recreation facilities, and have been used to produce an Open Space Strategy for the Council's Leisure Service.

Context

The Importance of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities

2.3 The importance and benefits of open space, sport and recreation facilities have been widely documented. PPG17 indicates that 'open spaces, sport and recreation all underpin people's quality of life'. Well-designed and implemented planning policies for open space, sport and recreation facilities are also 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 wellbeing
- Promoting more sustainable development

2.4 PPG17 suggests that local authorities should recognise that most areas of open space can perform multiple functions. These include:

- Strategic functions: defining and separating urban areas; better linking of town and country; and providing for recreational needs over a wide area
- Urban quality: helping to support regeneration and improving quality of life for communities by providing visually attractive green spaces close to where people live
- Promoting health and well-being: providing opportunities for people of all ages for informal recreation, or to walk, cycle or ride within parks and open spaces or along

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paths, bridleways and canal banks. Allotments may provide physical exercise and other health benefits

- Havens and habitats for flora and fauna: sites may also have potential to be corridors or stepping stones from one habitat to another and may contribute towards achieving objectives set out in local biodiversity action plans
- As a community resource: as a place for congregating and for holding community events, religious festivals, fêtes and travelling fairs
- As a visual amenity: even without public access, people enjoy having open space near to them to provide an outlook, variety in the urban scene, or as a positive element in the landscape

2.5 The draft National Planning Policy Framework contains a proposal for a new Local Green Space designation to protect locally significant green areas that are special to local communities. It proposes that these can be used in local and neighbourhood plans, in a way that complements investment in homes, jobs and other essential services. It also states that planning policies should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. The information gained from this assessment of needs and opportunities should be used to set locally derived standards for the provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities. Planning policies should protect and enhance rights of way and access.

2.6 As it currently stands, the South East Plan policies of relevance are:

- Policy CS3: Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty,
- Policy CS6: Countryside Access and Rights of Way
- Policy BE4: The Role of Small Rural Towns ('Market Towns')
- Policy TC2: New Development and Redevelopment in Town Centres
- Policy TSR2: Rural Tourism
- Policy TSR: Visitor Management
- Policy S1: Supporting Healthy Economies
- Policy S5: Cultural and Sporting Activity
- Policy S6: Community Infrastructure

2.7 The *Urban White Paper - Our Towns and Cities: The Future* (The Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions, 2000), suggests that well-managed public open spaces, recreational and sporting areas improve the attractiveness of urban areas and help promote a healthier lifestyle. They can bring benefits for wildlife and the environment, act as an educational tool and can relieve pressure on the countryside. It concludes by stating that they are therefore vital to enhancing the quality of the urban environment and the quality of lives.

2 Introduction

Waverley Borough Council | Waverley Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study

2.8 Open space, sport and recreation provision in Waverley therefore has an important role to play in supporting the implementation of the Government's objectives, providing a high quality of life and in places relieving pressure on the sensitive countryside around.

2.9 Waverley's Corporate Plan 2012 -2015 has leisure and lives as one of its corporate priorities. The Council will continue to support opportunities for all to take part in sport, recreation and other leisure activities to promote health and well-being for all. Waverley has a crucial strategic role to play in improving the quality of life for residents in our Borough by ensuring that everybody has access to a range of high quality sports and leisure opportunities. One of the priorities within the Plan is to encourage residents to use the Borough's open spaces and countryside as an important recreational resource, and to work with local residents and park users to develop appropriate management plans.

2.10 There are a number of policies in the Waverley Borough Local Plan 2002, which relate to the protection of open space and recreational facilities, as well as those which seek to protect those which have value for the protection of wildlife and the character of the landscape. These are:

- Policy BE1: Important Green Spaces within settlements
- Policy C3: Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Area of Great Landscape Value
- Policy C9: International and National Conservation Sites
- Policy C10: Local Nature Reserves, Sites of Nature Conservation Importance and Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites
- Policy C11: Undesignated Wildlife Sites
- Policy C12: Canals and River Corridors
- Policy CF1: Retaining Existing Community Facilities
- Policy CF2: Provision of New Community Facilities
- Policy LT1: Retention of Leisure Facilities
- Policy LT6: Leisure and Tourism Development in Settlements
- Policy LT7: Leisure and Tourism Development in the Countryside
- Policy LT8: Sports Grounds and Playing Fields
- Policy LT9: Golf Courses

Provision of quality open space

2.11 There is a multitude of factors that contribute to creating a quality open space. Within this, factors differ as to what is important to different types of open space. These are detailed within the sections dedicated to the individual open space types.

2.12 The *Green Flag Award Scheme* was launched in 1996 to recognise and reward the best green spaces in the country. The scheme provides useful general criteria (listed below) as to what is considered a quality open space, and formed the basis for how Waverley Borough's open spaces were judged within the qualitative assessment:

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- A welcoming place
- Healthy, safe and secure
- Clean and well maintained
- Sustainability – methods used in maintaining the park/ green space and its facilities should be environmentally sound
- Conservation and Heritage
- Community Involvement
- Marketing
- Management

2.13 The aim of the LDF and particularly the Core Strategy is to address the identified issues and deliver the Spatial Vision for Waverley in 2028. The following are draft key objectives for the Core Strategy that this open space strategy seeks to support:

- To deliver sustainable development that meets the needs of the local community, whilst not compromising the quality of life for future generations
- To deliver planned development in areas of significant change, including planned development in Hindhead that meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors, as a result of the changes brought about by the new A3 tunnel scheme. To ensure that cross boundary impacts arising from development or infrastructure provision are considered and addressed.
- To ensure that adequate provision is made for new or improved social, physical and green infrastructure to meet the needs of the increased population
- To support the vitality and viability of the centres of Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere and Cranleigh, taking account of the difference between each of the centres and the different roles that they play.
- To ensure that provision is made to meet the leisure, recreation and cultural needs of the community.
- To protect the countryside as a recreational asset, including its visitor facilities, and, where appropriate, promote its continued recreational use.
- To safeguard and where appropriate enhance the rich historic heritage and the diverse and attractive landscapes and townscapes in Waverley, and ensure that new development takes proper account of the character and distinctiveness of the area in which it is located.
- To protect and enhance the diversity of the wildlife and habitats that are within and around Waverley, both on designated sites and undesignated sites.

Report Structure

2.14 This report considers the supply and demand issues for open space in Waverley Borough, and key actions developed to implement change. This is structured as followed:

- **Part 2: Methodology**
- **Part 3: General open space issues**

- **Part 4: Assessment by typology**
 - Public parks and gardens
 - Natural/ semi-natural green space
 - Green corridors
 - Outdoor sports facilities*
 - Indoor sports facilities
 - Amenity green space
 - Children and young people's open space
 - Allotments

 - Cemeteries and Churchyards
 - Civic Spaces
 - Special Interest Sports

Further Work

Outdoor Sports Facilities

2.15 The Council has a detailed Playing Pitch strategy that was produced in 2003. This produced a number of key issues about over and under supply of various types of sports pitches by area.

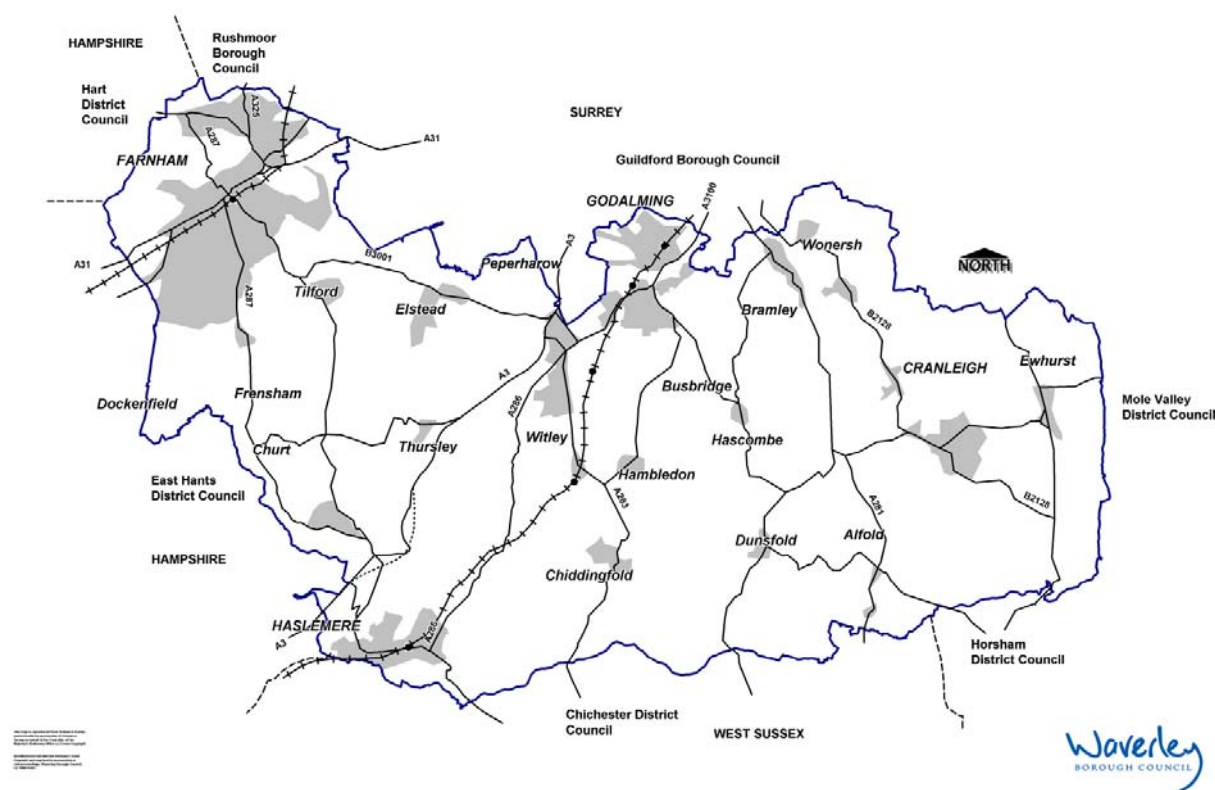
2.16 As part of this PPG17 study, survey forms were sent out to local sports clubs and others specifically about the outdoor sports facilities in Waverley. However, the response was not felt to be comprehensive enough to be able to formulate specific actions for this type of space. The Leisure and Community Safety Service has therefore decided to update the Playing Pitch Strategy in 2011 and the analysis and results of this will be incorporated into the PPG17 study once completed. The current (2003) data has been included in the chapter on Outdoor Sports Facilities until it has been revised.

2.17 Waverley's Leisure and Community Safety Service will also use the information gathered in this PPG17 study and develop it further to produce an Open Space Strategy for the Borough. This will involve taking the Key Actions produced, an assessment of their feasibility, cost and a timescale of projects and objectives. It is anticipated that it will be adopted by Waverley during 2012.

A Profile of Waverley Borough

2.18 Waverley Borough lies in southwest Surrey, roughly half way between London and the Sussex Coast. It borders the Boroughs and Districts of Guildford, Hart, Rushmoor, East Hampshire, Chichester, Horsham, and Mole Valley.

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Map 2.1 Waverley Borough and Surrounding Areas

2.19 The 2001 census showed the Waverley population to be 115,665, an increase of just 0.5% since 1991. The 2009 mid-year estimate is 118,800, and is projected to rise to 131,200 by 2026. Waverley has an ageing population, with a relatively high proportion of people above retirement age. 17.6% of Waverley's population is over 65, compared with the national figure of 16%. This trend is set to continue with a significant percentage increase forecast in the number of people over 65 and over 85 in the 2005-2015 period projected to be 16.5% and 29.4% respectively.

2.20 Some 97% of the Borough's population is white, with just under 2% being black, Indian, Pakistani or mixed origin. There is a significant and long-standing gypsy and traveller community in Waverley.

2.21 At 345 square kilometres, the Borough is roughly bounded by its four principal urban settlements. Each has a different character and distinctiveness, and a defined town centre. About 72% of the population of Waverley live within one of the four main centres.

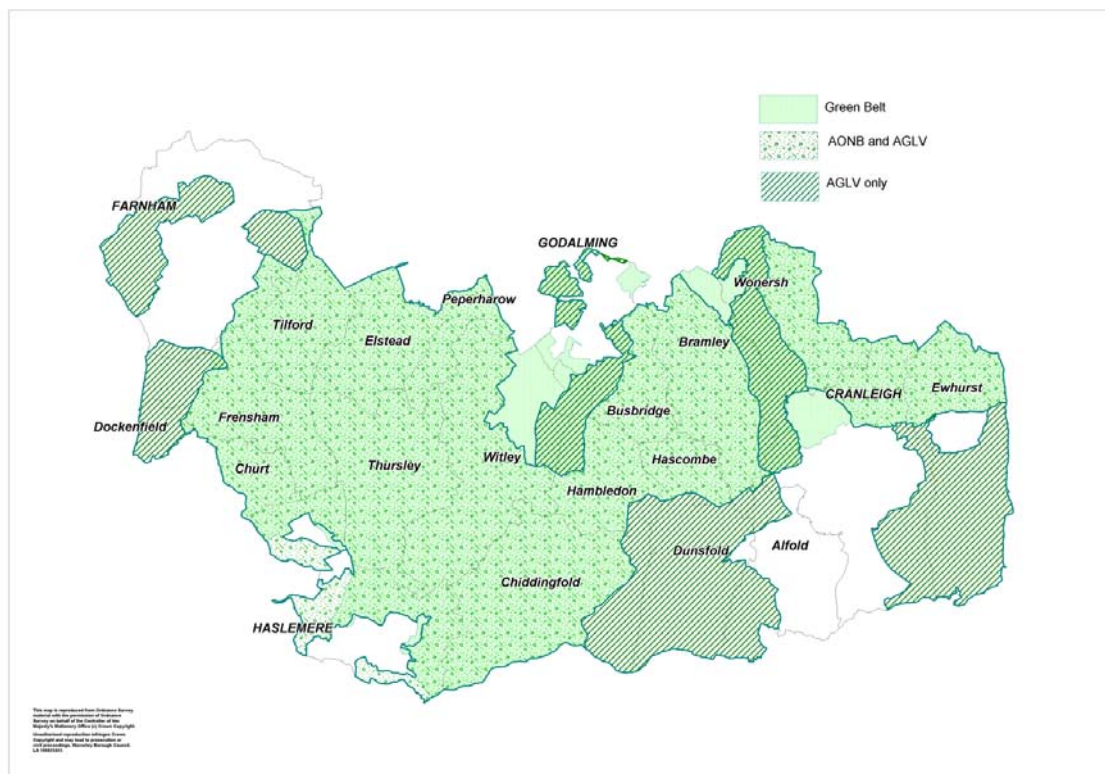
- Farnham is the largest settlement, having a population of approximately 36,000. Functionally, it has links with other centres outside Waverley, including Guildford and the string of settlements west of the Borough in the Blackwater Valley.

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- Godalming has a population of 21,000. The size and range of services is less than Farnham, but is significantly influenced by Guildford, which is only 10km away via good road and rail links.
- Haslemere, which has a population of approximately 15,000, lies in the southwest corner of the Borough, close to the boundaries with West Sussex and Hampshire. This small country town has a large rural catchment, which extends into Hampshire and West Sussex.
- Cranleigh, to the Borough's east, has a population of approximately 12,000. It has a more limited range of services within its village centre, but these are very good for a settlement of its size and location. It borders West Sussex and is influenced by Guildford and to a lesser extent by Horsham.

2.22 Approximately 92% of the Borough is rural; made up from 61% (21,000 hectares) within the Metropolitan Green Belt and 31% (10,624 hectares) designated as Rural Area Beyond the Green Belt. 80% of the countryside is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and/or an Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV).



Map 2.2 Green Belt, AONB and AGLV

2.23 There are also significant ecological assets within and close to the Borough, and numerous areas that have one or more local or national policies to protect them. These include Special Areas of Conservation, a Ramsar Site, National and Local Nature

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reserves, Sites of Nature Conservation Importance. Waverley also contains all or part of some 15 sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). There are also two Special Protection Areas designated under the European Birds Directive as being of European importance for its wild birds. Only 80 hectares of the Thames Basin Heaths PSA lies within Waverley, to the north of Farnham, but its zone of influence extends 5 km from its boundary and therefore affects development in most of Farnham.

2.24 Waverley's landscape has a distinctive wooded character, which at 31.5% is the highest in the country.

2.25 Rivers flowing through the Borough include the River Wey (Alton to Farnham reach, Liphook to Tilford reach, Tilford to Godalming reach and Bramley to Cranleigh reach), and Cranleigh Water. Frensham Great Pond and Frensham Little Pond are significant water bodies and there is an extensive network of lakes, ponds, streams and ditches across the Borough.

2.26 Many of the residential parts of Waverley have a distinct semi-rural character. Haslemere and Godalming have wooded hillsides surrounding them, while in Cranleigh there is a much more rapid transition from urban to rural, with common land extending into the heart of the shopping centre. Most of the rural villages have village greens, many of which are multi purpose and of great importance to residents, both as a functional recreation space and as a distinctive part of the character of the area.

2.27 Waverley is an affluent area, as demonstrated by high house prices, high incomes, households with more than two cars and the relatively high proportion of children who attend private schools. However, there are identified small pockets of relative deprivation, typically in medium- sized housing estates on the periphery of the main settlements. Waverley has a buoyant economy, with low unemployment. A high number of people are employed in knowledge-driven occupations such as business and finance and computer/ telecommunications, and the Borough's residents have a high knowledge score.

Methodology 3

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Picture 3.1 Lammas Lands, Godalming

Introduction

This assessment was undertaken in accordance with PPG17 and the methodology in *Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17*. The *Companion Guide* emphasises the need to undertake a local needs assessment and audit of provision. It states that the main purpose of undertaking a local needs assessment is to plan positively, creatively and effectively to ensure that there is adequate provision of accessible, high quality green spaces, civic spaces, and sport and recreation facilities to meet the needs of local communities and visitors.

The *Companion Guide* outlines four guiding principles for undertaking a local needs assessment; these are as follows:

- Local needs are likely to vary considerably, even within a local authority area
- The delivery of a network of high quality, sustainable open spaces, sport and recreation facilities depends on good planning, creative urban and landscape design, and effective management
- The delivery of high quality and sustainable open spaces may depend much more on improving and enhancing the accessibility and quality of existing provision than

3 Methodology

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on new provision. But at the same time, where additional open spaces or sport and recreation facilities are required, they should enhance the network

- The value of open space, sport and recreation facilities, irrespective of who owns them, depends primarily on two things; the extent to which they meet clearly identified local needs and the wider benefits they generate for people, wildlife, biodiversity and the wider environment

Although these principles apply to both urban and rural areas the *Companion Guide* indicates that it may be necessary for some areas to have both urban and rural provision standards.

The Five Step Process for Undertaking the Local Needs Assessment

The assessment has been undertaken by following the 5-step process set out in the Companion Guide. The steps are as follows:

- Step 1: Identifying local needs
- Step 2: Auditing local provision
- Step 3: Setting provision standards
- Step 4: Applying provision standards
- Step 5: Drafting policies

The work undertaken at each step is outlined as follows:

Step 1: Identifying local needs

A review was undertaken of existing national, regional and local policies and strategies to identify any implications for local needs in relation to open space, sport and recreation facilities.

Consultation

A series of consultations were undertaken in order to identify the local needs and views of Waverley residents in relation to existing open space, sport and recreation facilities throughout the Borough. Paper questionnaires and online surveys via the Council's website were used to gather information on the general public's attitudes to existing provision, their quality and accessibility, and any deficiencies in their areas. 3,500 copies were distributed, and a 20.45% response rate achieved. Consultation was also undertaken directly with sports clubs and organisations, schools, Parish and Town Councils, and other landholders and the response rates from these groups is reported on throughout the document. In combination, these surveys provide a relatively robust

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evidence base from which to carry out the assessment and prepare and review planning policies as part of the LDF process; however, further work is needed on some of the aspects of the study to enable more accurate local standards to be produced.

Step 2: Auditing Local Provision

The assessment requires the identification of all applicable open space, sport and recreation facilities in the Borough, irrespective of ownership and the extent of public access. The following steps were used to gather and then verify the appropriate information.

Open Space

PPG17 defines that *'open space should be taken to mean all open spaces 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'*. Waverley contains many lakes and ponds as well as the River Wey and its tributaries and part of the Wey and Arun Canal. These have not been looked at in detail in this study, but their contribution to more specialist leisure activities in the borough is included in Chapter 15 Special Interest Sports.

PPG17 splits 'open space' into two main sub-sets: green space, which is normally grassed/ vegetated and, civic space, which is predominantly hard-surfaced. It also indicates that as a result of the multi-functionality of many types of open space it will be necessary to classify each open space by its 'primary purpose' to ensure that it was counted only once in the assessment. However, to enable a more accurate study to be undertaken in Waverley, where possible, large sites, such as Farnham Park, have been split into their component parts, and calculated accordingly.

In accordance with the guidance, the open space typologies that were included in this assessment along with their definitions and primary purpose are outlined in the table below which is taken directly from PPG17.

	Typology	Definition for this Study	Primary Purpose	Source of Information in Waverley
Green Spaces	Parks and Gardens	Urban Parks, Country Parks, and formal gardens	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds Maintenance • Officer knowledge • Waverley Borough

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	Typology	Definition for this Study	Primary Purpose	Source of Information in Waverley
				<p>Council Website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aerial Photographic survey 2009
	Natural and semi-natural green spaces, including urban woodland	Includes publicly accessible woodland, urban forestry, scrub, grassland (e.g downlands, commons and meadows) wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land and rock areas (eg cliffs, quarries and pits)	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds Maintenance • Officer knowledge • Local Plan Proposals Map 2002 designations • Waverley Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2010 • GIS data
	Green Corridors	River and canal banks, cycle ways and rights of way	Walking, cycling, or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel, and opportunities for wildlife migration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds Maintenance • Officer knowledge • Local Plan Proposals Map 2002 designations • Waverley Information Sheets • GIS data
	Outdoor Sports Facilities (with natural or artificial surfaces and either	Publicly or privately owned tennis courts, bowling greens, sports pitches, golf courses, athletics tracks, school and	Participation in outdoor sports, such as pitch sports, tennis, bowls, athletics or countryside and water sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds Maintenance • Officer knowledge • Playing Pitch Strategy 2003

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	Typology	Definition for this Study	Primary Purpose	Source of Information in Waverley
	publicly or privately owned)	other institutional playing fields, and other outdoor sports facilities		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waverley Borough Council Website • GIS data • Aerial Photographic survey 2009
	Amenity green space (most commonly, but not exclusively in housing areas)	Informal recreation spaces, green spaces in and around housing, domestic gardens and village greens	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance or residential or other areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds Maintenance • Officer knowledge
	Provision for children and young people	Play areas, skateboard parks, outdoor basketball hoops, and other more informal areas (eg 'hanging out' areas, teenage shelters)	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds Maintenance • Playgrounds survey 2008 • Officer knowledge • Aerial Photographic survey 2009
	Allotments, community gardens, and city (urban) farms	Green areas for the public's use of growing produce	Opportunities for those people who wish to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds Maintenance • Officer knowledge • GIS data • Aerial Photographic survey 2009

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	Typology	Definition for this Study	Primary Purpose	Source of Information in Waverley
	Cemeteries and churchyards	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds	Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds Maintenance • Officer knowledge • Waverley Borough Council Website • GIS data • Aerial Photographic survey 2009
Civic spaces	Civic spaces	Civic and market squares, and other hard surface areas designed for pedestrians	Providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds Maintenance • Officer knowledge

Table 3.1

3.1 It should be noted that it is not always clear-cut as to which category an area falls into and the judgement of Officers has been used on occasions. As can be seen from the maps, Waverley is a rural borough, with large tracts of open land, including commons, agricultural land across it. In addition, many of these sites have more than one 'designation'. For example, one of the areas of Thursley Common is not only common land, but also a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Area of Conservation, a National Nature Reserve, and a RAMSAR site.

3.2 Using these typologies as a basis an attempt has been made to identify as much known open space, sport and recreation facilities within the Borough as practically possible irrespective of ownership and extent of public access. This includes primary, secondary schools and other educational institutes, and open space of particular historical/ cultural interest. The focus has been on land in the borough which is accessible to the public. It is acknowledged that there are large tracts of open land in private ownership which does not have this accessibility, and therefore in some case the areas of land quoted will be a minimum.

3.3 In accordance with PPG17 this assessment does not include the following:

- 'SLOAP' (space left over after planning), although significant areas within the towns that may be considered as amenity green space have been assessed;

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- other incidental areas of land, such as road verges, (those which are maintained by Waverley have been included) and which are not intended for a specific use; and,
- some small sites are excluded from the analysis due to the difficulties in mapping, identifying and assessing, for example village war memorials.

Indoor Sport and Recreation Facilities

3.4 PPG17 does not formally define indoor sport and recreation facilities, but it does indicate that for the purposes of assessments local authorities should use a typology which includes:

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

Qualitative Assessment

3.5 To add to the information obtained above, an assessment of the quality of the sites was established through site visits undertaken by Officers of the Council. Over 300 of Waverley Borough's open space sites managed by the Parks and Landscapes Department were assessed. The larger sized sites managed by Waverley; which were generally natural/ semi-natural and amenity land, were not assessed on site, but with the knowledge of Countryside Officers. Sites not under Council ownership were not qualitatively assessed.

3.6 The qualitative survey work was based upon the guidance contained within the *Companion Guide* to PPG17, the results of the general survey relating to key site features and through consultation with the Leisure and Community Safety Service. Each site was assessed in spring 2010 through ten to twelve questions that relate to both the value attributed and quality of the open space for that typology.

3.7 Quality relates to the range of features or facilities on the site (e.g. trees, seating, paths), their basic characteristics (e.g. appropriate to the site or not), and their condition (e.g. on a spectrum from excellent to very poor)

3.8 Value is nothing to do with monetary value but refers the importance of a site to people and biodiversity; to its cultural and heritage value; and to its strategic value-for example by providing a sense of openness in a densely developed area.

3 Methodology

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3.9 Quality and value are therefore entirely independent of each other. For example, if a particular green space is the only one in which young people can take part in a kickabout in an area, it is of high value, even if it is poor quality. Conversely, a space or facility of superb quality may be of little value if it is inaccessible or no one knows it is there.

3.10 For these sets of questions, the site was marked as *excellent, good, poor, very poor, not present but required, and not present and not required*. The assessment resulted in a percentage score being given to both the value and quality of each site surveyed.

3.11 These ratings are only a guide and are not intended to indicate that a site is not valued by the community or is surplus to requirements. The difficulty with this approach is that it cannot take full account of the limitations of certain sites and that in many cases there may be restrictions (e.g. locational, environmental) meaning that a top score is unachievable. Therefore this information has been used as a guide and in conjunction with the results of the consultation process and Officer knowledge and judgement.

Step 3: Setting Provision Standards

3.12 Once the assessments of local need and audit of provision are in place it is possible to set locally determined provision standards. PPG17 states that local standards should include:

- A quantitative component
- A qualitative component
- An accessibility component

3.13 The **quantitative** standard was established through a combination of examining the consultation responses, mapping the location of sites, extracting data on size and facilities, and considering their accessibility to the population of the Borough. This helps to identify areas where provision needs to be examined further. A simple analysis of where concern that provision was too low was also undertaken based on the respondent's postcode, this gave a general indication of where there may be issues, but should be treated with caution due to the difficulties in matching postcodes with identifiable communities and any inherent bias in the number of respondents from various areas.

3.14 The **qualitative** standard was established through a combination of the site visits undertaken by Officers of the Council and the results of the consultations as discussed above.

3.15 The **accessibility** of sites was considered, both in terms of the physical accessibility of sites to the public i.e. were there footpaths, disabled access, was it easy to locate, accessible by foot etc and by the distance and means by which people were willing to travel in order to establish 'catchment' areas and provision standards. This was also supplemented by information on ownership, which can be viewed in the Area

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Profiles in Annex A. The Borough contains a number of member- only clubs or sites associated in particular with the high number of private schools and some large businesses within the Borough.

3.16 ‘Catchment’ areas for different types of provision were based on the favoured mode of transport and the distance people expected, or were willing to travel as established through the consultation responses. In all cases the catchment was defined as the distance 75 – 80% of users wish to travel by the most popular mode of transport. The catchments used in this study are fairly general in nature and do not take account of the wide variety of users; however, they are based upon the minimum distance likely to be travelled to take account of the needs of the older population and those with young children. They are also ‘as the crow flies’ catchments but any physical barriers to access are picked up through the area profiles.

3.17 Levels of usage can provide useful information on the popularity of a site or help identify deficiencies or barriers to access.

Step 4: Applying Provision Standards

3.18 Once the standards are set they are applied to the existing provision of each individual type of open space, sports or recreation facility. This process helps to identify gaps in provision and therefore the areas of priority. The anticipated changes in the population have been taken into account which, in Waverley, is expected to result in an increase in population from 118,800 (2009) to 131,200 in 2026. (Based on ONS 2008 based sub-national projections). As most new residential development is anticipated to be within the main towns of the Borough, it is expected that these areas are most likely to experience this population growth. With the generally ageing population and a reduction in the number of younger residents no significant population growth is anticipated in the more rural areas. Provision standards should not be seen as rigid, rather they are starting points for negotiations and a high quality environment will not necessarily result from their strict application. They should be combined with high levels of design skills and consideration of the wider context.

3.19 When applying the standards, Parish boundaries have been used for the rural areas. In the four main settlements Wards have been combined, and only in the case of Moor Park, divided, to better reflect the built-up areas and identifiable neighbourhoods as suggested by PPG17. Farnham has been divided into areas north and south of the A31, and similarly Godalming has been divided into two areas by the A3100.

3.20 The boundaries of the areas surveyed are shown on Map 3.1.

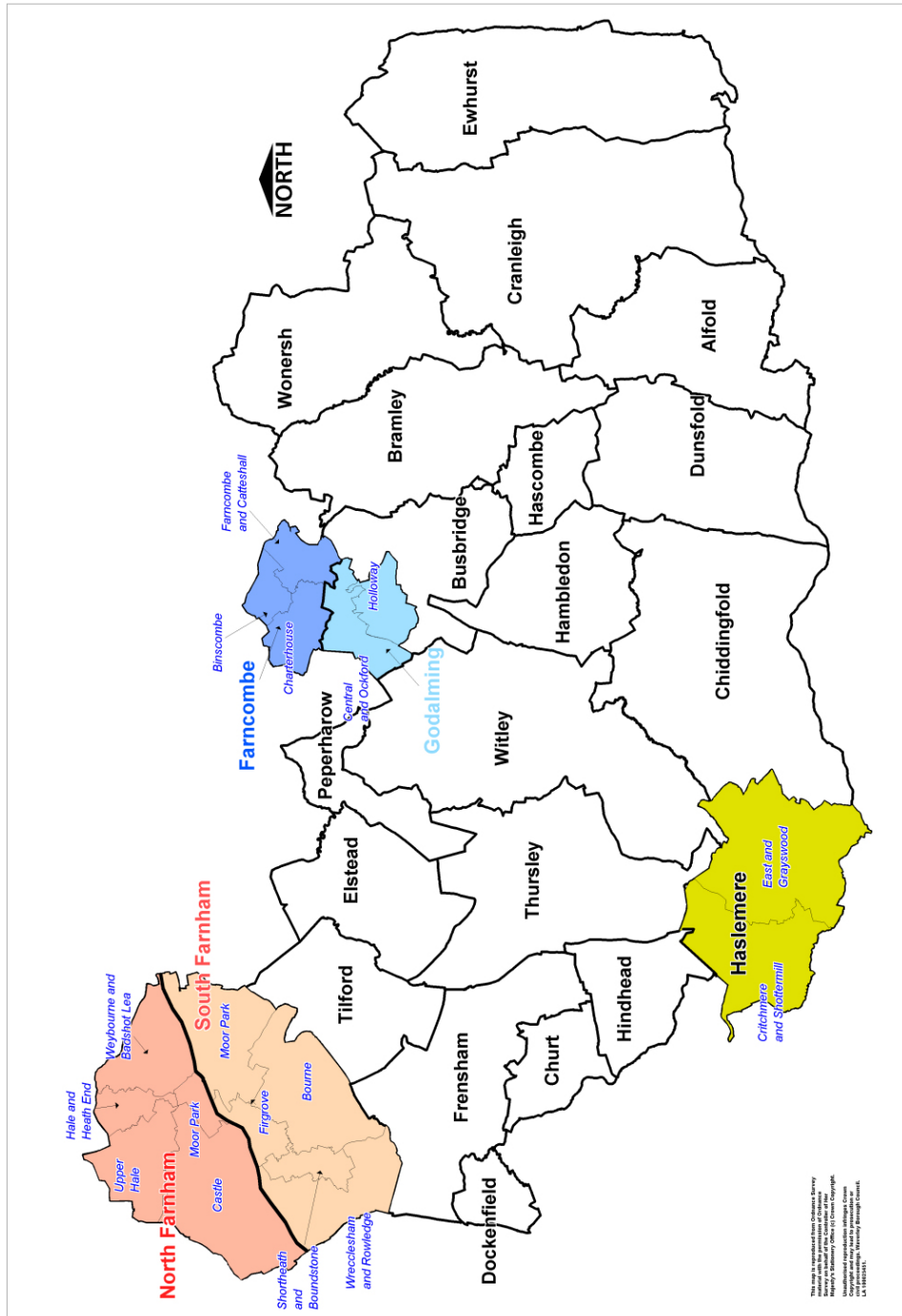
3.21 However, it is intended that the data captured should be capable of being used in a number of situations, and analysis of the typologies can also be made on a parish, ward and borough-wide basis as required, as well as the areas defined for this study.

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3.22 A profile for each area will be contained within Annex A, once the review of the Playing Pitch Strategy has taken place, and be used to assess local circumstances that may result in a need to deviate from the standards set across the Borough. This is felt to be more informative than setting urban and rural standards.

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Map 3.1 PPG17 Study Areas

Step 5: Policy Options and Key Actions

3.23 The preceding 4-step approach to the assessment provides the evidence from which the Council can make decisions on the open space, sports and recreation facilities that should be protected, enhanced, relocated or are indeed surplus. Also, 'key actions' have been suggested to address issues that can be dealt with immediately or in the longer term as part of any future Leisure and Community Safety Service Action Plans and also the Open Space Strategy (2012). In terms of new provision, it is recommended that a minimum acceptable site size for each typology is established, for use when development is proposed. The small nature of most development opportunities within the Borough will mean that provision on many sites will normally not be practicable. However, the Council's Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 'Planning Infrastructure Contributions'(2008) incorporates a tariff system of developer contributions for many kinds of developments. The contributions are payable to increase capacity in line with additional need which the new development creates. The tariff approach allows funds to be gathered on every housing site from a single dwelling to a large development, and also for commercial development. The funds are pooled under different uses. One such use is leisure, which is sub-divided into Indoor facilities, Sports Pitches and Play Spaces. Contributions may be spent to meet the needs of the development on relevant county-level and district level projects or individual works to serve the actual development.

General Open Space Issues 4

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4 General Open Space Issues

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Introduction

4.1 Consultation with users of open space across Waverley Borough covered a range of issues. Typology and site-specific information issues are covered in the relevant sections of this report. This section describes the generic issues of open space quantity, usage, accessibility, quality, and value that concern all open space typologies.

4.2 Aside from Waverley Borough Council, open space is owned and managed by a wide variety of agencies, including the National Trust, Forestry Commission, Surrey Wildlife Trust, Surrey County Council, MOD, and Parish and Town Councils. As previously explained, developing an accurate picture of open spaces in the area is therefore, complex.

Consultation

4.3 A series of consultations were undertaken in order to identify the local needs and views of Waverley residents regarding existing open space, sports and recreation facilities throughout the Borough. This section sets out the key findings of these consultations.

The General Survey

4.4 The purpose of the general survey was to gather the views of households on the quantity, usage, accessibility, quality, and value of open space, sport and recreation facilities in the Borough. Between December 2009 and February 2010, 3,400 surveys were mailed out across Waverley, distributed proportionately to the number of households in each ward. Within each ward these were distributed at random. A further 12 questionnaires were sent to members of Waverley's Top Youth Council, and an online version of the general survey was placed on the Council's website to coincide with the release of a news article about the general survey in the local press.

4.5 716 responses were received, equating to a response rate of about 20% of those specifically questioned.

The key findings in terms of all types of open space within the Borough were as follows:

Quantity

- It is considered that the amount of open space in the borough is about right (65%). Only 0.6% of respondents thought that there was too much. 24% thought there was too little provision. From the results, there is a perception that there is not enough provision for children and young people, or enough indoor sports facilities or green corridors in Waverley.

Quality

- The majority of people rated the space as good or average. Just over 9% thought they were poor or very poor, with concerns about indoor sports facilities, civic spaces and the quality of facilities for children and young people.
- Note has been taken of the spaces which people considered to be of poor quality for further investigation.

Accessibility

- Walking was the most favoured means of travel to an open space, closely followed by car travel, particularly in respect of indoor and outdoor sports facilities in the borough, which could be explained by the need to travel to away matches, or to the towns from the more rural parts of the borough, and also civic spaces, which are located in the towns.
- The majority of people expect to travel for no more than 20 minutes to the open space of their choice.

Importance

- Over 84% of people consider open space to be important or very important, while less than 4% consider it not to be important at all. Natural and semi natural spaces were thought to be the most valued by 79% of people, while others particularly valued parks and gardens and green corridors.

4 General Open Space Issues

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Usage

- The most popular reasons for people using the open space near them are walking, fresh air and to take exercise. The main reason for not using them was a lack of time; but a number of respondents said that they were too far away, with poor access or that the site nearest to them was not of good quality.
- The majority of people said that they only used open spaces occasionally, followed closely by those using them on a weekly basis. Only 11% used the spaces on a daily basis.
- 8.4% of respondents said that one of their main reasons for using open space was to observe the wildlife, which given the number of accessible areas which are designated for their wildlife/ habitat value, is not surprising.

Waverley Schools Survey

4.6 A questionnaire was sent to all 48 Primary and Secondary Schools in the Borough. 22 responses were received.

4.7 The purpose of this consultation was to ask schools to indicate the types of sport and recreation facilities they have, to ask about the use of their facilities by external sports clubs or organisations and whether or not they had any plans for increasing, decreasing or improving their facilities. This generally concerned information on playing fields and indoor facilities.

4.8 21 of the 22 schools that responded allowed outside clubs to use their facilities on a regular basis. Charterhouse list over 20 different clubs and organisations, several of which came from outside Waverley. Allowing access to the schools at weekends and the cost of maintaining grass pitches were given as reasons for restricting access. 13 of the 22 schools have plans to improve facilities, which range from hopes to rebuild an entire school to improving drainage on the sports pitches, all of which are dependent on funding sources of various kinds.

4.9 The forthcoming Playing Pitch Strategy will provide more detailed information in relation to the use of leisure and recreational facilities owned by educational establishments in the Borough.

Parish and Town Council Survey of Open Space and Allotments

4.10 The twenty Parish and Town Councils in the Borough were sent a questionnaire and asked to verify and add to information gathered by the Council on sites in their area.

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4.11 The questionnaire asked for their opinion of the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space, sport and recreation facilities in their area, information on their village halls and any plans they may have for increasing, decreasing or improving sites. Eleven responses were returned. Where specific issues are identified these are discussed under the relevant typologies.

4.12 The majority of allotment sites in Waverley are owned and managed by the relevant Parish or Town Councils. An additional questionnaire was distributed to these Councils to obtain information about the provision of allotment sites, and to determine the current quality of the sites along with their accessibility and usage. Seven parish councils returned information concerning the allotments they manage. Analysis on the use of allotments is contained within the relevant chapter.



Picture 4.1 Busbridge Lakes

which, given the quality of the landscape and the rural character of the Borough in Waverley is not surprising.

4.15 Whilst the survey does identify some areas of concern from some user groups, this is not across all uses. Major refurbishment to Waverley's leisure centres in Cranleigh and Farnham have been completed since the survey was carried out, which should address the majority of concerns about these buildings.

4.16 All of the information from the various elements of the consultation has been fed into the relevant chapters, and from this a series of Key Actions has been identified for each typology. If agreed, these will be fed into the next High Level Action Plan of

Other Landholders

4.13 Other major owners of open space within the Borough were contacted. These included the National Trust, Woodland Trust and Surrey Wildlife Trust. The purpose was to further identify land (in most cases *natural/semi-natural green spaces*) that is available for public use, its extent, quality and future plans. Mapped data from these groups has been included where appropriate within the document and where information was supplied.

Summary

4.14 It would appear that there is generally a good level of satisfaction with the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space, sports and recreation facilities in the Borough. There is a higher degree of satisfaction with the natural environment over the built facilities,

which, given the quality of the landscape and the rural character of the Borough in Waverley is not surprising.

Whilst the survey does identify some areas of concern from some user groups, this is not across all uses. Major refurbishment to Waverley's leisure centres in Cranleigh and Farnham have been completed since the survey was carried out, which should address the majority of concerns about these buildings.

All of the information from the various elements of the consultation has been fed into the relevant chapters, and from this a series of Key Actions has been identified for each typology. If agreed, these will be fed into the next High Level Action Plan of

4 General Open Space Issues

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the Waverley Cultural Strategy, and the emerging Open Space Strategy, and taken into account by other departments of the Council if potential funding opportunities arise to improve open space, sport and leisure facilities.

Public Parks and Gardens 5

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Study

5 Public Parks and Gardens

Waverley Borough Council | Waverley Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study

Definition

Urban parks, country parks and formal gardens, the primary purpose of which is to provide accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.

For the purpose of Waverley's study this definition includes gardens with more formal landscaping and planting and recreation grounds *without* formal sports facilities, such as goal posts etc.

Public parks and gardens also provide a variety of other secondary purposes such as ecological benefits and providing amenity green space etc.

Background

5.1 In 2003 a national survey was commissioned by Sport England, the Countryside Agency, and English Heritage⁽ⁱ⁾ to help establish how many adults in England use public parks. The definition of public park that was used in the survey was a very broad one (broader than the definition used in this study) and included both formal provision such as a town park, country park, formal gardens, play grounds, and recreation grounds, and less formal provision such as village greens or open common/ heathland. The main findings from this study include:

- Just under two thirds of adults in England had visited a public park during the previous 12 months
- There is a distinct bias in the use of parks by social groups with almost three quarters of adults from a higher social group visiting a park compared with only half of those from the lower social group. People from black and ethnic minority communities have relatively low participation rates, as do adults with a disability.
- More than 8 in 10 adults who had used a park in the previous 12 months did so at least once a month during the spring/ summer months with almost two thirds visiting a park once a week.
- The most popular type of park visited was an urban/ city/ town park.
- Accompanying a child to a play area was the second most common activity (43%) undertaken in parks by adults, behind going for a walk (75%).
- Only 11% of adults claimed to use a park to take part in formal organised sporting activity.

5.2 There are no local policies relating specifically to public parks and gardens, but they are often included in cultural and community strategies. Waverley does have eight Historic Gardens as identified by English Heritage; however because these are for the

i [The Use of Public Parks in England 2003](#)

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most part private and some may only have public access by arrangement and payment and only on certain days, such as the Yellow Book Scheme, they have not been included in this audit.

Consultation Results

The General Survey

5.3 The results of the general survey showed that parks and gardens are considered to be the second most important type of open space in the Borough with 96% of respondents stating that they were either very important or important. This is only slightly lower than natural and semi natural space (98.1%) and green corridors (95%).

5.4 The high usage of a space can give an indication of how much it is valued. Over the last 12 months respondents visited a park or garden:

- Daily 16.7% (16.2% People using Parks and Green Space in SE)⁽ⁱⁱ⁾
- Weekly 38.6% (30% People using Parks and Green Space in SE)
- Monthly 17.2% (20.9% People using Parks and Green Space in SE)
- On occasion 27.5%

5.5 Parks and Gardens are the second most frequently visited type of open space in the Borough behind natural and semi natural green spaces. People from North Farnham use parks and gardens most frequently, but this is not surprising given that 11 of the 36 parks and gardens are in this area.

5.6 Over 77% think that the provision of parks and gardens is about right. 18.6% think that there is too little and postcode analysis shows that there was particular concern in Haslemere.

5.7 Parks and gardens are rated by 69.4% as being of very good or good quality, with 4.6% considering them to be poor or very poor. Respondents from Cranleigh and Ewhurst were least satisfied with the quality of their parks and gardens.

Parish and Town Council Survey

5.8 Results were generally positive with four of the six responses to this question rating the quality of their parks and gardens to be good.

5.9 There may have been some confusion about the definition of parks and gardens by the towns and parishes, as some said that they didn't have any, where some had actually been recorded in the audit. It is likely that they considered them under another typology. Conversely, some commented on them, where none had been recorded. This definition will need to be made clearer for future documents.

ii Source: BVPI Data. Urban Green Nation: Building the Evidence Base – CABE 2009

5 Public Parks and Gardens

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5.10 Most of those that responded thought that the provision was right, with only Cranleigh suggesting that there was too little.

5.11 None of the Parish or Town Councils that responded has identified any future plans for the parks and gardens in their areas. In acknowledging that there were concerns about the lack of such facilities in Cranleigh, the Parish Council felt that this had been helped by the recent refurbishment of the recreation ground at Snoxhall Fields and the area surrounding the Parish offices.

Current Provision in Waverley

5.12 The audit identified 35 public parks and gardens in Waverley Borough. Of these, eight are gardens with more formal landscaping and planting, such as the Victoria Garden and Battings Memorial Garden in Farnham. The others are less formal parks with other facilities and open space.

5.13 Due to the multi-functionality of most public parks and gardens in Waverley many of them contain other typologies, in particular provision for children and young people. Farnham Park has not been included within Parks and Gardens, but for the most part has been included as a natural and semi natural greenspace, and its play space areas recorded in that category. Recreation grounds without sports equipment such as goalposts or formal pitches marked have been included as parks in this typology. Where other uses are present (such as sports facilities or playgrounds) the size in hectares of these have been calculated and removed from their total area. This is to ensure that there is no double counting and therefore as accurate a representation as possible of the other typologies is provided.

Setting Provision Standards

5.14 The provision standards have been set taking into account the current provision, site assessments, consultations and likely future needs.

Quantity Standards

5.15 The audit shows that there are some 20 ha of public parks and gardens across the whole of Waverley. This equates to a provision of 0.17 ha per 1000 people.

5.16 Respondents to the general survey are overall satisfied with the overall provision of public parks and gardens in the Borough and therefore results indicate that provision in Waverley is 'about right'. This is of course supplemented by amenity open space, natural and semi- natural green space and outdoor sports facilities that perform many of the functions of a public park. It is reasonable to set the quantity standard at 0.2 per 1000 people to reflect existing provision and the availability of access to the open countryside in Waverley.

Quantity Standard - 0.2ha per 1000 people.

Quality Standards

5.17 The Green Flag Award is the national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales. The award scheme is a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country. The awards are based on a holistic view of what makes a good green space, rather than a single indicator.

5.18 The following is the key criteria against which every park or green space entered is judged:

- A welcoming place
- Healthy, safe and secure
- Clean and well maintained
- Sustainability
- Conservation and heritage
- Community involvement
- Marketing
- Management

5.19 Within each criterion are a series of other criteria and this is becoming an increasingly recognised standard across the country. Although the fact that a space has achieved a Green Flag award is a good indication of its quality, Green Flag is a voluntary scheme. The fact that a space does not have an award should not be taken to imply that it is of poor quality; it may simply not have been entered into the scheme, which is the case with most of Waverley's parks and gardens. It is anticipated that several of the parks will be nominated in the future.

5.20 The overall result of the general survey indicates general satisfaction with Waverley's parks and gardens, but some said that they did not use the following sites. Not everyone gave reasons:

- Badshot Lea Village Green, Farnham
- Chestnut Way Recreation ground, Bramley (litter/broken glass/dog mess/anti-social youths)
- Gostrey Meadow, Farnham (too much litter, unpleasant environment, full of teenagers)
- Town Meadow, Haslemere

5.21 Conversely, Gostrey Meadow was also one of the most frequently visited parks in the borough, as well the Langham Recreation ground, and Victoria Gardens, Farnham and the Philips Memorial Ground, Godalming.

Quality Standard – Parks and gardens should be welcoming, safe, clean and inviting spaces that are well maintained with a good mix of natural and built amenities.

5 Public Parks and Gardens

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Accessibility Standards

5.22 Without good accessibility to the public, the benefit of good quality or good quantity of open space will be of very limited value. The Use of Public Parks in England survey 2003 showed that the majority of people visit the park that is closest to where they live, and the most common way of getting there is walking, followed by using a car. The majority of journeys to a particular park originated within 5 miles of the park, however most of them originated within one mile of the park.

5.23 A more recent survey, the Park Life Report, carried out by the charity Green Space in 2007 showed that 69% of people visit parks and green spaces on foot while 25% travel to parks in cars. Few people use public transport to visit parks and green spaces with only 2% travelling by bus.

5.24 In Waverley, 53% of respondents walk to the parks or gardens, with 41% travelling by car, which reflects the rural nature of the borough with limited public transport in the rural areas. There are also fewer parks and gardens in the rural areas and other types of open space are closer to hand. Only 2.7% would cycle, the same amount travelling on public transport.

5.25 47% of people expected to walk for less than 10 minutes, while 41.1% were willing to travel between 11 and 20 minutes. PPG17 recommends that it is best to define catchments by using the distance 75%-80% of users are willing to travel, and so 15 minutes walk is suggested as an accessibility standard for parks and gardens.

Accessibility Standard - 15 minutes walk, approximately 800m

Applying the Standards

5.26 Map 5.1 shows the locations of the identified parks and gardens. This shows that the areas that have apparent deficits are the more rural parts of the borough. With a concentration of parks and gardens in just a few wards, the standard of 0.2ha per 1000 people may not be reflective of the true picture on the ground. Analysis of the largest wards shows an apparent over provision in some and a deficit, or no actual parks and gardens at all in others, however, this needs to be balanced against the significant amounts of accessible natural and semi natural space, amenity space and other accessible open space in the more rural areas of the borough, and the other recreational spaces such as play areas and amenity areas in the more built up areas.

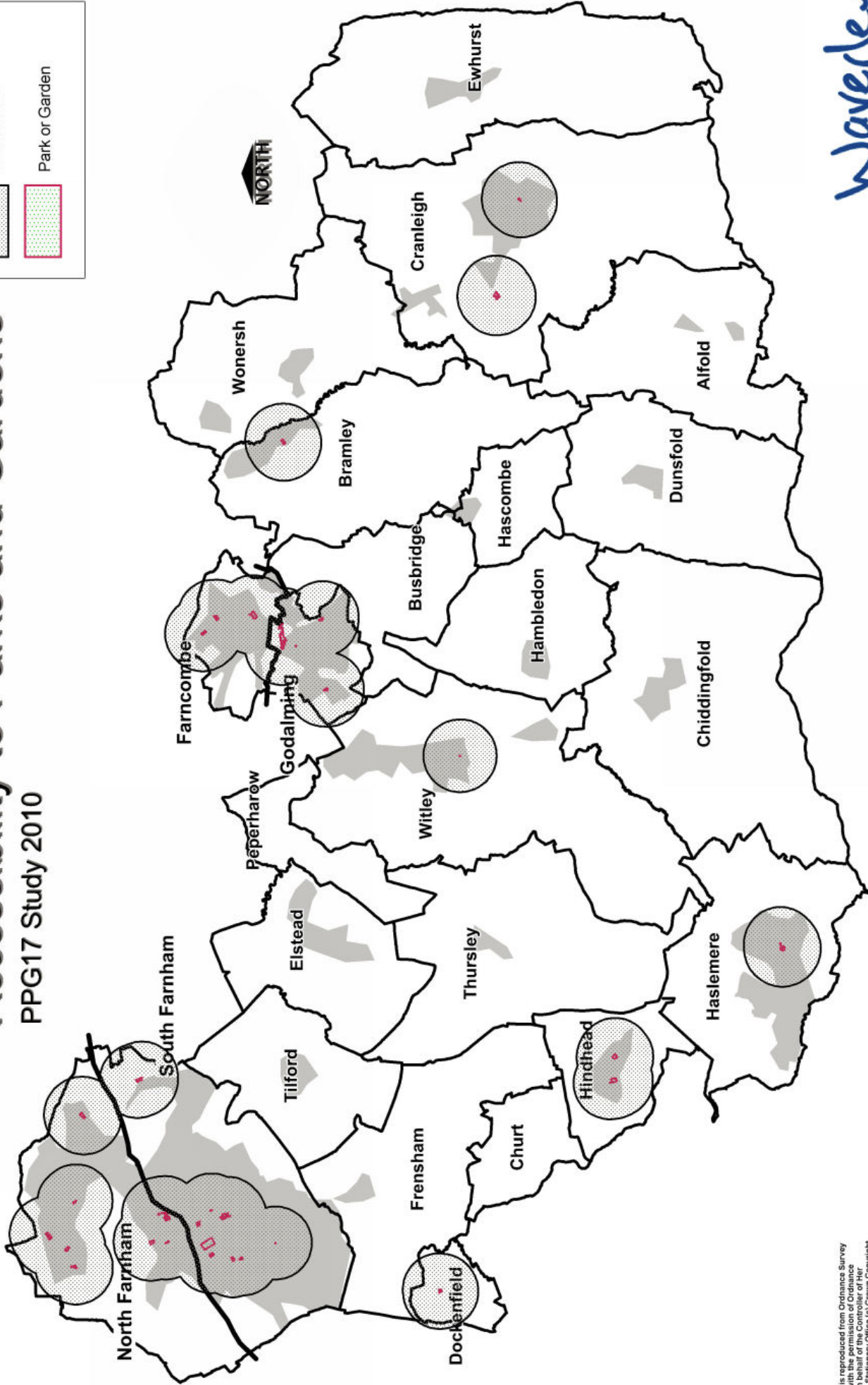
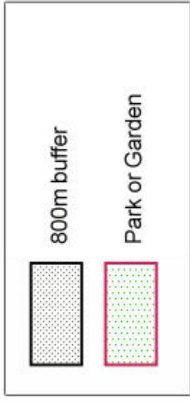
5.27 With 77% of respondents thinking that the provision of parks and gardens is about right, quantity does not appear to be a particular concern for most people. However, concern has been expressed in Haslemere and Cranleigh, and key actions have been suggested to look at this in more detail in the Open Space Strategy 2011.

5.28 In terms of quality, there did not appear to be any significant issues, with the majority of sites being rated as average to very good.

5.29 In terms of accessibility, there are some urban areas with higher populations that are not within 800m walk of a park or garden, but again, this should be looked at in conjunction with some of the other types of open spaces in these areas before making a decision on the need to address an apparent deficit.

Accessibility to Parks and Gardens

PPG17 Study 2010



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Policy Options

5.30 The anticipated levels of development to 2016 to could result in a population increase of around 4,300 people, (ONS 2008 sub-national population projections) this is most likely to be concentrated in the main towns of Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere and Cranleigh, with lesser levels of development in some of the larger villages. This may result in an increasing need for, and pressure on open space generally within these areas. A population increase of about 4,300 would result in an additional need for about 1ha.

5.31 There are a number of policy options available:

- Make the best use of the resources available in the Borough and seek intensification / multi-use of existing sites, for example, some areas of amenity space in areas closely related to the population may double as parks and gardens, particularly if not suitable for informal recreational activities. This is not a planning policy issue and there would need to be a partnership between relevant organisations on these more land management issues.
- Where a need for new or expanded facilities is identified further land could be sought through the site allocations process; however, finding available land could prove to be very difficult particularly in existing built-up areas, and when other types of open spaces are taken into account could be hard to justify.
- Seek parks and gardens on development sites; however it is unlikely that a development site within the Borough will be of a large enough size to accommodate a park, or that there will actually be a need for such a formal facility, having regard to the amount of accessible greenspace in the borough, especially in the more rural areas. There are more likely to be opportunities for smaller landscaped garden areas in the more built up areas, particularly in conjunction with high quality amenity space. This could be dealt with on a site by site basis when amenity greenspace is being sought.
- Financial contributions could be sought from developments near to existing parks and gardens to be put towards their improvement so that they are a more attractive option for people to use.

5.32 If all existing open space, sports and recreation facilities identified in the PPG17 Assessment are protected from development, proposals for re-development to a non open space, sports and recreation based use should first be required to demonstrate that the site is surplus to requirements and unsuitable for all other open space typologies, not just its existing use. This is due to the identified deficiencies in some typologies and the limited opportunities available to accommodate new facilities across the Borough particularly in the built-up areas and across much of the countryside due to the significant constraints (both physical and policy related).

Key Actions

- **Address issues of general quality in the Cranleigh area**
 - Work with Cranleigh Parish Council to address issues, and seek sources of external funding. This would only be possible if housing numbers increase in the area generating specific need for further parks and gardens which is unlikely by comparison with the need for other facilities.
- **Identify 'district level' public parks and gardens in the Borough, with the aim to produce management plans (including specific landscape plans) for enhancing sites**
 - Produce management plans for:
 - Phillips Memorial Ground (Godalming)
 - Gostrey Meadow (Farnham)
 - Broadwater Park, Godalming
- **Seek to improve the overall quality of public parks and gardens through application for *Green Flag* accreditation for the following sites:**
 - Phillips Memorial Ground (Godalming)
 - Gostrey Meadow (Farnham)
 - Broadwater Park, (Godalming)
- **Improve the quality of public parks and gardens rated poorly in the survey:**
 - Boundstone Recreation Ground (Farnham)
 - Hale Reeds Recreation Ground (Farnham)
 - Oast House Crescent Recreation Ground (Farnham)
 - Sandy Hill Top Space (Farnham)
 - Weydon Tip (Farnham) (former landfill site still producing methane which limits its use.)
- **Address the lack of provision of public parks and gardens sites in Haslemere**
 - General survey respondents from the Haslemere area assessed local provision of public parks and gardens to be poor

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- Identify appropriate new sites in the Haslemere area where open space of a public parks and garden standard can be developed
- Enhance the quality of centrally located 'major' sites of other typologies in the Haslemere area to reach the standard of public parks and gardens. Possible sites include:
 - St Christopher's Green (Haslemere)
 - Crown and Cushion Junction/ Weydown Road Car Park (open space Haslemere)
 - Town Meadow
- **Enhance Phillips Memorial Park, Godalming with the intention of improving overall quality; taking into account the Titanic centenary commemorations in April 2012**
 - Submit bid to Heritage Lottery Fund for additional funding
 - Undertake historic building works
 - Improve general accessibility
 - Enhance biodiversity
 - Enhance landscaping
 - Application for Greenflag award status
- **Improve site signage and provide appropriate interpretation.**

Natural / Semi- Natural Greenspace 6

Waverley Borough Council | Waverley Open Space, Sport and Recreation
Study

Definition

This type of open space includes urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (e.g. downlands, commons and meadows) wetlands, open and running water, wastelands and derelict open land and rock areas (e.g. cliffs, quarries and pits). Its primary purpose is wildlife conservation, biodiversity, and environmental education and awareness.

Background

6.1 Access to natural/ semi-natural green space is a key characteristic of Waverley Borough and it is highly valued by residents and visitors alike. At a national level studies tend to focus on the value of more formal elements of sports and recreation facilities; however, Natural England and The Woodland Trust have recognised the importance of natural/ semi-natural green space and have devised their own accessibility standards, some of which will be examined later in this study.

6.2 English Nature, in their publication *A Space for Nature* (1996), believe that:

- *Everyday contact with nature is important for well-being and quality of life;*
- *everyone should be able to enjoy this contact, in safety, without having to make any special effort or journey to do so;*
- *natural green space in towns and cities can play an important part in helping safeguard our national treasure of wildlife and geological features; and,*
- *accessible natural green spaces give everyone an excellent chance to learn about nature and to help protect it in practical ways.*

6.3 Although the above document perhaps relates more to an urban population than a rural one, the sentiments are still strongly felt by residents in Waverley, no matter whether they live in towns, villages or more rural locations. This view has always been expressed by residents over a variety of consultations about what is valued in the Borough.

6 Natural / Semi- Natural Greenspace

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6.4 The majority of natural/ semi-natural green spaces within the Borough are managed by organisations with conservation and enhancement of the environment as part of their remit. In addition this type of green space is covered by national designations such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC).



Picture 6.1 Frensham Common

6.5 There are a number of sites attracting visitors from quite large distances, such as the Devil's Punchbowl, Frensham Common, and Winkworth Arboretum. This can result in significant recreational pressure on sites and the road network around them, and needs careful management; although these pressures can be difficult to control as promotion may be carried out by other others.

Consultation Results

General Survey

6.6 The results of the general survey indicate that Waverley residents consider natural and semi-natural greenspaces to be the most important types of open space in the Borough. 98.1% rate it as important or very important. Over the preceding 12 months respondents visited these areas:

- Daily 16.7%
- Weekly 43.6%
- Monthly 18.8%
- On occasions 14.2%

6.7 As well as being the considered the most important type of space, it also the most frequently used in the Borough. The most highly rated sites included Blackheath, Cranleigh and Dunsfold Commons, Farnham Park, and Frensham Common.

6.8 Whilst only 3.5% stated dog walking as the main purpose, from observations many of those using sites on a daily basis are accompanied by a dog. Dog fouling is a significant problem at access points on many natural and semi natural greenspaces

6.9 82% of respondents thought that the quantity of natural and semi natural greenspaces was about right. 16.1% thought that there was too little and these respondents came mainly from North and South Farnham and Farncombe and Godalming.

6.10 Natural and semi natural greenspaces were rated as being of good or very good quality by 81.9% of respondents.

Town and Parish Council Survey

6.11 All Parish and Town Council responding to the survey considered natural/ semi-natural green space provision to be ‘about right’ within their areas.

Current Provision in Waverley

6.12 In total, there is at least 5,800 ha of land classified within the audit as natural/ semi-natural green space. Although this is already a large amount, in reality this is likely to be lower than what actually exists. Capturing and categorising the data is difficult. For example, commons are often managed as natural and semi natural greenspaces, but their primary purpose in some cases may be better categorised as amenity greenspace. When another use has been identified, usually through local knowledge or through use of the Council’s aerial photographic survey 2009, the other uses have been extracted and put into other categories. Every effort has been made to avoid double counting of land, but it is acknowledged that areas will have been missed, mainly because of lack of knowledge about ownership/ accessibility/ accuracy of physical boundaries.

6.13 Although the Council has contacted several major landowners having land accessible to the public, it recognises that there may be others.

6.14 The types of land included in this typology include

- The National Trust land
- Surrey County Council land managed by Surrey Wildlife Trust under contract
- Woodlands Trust land
- Surrey Wildlife Trust land
- Common Land and woodland managed and maintained by Waverley Borough
- Natural England
- Forestry Commission
- MOD
- Ancient Woodland with public access (i.e has a bridleway or footpath through it)
- All sites with national and local environmental designations that have public access (SSSIS, NNRs, LNRs, SACs, SPAs, RIGS and RAMSAR sites etc)

6.15 The South Downs National Park formally came into being on 31 March 2010, and part of the area adjoins Waverley for several miles along part of its southern border.

6 Natural / Semi- Natural Greenspace

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Picture 6.2 Winkworth Arboretum

6.16 The amount and location of the captured areas demonstrates the significant environmental and historical heritage within Waverley. Although PPG17 suggests that all such land can be included, in this case, an attempt has been made to include only those areas that are available for the purposes of public recreation, or have an element of public access. Sites range widely in size, from the 0.38ha at Blackheath Crossroads, to the 367ha of Frensham Common. Several of these sites cross Parish and Borough boundaries, but the amount for each PPG17 area has been calculated. Major open spaces which extend beyond the Waverley Borough boundary include:

- Alice Holt Forest Council East Hampshire District
- Ashpark Wood Chichester District Council
- Blackdown Chichester District Council
- Blackheath, Farley Heath and Newlands Corner Guildford Borough Council
- Crooksbury and Puttenham Commons Guildford Borough Council
- Hogwood Chichester District Council
- Hurtwood Guildford Borough and Mole Valley District Council
- Ludshott and Bramshott Commons East Hampshire District Council
- Rowhill Nature Reserve Rushmoor Borough Council
- Linchmere & Marley Commons Chichester District Council
- Caesar's Camp (part of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA) Rushmoor Borough & Hart District Councils

6.17 The South Downs National park was designated in 2010, and part of its border is contiguous with Waverley around part of Haslemere. Many of the other boroughs and districts are rural and it is clear that users in Waverley will also travel outside of the borough to access other open land for various reasons.

Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area

6.18 A Special Protection Area (SPA) is a site that is designated under the European Habitats Directive as being of European importance for its populations of wild birds. In the case of the two SPAs in Waverley, the birds are specifically breeding populations of nightjar, dartford warbler and woodlark. All of them are rare birds in Britain. They nest on or near the ground and are therefore vulnerable to disturbance from cats, dogs and humans.

6.19 Only a small part of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, about 80ha, is within Waverley to the north of Farnham. The vast majority of the SPA lies outside Waverley to the north. However, the zone of influence of the SPA extends 5km from the perimeter of the SPA and therefore, affects most of Farnham.

6.20 In order to avoid residents of new housing in the Farnham area having an adverse impact on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area, the Council adopted an Interim Miniplan in 2007. The Miniplan prevents residential development within 400 m of the SPA and within 5 kms requires developers to contribute to the enhancement of Farnham Park as a suitable alternative natural green space (SANG).

6.21 The aim was to encourage residents to go to the SANG for dog walking and recreation, rather than visiting the SPA. When the Miniplan was first adopted, the identified capacity of SANG at Farnham Park was 10.9 hectares. That capacity was soon exhausted and a new Avoidance Strategy was adopted on 15 December 2009. It provides an additional 3.45ha of SANG (Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace) in Farnham Park.

6.22 The Council has established an approach so it may determine planning applications for residential development in the Farnham area on the basis that they do not have a significant effect on the Special Protection Area. The Avoidance Strategy provides guidance to developers in relation to the level of avoidance measures that the Council expects to see incorporated within planning applications in the light of Natural England's advice. In this instance, "avoidance measures" means providing or contributing towards Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and contributing towards a programme of strategic access management and monitoring of the SPA.

Setting Provision Standards

6.23 The provision standards have been set taking into account the current provision, information from landowners, consultation responses and likely future needs.

Quantity Standards

6.24 The audit shows that there are at least 5,800 ha of natural and semi natural greenspaces in Waverley. This equates to a provision of 49 ha per 1,000 people and is significantly higher than other Boroughs in the area. (Mole Valley 34ha per 1000 people; Elmbridge - 9.86ha per 1,000 people; Epsom and Ewell - 11.09ha per 1,000.)

6 Natural / Semi- Natural Greenspace

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6.25 Waverley does have a significant amount of woodland, having about 31% coverage which is the highest of any district in the country. Only woodlands that have an element of public access have been included in the audit.

6.26 Respondents to the general survey are broadly satisfied with the amount of natural and semi natural greenspaces and the results, together with the data captured would indicate that the provision in the Borough is 'about right.' Using population forecasts and an assuming that there is no loss of land from within this typology, there will still be 44ha per 1000 people in 2026.

6.27 In terms of the quantity of natural/ semi natural green space the results of the study show that a there is a significant level of land available across much of the Borough, although there is a greater concentration of larger sites in the western half of the Borough (Frensham and Thursley Commons) Much of this land is protected through national and local designations and it is unlikely that any significant loss to development of any such protected land type will be seen in the next 20 years.

6.28 Access on foot to the extensive areas of common land in Waverley is protected by the Countryside and Rights Of Way Act 2000 even where privately owned. Further detail by area will be contained within Annex A when completed.

6.29 There are two main standards which relate to the provision of natural/ semi-natural green space. These are the Woodland Trust's standard for woodland areas, and English Nature's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt).

6.30 The Woodland Trust recommends standards for the provision of woodland areas with different catchments for different size sites. They suggest that:

- No person should live more than 500m from at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 2ha in size
- There should be at least one area of accessible woodland of no less than 20ha within 4km (8km round-trip) of people's homes

6.31 This study has not distinguished between woodland and other forms of natural and semi-natural green spaces, but significant areas are wooded and this is a useful guide against which to assess the levels.

6.32 English Nature's standards are:

- An accessible natural green space of at least 2ha in size, no more than 300m (5 minutes) walk from home. (Map 6.1)
- 1ha of statutory Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 population
- There should be at least one accessible 20ha site within 2km of home (Map 6.2)
- There should be one accessible 100ha site within 5km of home

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

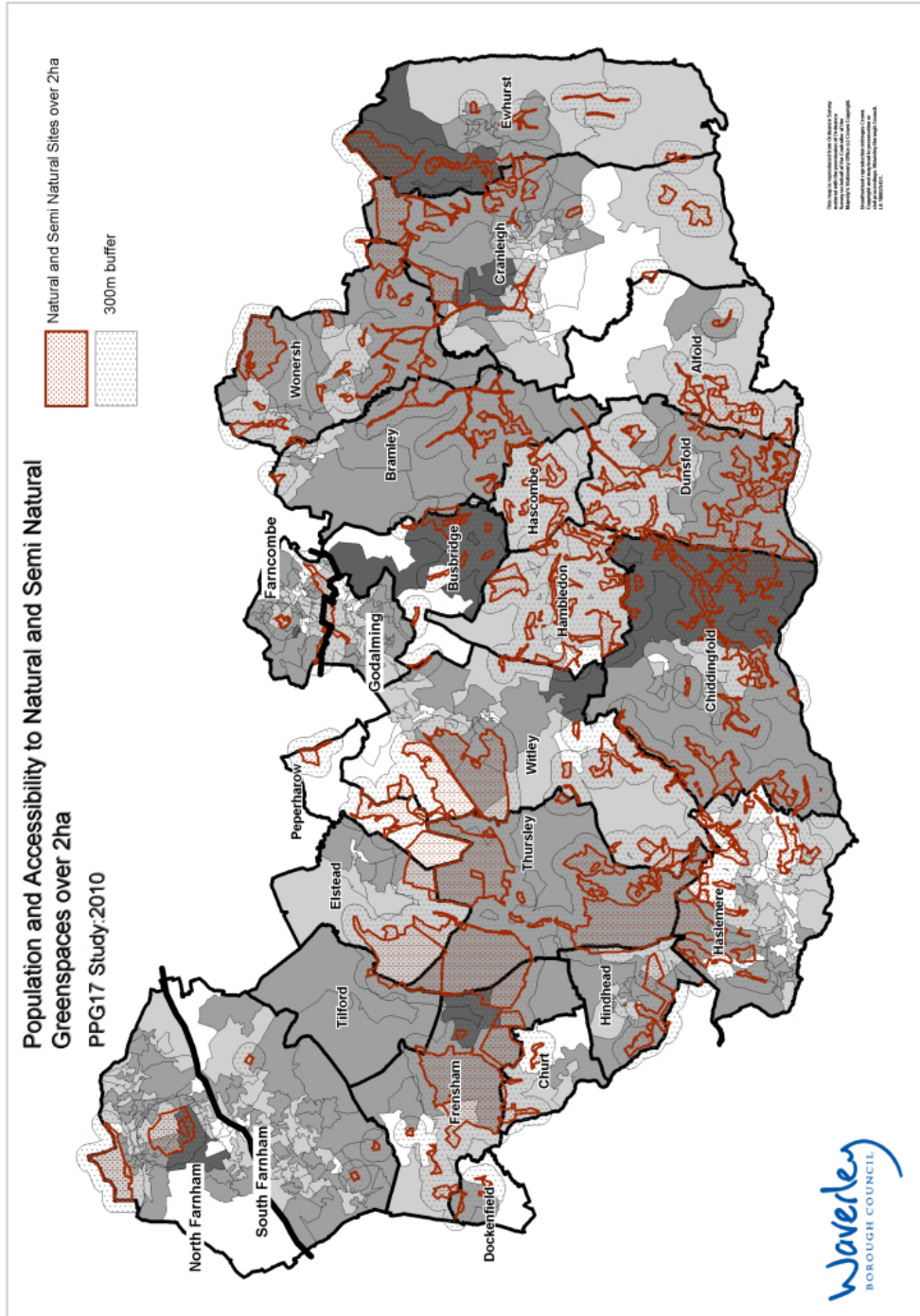
6.33 Analysis shows that there is 117 ha of Local Nature Reserves in Waverley, which equates to 0.98ha, per 1,000 population.

6.34 The following maps show the implications of the application of some aspects of these standards on Waverley.

6.35 Map 6.1 shows that there are many people, particularly in Farnham and Godalming for which accessible greenspace of more than 2ha is more than 300m away, however, the majority of sites in Waverley are over 2ha. It is not considered likely to be possible or practical to provide new space of this type in the urban areas as it is opportunity lead and there are limited, if any, opportunities in these areas.

6 Natural / Semi- Natural Greenspace

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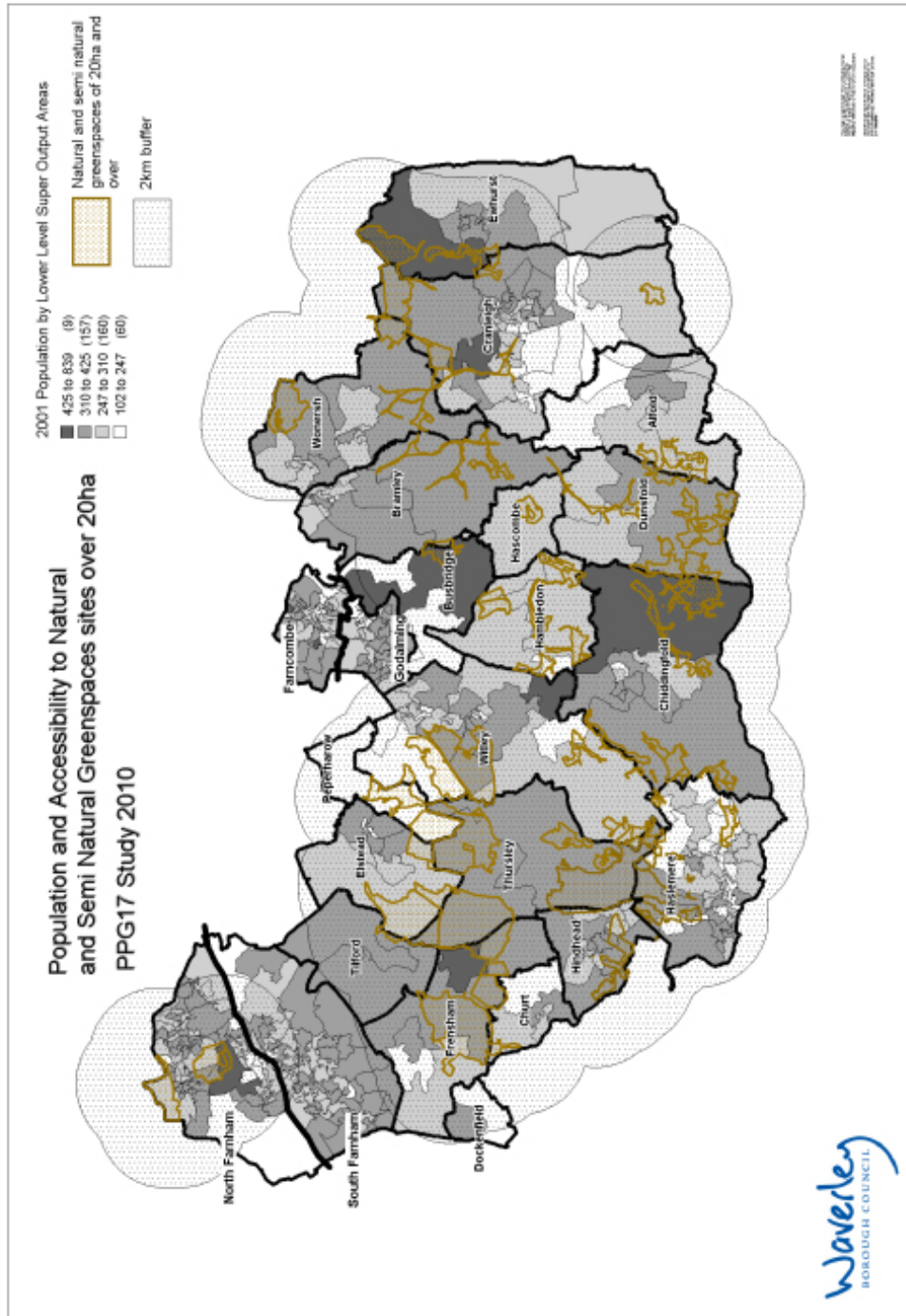


Map 6.1 Access to Natural and Semi Natural Spaces of over 2ha

6.36 Map 6.2 shows sites over 20ha in size with a 2km buffer. This shows clearly that while the rural area of the borough has good coverage, the residents of South Farnham and Farncombe and Godalming have little or no provision of this type of open space. The far south- eastern corner of Ewhurst appears deficient, but this has fewer residents, who may also have access to private open land and there are a number of properties in large plots as well as farmland or equestrian facilities. This also doesn't take account of natural and semi natural space land over the county boundary such as Alice Holt Forest, to which those in South Farnham are closest.

6 Natural / Semi- Natural Greenspace

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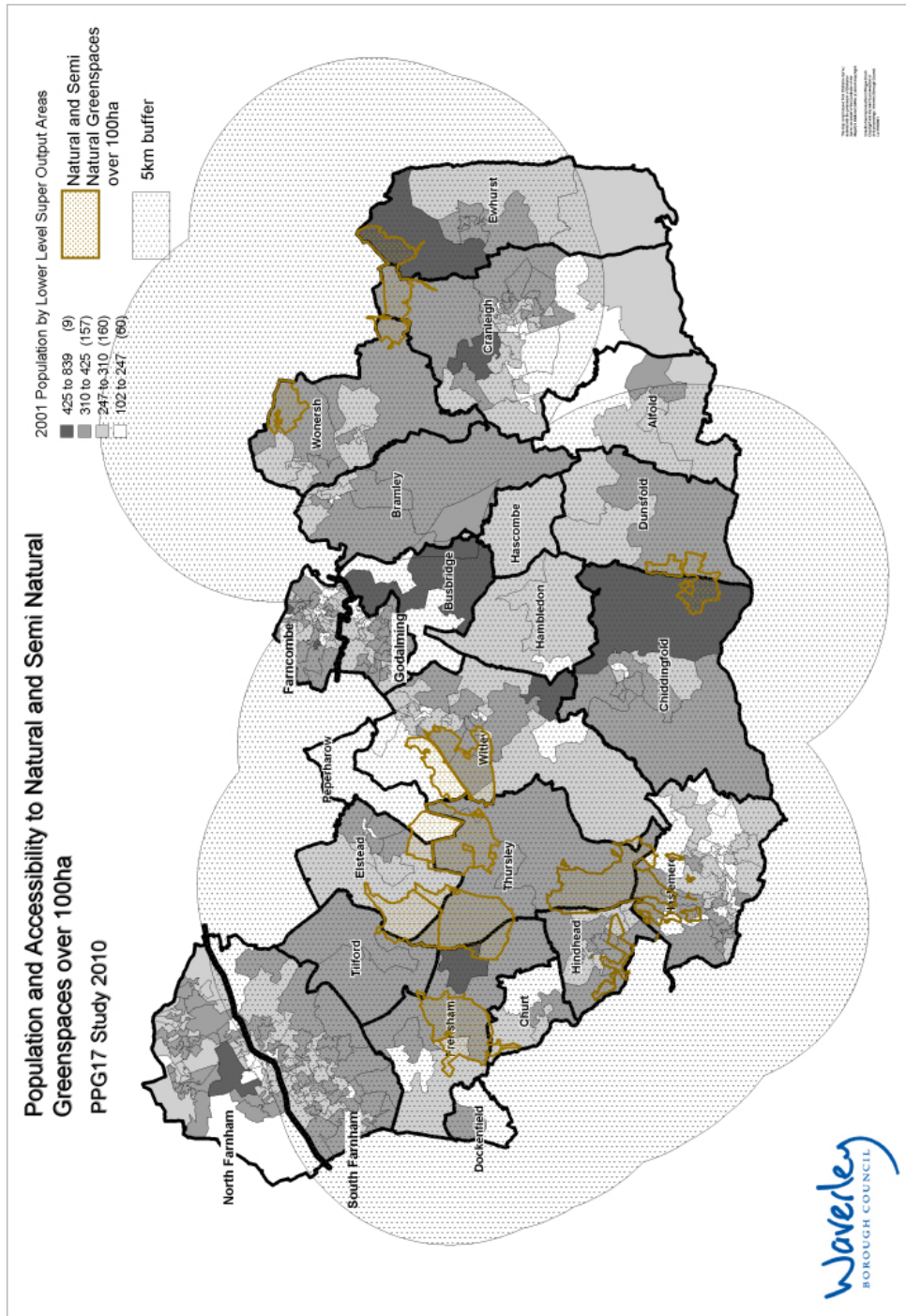


Map 6.2 Access to Natural and Semi Natural Greenspaces over 20ha

6.37 Map 6.3 shows that the majority of the Borough has well in excess of the standard of sites of over 100ha, which provide a variety of habitats and areas to walk. The vast majority of the Borough is within 5km, and this does not include such sites as listed in para 5.14, which if plotted would show that the whole borough does have access to such sites.

6 Natural / Semi- Natural Greenspace

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Map 6.3 Access to Natural and Semi Natural Greenspaces over 100ha

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6.38 In terms of the remaining standard, Waverley has two sites of over 500ha (Elstead and Thursley Commons and Hindhead Common) and a 20km buffer encompasses the whole of the Borough and beyond.

6.39 The A3 Hindhead Improvement Scheme (6.5 km) which was completed in 2011, created a continual dual carriageway link between London and Portsmouth. The site posed a number of environmental and ecological constraints as the route passes through areas of Ancient Woodland, a Site of Special Scientific Interest, Special Protected Areas and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The area also provides a habitat for a range of reptiles, mammals and birds, including a number of protected species such as adder, dormice, badgers and rare heathland birds.

6.40 The aim of the design, planning and execution of the road works was to enhance heathland and woodland habitat for a wide range of species. Most importantly the scheme has re-unite the two severed halves of the Devil's Punchbowl Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This will mean that the species within the nature reserve will be able to migrate far more freely from one part to another and the re-united habitat will be far more viable. In addition new heathland habitat will be created and this is important since over 80% of lowland heath in Britain has been lost in modern times.

6.41 The major landscape gain will be the removal of the old A3 from the Devil's Punchbowl within the heart of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Extensive woodland planting and heathland recreation will take place. Landscape proposals have been drawn up and address the following principles:

- Mitigation of visual impact through integrated landscape/engineering design of new roads, road intersections and portals.
- Preservation of strategic views and of the quality of the local landscape.
- Design of new landscaping to ensure that its future long-term management is viable.
- Appropriate design to reinforce local landscape character.
- The completion of the tunnel should effectively halve the noise in that area and so restore tranquillity to the beauty spot.

6.42 Further information about the environmental aspects of the tunnel is available from the [Highways Agency](#)

6.43 As a result of analysing the information no quantity standard has been set as it is felt that there is clearly no need to require natural/ semi-natural green space as a result of future development, and that in terms of quantity it will have little impact on overall levels. It is important to continue to protect this land as open space or as a recreational facility, most of which is covered by high-level national and environmental policies for its quality and importance. The level of publicly accessible natural/ semi-natural green spaces is intrinsic to the character of the Borough and not only serves a local need but also for attracts visitors from further afield.

6 Natural / Semi- Natural Greenspace

Waverley Borough Council | Waverley Open Space, Sport and Recreation Study

Quality Standards

6.44 There are no national standards for the quality of natural/ semi-natural green spaces; however, the Countryside Agency has stated that such land should be managed to conserve or enhance its rich landscape, biodiversity, heritage and local customs. The vast majority of this land type within the Borough is managed by organisations with remits to protect and enhance the environment, such as the National Trust, the Surrey Wildlife Trust, Natural England and Waverley Borough Council. As a result all of these sites are managed to ensure that they are protected for the future.

6.45 The quality of natural and semi natural greenspaces is considered good or very good by 81.9% of people.

6.46 Only Chiddingfold and Ewhurst Parish Councils thought that their natural and semi natural greenspaces were average; the others that responded rate them as good or very good.

Quality Standard - A natural open space with a focus on the retention and/or enhancement of natural features and conservation of flora and fauna, assisted where appropriate by the use of education facilities such as interpretation boards, leaflets, walks and talks. They should be clean, litter free, well signed and with clear paths.

Accessibility

6.47 62% of respondents favoured walking to natural/ semi-natural greenspaces, with 45% willing to walk less than 10 minutes to use this type of space. When extended to travel times of less than 20 minutes, results do not vary much across the open space types. 32% opted to travel by car.

6.48 The assessment of general accessibility of natural/ semi-natural green space made by Parish and Town Councils was mixed. Most rated access as good or average. Godalming Town Council stating specifically that access to the Lammas Lands is poor.

6.49 PPG17 recommends that it is best to define catchments by using the distance 75 – 80% of users are willing to travel. Respondents were asked how far in minutes they should be expected to travel in order to access natural/ semi-natural green space using their preferred method of transport. For this survey the preferred method of travel was walking, with 45% indicating that they would only expect to walk within 10 minutes and 42% for up to 20 minutes. Therefore a threshold of approximately 15 minutes walk will be used. This equates to a straight line distance of approximately 800m.

Accessibility Standard – 15-minute walk, approximately 800m

Applying the Standards

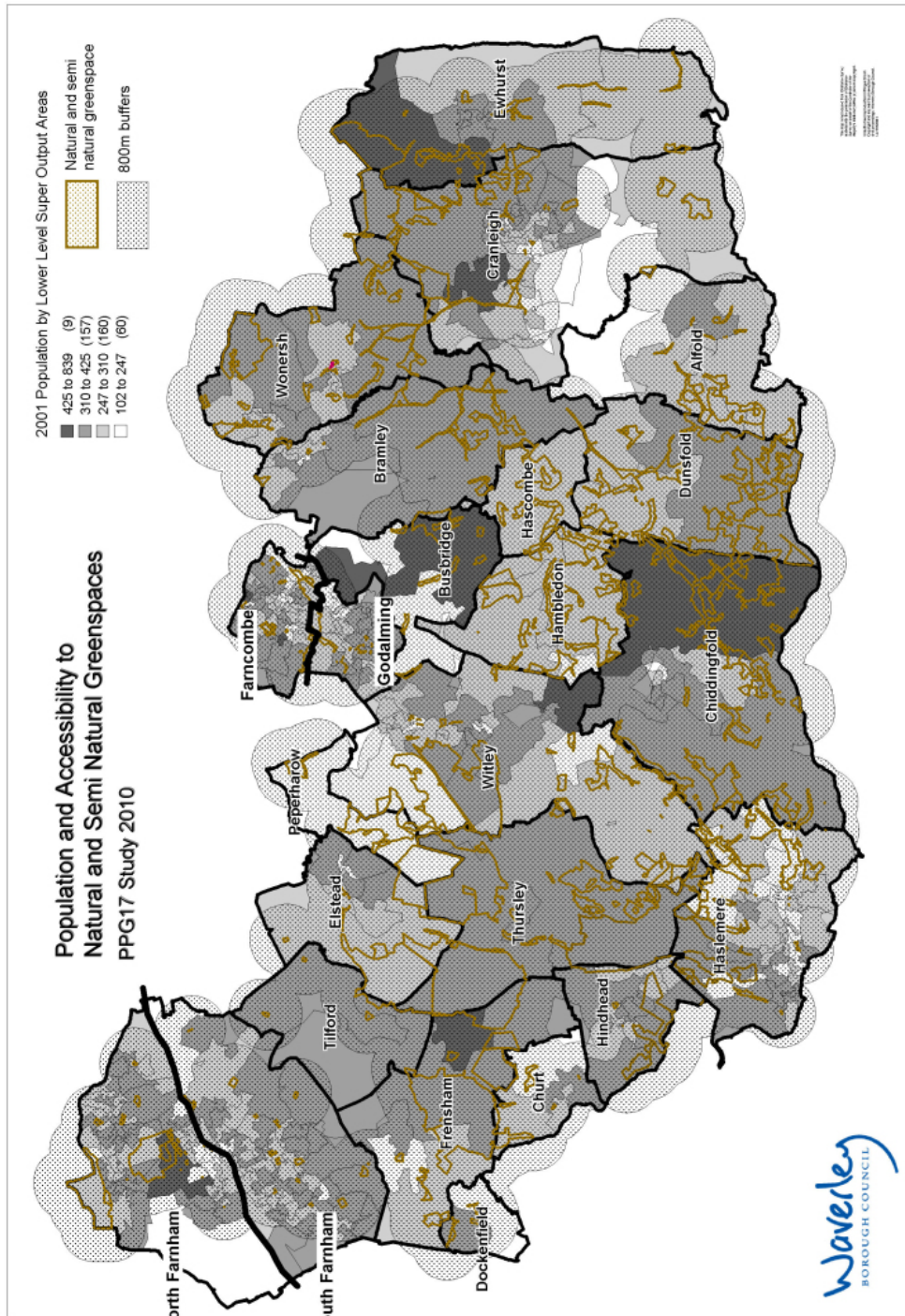
6.50 There is a substantial amount of natural and semi natural greenspace in Waverley, particularly in the western part of the borough. Much of this land is protected through national and local designations and is unlikely to be lost over the next 20 years. Further detail by area will be contained in Annex A.

6.51 The quality of all national and semi natural greenspace is considered to be good and/or (in the case of SSSIs) favourable or improving. Some areas are the subject of Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreements, which aim to deliver significant environmental benefits in high priority situations and areas.

6.52 Map 6.4 shows the catchment area of all natural and semi natural greenspaces in Waverley with an 800m buffer. It shows clearly that accessibility to natural and semi natural greenspace on foot is very good for almost the whole borough. The areas which have least accessibility have some of the lowest populations in Waverley, but also have access to a variety of other types of open space both in Waverley and in adjoining boroughs.

6 Natural / Semi- Natural Greenspace

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Map 6.4 Accessibility to Natural and Semi Natural Greenspaces

Policy Options

6.53 The Companion Guide to PPG17 suggests that planning for new natural and semi-natural green spaces in established urban areas has to be largely opportunity-led. The Council is not aware of any plans to provide further natural and semi-natural green spaces within the Borough; however, the National Trust, Surrey Wildlife Trust and other such organisations can from time to time be given land to manage. Due to the good level of high quality provision across the Borough it is not felt necessary to seek to supply further such sites even in light of the slight increase in development anticipated over the next 20 years. Only one policy options is suggested:

- Make the best use of the resources available in the Borough and seek intensification / multi-use of existing sites, for example, some areas of natural/ semi-natural green space in areas closely related to the population may double as, or accommodate, amenity green space, children's play areas etc; however, this may be contrary to other objectives, such as quiet enjoyment or conservation work. This is not necessarily an entirely planning policy issue and there would need to be a partnership between organisations on these more land management issues.

6.54 In addition, if all existing open space, sports and recreation facilities identified in the PPG17 Assessment are protected from development, proposals for re-development to a non open space, sports and recreation based use should first be required to demonstrate that the site is surplus to requirements and unsuitable for all other typologies, not just its existing use. This is due to the identified deficiencies in some typologies and the limited opportunities available to accommodate new facilities across the Borough particularly in the built-up areas and across much of the countryside due to the significant constraints (both physical and policy related).

6 Natural / Semi- Natural Greenspace

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Key Actions

- The Council will continue to manage its sites providing a balance between biodiversity and public access. It will:
 - Implement site management plans
 - Reduce the frequency of grass cutting to encourage wildlife
 - Improve public access routes by mowing meandering grass paths
 - Develop glades and paths through woodland and scrub
 - Create zoned areas by water bodies to allow managed public access but also provide undisturbed areas for wildlife
 - Promote responsible dog walking through the Dog Walkers Code of Conduct, to avoid the reduction in wildlife value of natural/ semi-natural green space
 - Link sites to areas of population through green corridors (see part 6)
 - Raise awareness of natural/ semi-natural green space on residents doorsteps and appropriate behaviour in order to conserve wildlife
- The Council will seek to bring its housing amenity open space with substantial woodland cover into appropriate natural/ semi-natural green space management.
- Improve biodiversity and public access to sites

Green Corridors 7

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Study

7 Green Corridors

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Definition

Green corridors include river and canal banks, cycleways and other rights of way. The primary purpose of this type of open space is to provide opportunities for walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel, and opportunities for wildlife migration.

Background

7.1 Local Authorities, through Rights of Way Improvement Plans, and other measures, should encourage access to the countryside particularly by maintaining, enhancing and promoting Public Rights of Way. They should also identify opportunities and plan for routes within and between settlements, seeking to reduce car use; and, where possible make new routes multi-functional to allow pedestrians, horses and cyclists to use them.

7.2 Surrey County Council, who are responsible for the Public Rights of Way network have produced a Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾. It states that large numbers of local residents, visitors and tourists use the Surrey rights of way network. Walkers are the largest group of users and many use the rights of way network frequently. Rights of way are particularly important in enabling those without a car to access local services. Cyclists are the second largest group after walkers; mountain biking is particularly popular in the Surrey Hills.

7.3 Waverley adopted its Cycling Plan SPD in April 2005.^(iv) The aim of the Cycling Plan is to increase the levels of cycling in Waverley so as to help to achieve the cycle-related targets in the Surrey Local Transport Plan. This is promoted through a number of objectives, each of which is supported by specific actions in the related Action Plan.

7.4 Horse riding is very significant in Surrey where there is estimated to be more than 20,000 horses.



Picture 7.1 Wey Navigation at Godalming

iii Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Surrey: November 2007

iv Waverley Cycling Plan SPD

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7.5 Surrey has an extensive rights of way network and considerable areas of open access land (land accessible to the public under the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, and access agreements with private landowners), registered commons, heathland and downland. Much of the access land is in the ownership of public bodies - the County Council and Borough councils, the Ministry of Defence and charities; the National Trust and Surrey Wildlife Trust. The Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is particularly popular for open-air recreation, and is an attraction for tourists.

7.6 The Rights of Way Improvement Plan survey results in 2006 suggest that there is a public demand for circular routes, adequate waymarking, multi-user routes and more information. There are some routes specifically designed for those with mobility difficulties. It is estimated that 20% of the population has some sort of disability and with an ageing population this is a growing issue.

7.7 The overall aim of the Improvement Plan is, 'to enable the rights of way network adequately to provide for the needs of walkers, cyclists, equestrians and those with mobility difficulties'.

7.8 Five key objectives to secure this aim have been identified:

- to improve accessibility to services, facilities and the wider countryside along rights of way
- to improve connectivity of rights of way to reduce severance
- to improve the quality of the rights of way network
- to increase recreational enjoyment
- to secure coordinated implementation of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan within resources available.

7.9 The quality of the rights of way network in Surrey is variable - not only in terms of the conditions of surfaces and structures (stiles, gates, bridges, etc) but also the surrounding environment - including overgrowing vegetation and views of the landscape. Rights of way near to where people live are often heavily used but also under greatest threat of neglect and abuse. The Improvement Plan proposes to target improvements both to routes and the surroundings of these rights of way. It is also proposed to work with the local planning authorities to ensure planning policies and new developments enhance existing routes and, where appropriate, create new ones. Particular benefits can be gained from the creation of greenways - routes which give access to the wider countryside and destinations (such as work, shops, recreational & social activities) from where people live, without the need for a car.

Consultation Results

The General Survey

7.10 The results of the survey show that Green Corridors are the third most important type of open space in the Borough, with 95% of respondents considering them to be important or very important. The Downs Link north of Cranleigh was assessed to be the site of highest value in the Borough among those who responded.

7.11 Over the last 12 months respondents used green corridors:

- Daily 16.9%
- Weekly 38.5%
- Monthly 23%
- Occasionally 21.6%

7.12 64% of respondents thought that the amount of green corridor space was right, while a sizeable proportion (30.1%) thought that there was too little. Most of those concerned that there was too little came from Haslemere, South Farnham and North Farnham.

7.13 Green corridors are rated as being of very good or good quality by 62.2% of respondents and average by 29.2%.

7.14 The Towns and Parishes that responded all thought that provision was right, but Witley, Churt and Ewhurst all stated that the quality of these spaces was only average, while others rated them more highly.

Current Provision in Waverley

7.15 There is an extensive network of Public Rights of Way across Waverley, particularly given its rural character and the significant areas of natural and semi natural greenspaces. They have not been assessed, as the sheer number would make this impractical. In addition they are maintained by Surrey County Council and regularly monitored. They amount to 789kms (of which 438kms are footpaths, and 320kms bridleway).

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7.16 The audit identified several sites owned and maintained by Waverley Borough Council that are primarily for the purpose of providing green space for the movement of people and the environment, and these include the various riverside walks in Farnham.

7.17 There are also two long distance footpaths that run through the Borough: the North Downs Way and the Greensand Way. The Downslink between Cranleigh and Guildford runs north to south, following the disused route of the railway which closed in 1967, and this is probably the most significant green corridor in the borough and a well-established route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders, linking the North Downs Way and South Downs Way. Sustrans National Cycle Network NCN 22 runs through Waverley as well as proposed local Scholar's Greenway (a cross-town, attractive and safe route which school children, parents and students would use to cycle and walk to school and college) and Weyside Way, promoted by Transition Town Farnham. The Sussex Border path lies to the south, and parts of this run through Waverley.



Picture 7.2 Downslink at Bramley

7.18 There are extensive lengths of roadside common or waste of the manor in Waverley, particularly in the east of the borough. As these are not easily accessible some have not been included in this report; however they are important wildlife corridors and rural landscape features.

7.19 Canals and river corridors are an example of providing a valuable 'wildlife corridor' or connection between a network of habitats across the Borough. Planning Policy Statement 9 recognises their value as access route to open space and sites of biodiversity importance. In Waverley, the River Wey and its tributaries, the Wey and Arun Canal, the River Wey and Godalming Navigations, and the River Blackwater provide a valuable asset for the landscape as well as a multifunctional role for recreation, leisure and nature conservation. These river corridors and canals contribute to the quality of the environment and quality of life for residents in both urban and rural areas. The River Wey flows through Farnham and Godalming and makes an important contribution to character of these areas. In addition the wider network of watercourses need to be acknowledged as providing valuable environments and connections between sites of biodiversity importance. The Wey and Arun Canal stretches from Bramley in the north to Dunsfold in the south and beyond Waverley's boundaries. Currently only a small amount of the canal within Waverley is navigable although the Wey and Arun Canal Trust have the aim of restoring the direct water link between the South Coast and London, and restoration work has begun on a stretch of the canal in Bramley.

Setting Provision Standards

7.20 The provision standards have been set taking into account the current provision, national and local guidance, consultations and likely future needs.

Quantity

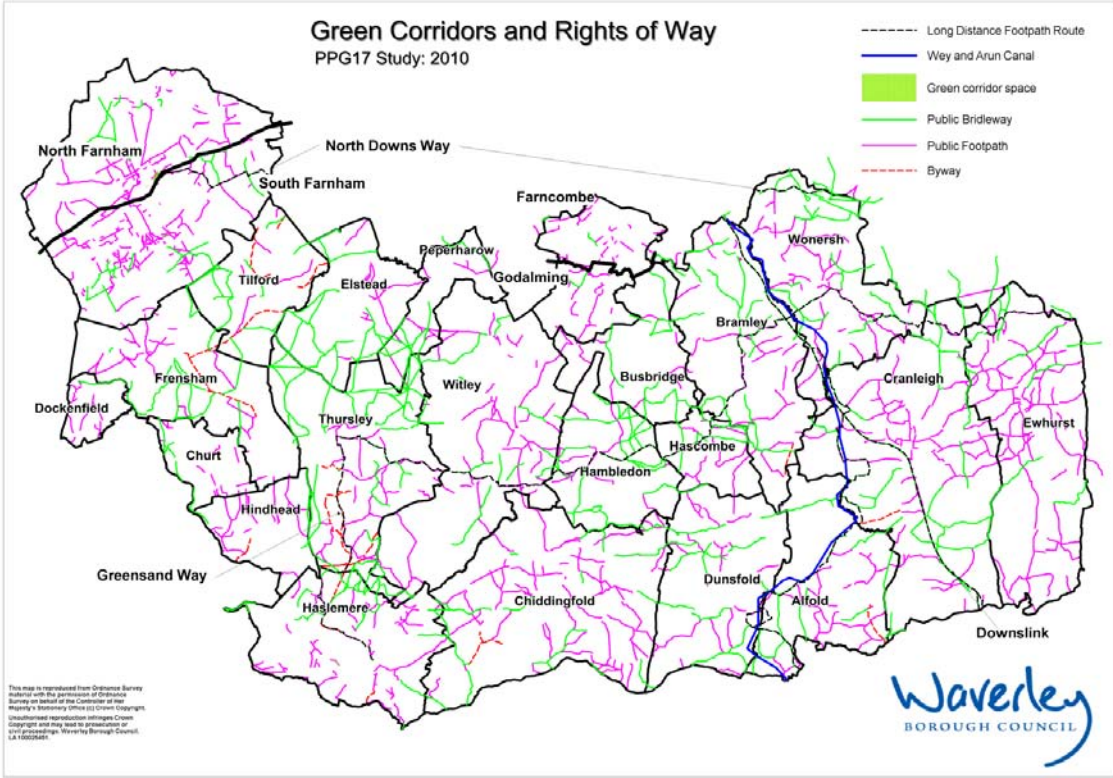
7.21 PPG17's companion guide states that: *"The need for green corridors arises from the need to promote environmentally sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling within urban areas. This means that there is no sensible way of stating a provision standard, just as there is no way of having a standard for the proportion of the land in an area which it will be desirable to allocate for roads"*.

7.22 The companion guide therefore recommends that: *"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 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"*.

7.23 This approach is to some extent already reflected in the Surrey County Council ROW Improvement Plan aims and in national planning policy guidance.

7.24 Map 7.1 shows Green Corridors and the ROW network in Waverley together with portions of the long distance paths within the area, and the route of the Downs Link. As recommended by the companion guide, no standard is proposed. Map 7.2 is extracted from the Waverley Cycle Plan and shows the existing routes and desire lines.

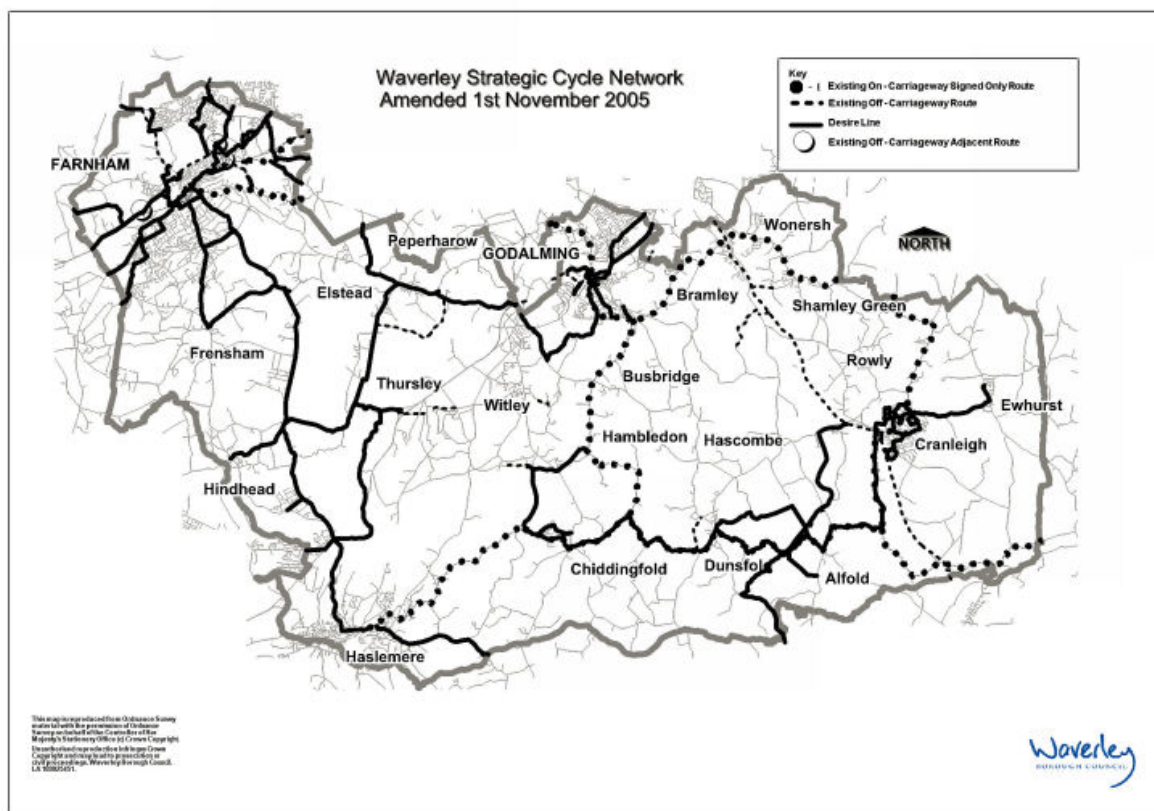
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Map 7.1 Green Corridors and Rights of Way

7 Green Corridors

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Map 7.2 Waverley Cycle Network (Cycle Plan 2005)

Quality Standards

7.25 The overall result of the survey shows a general satisfaction with the quality of the green corridors. Respondents did indicate that some of the footpaths in Cranleigh, and 'canals and riverbanks, and the Farnham River Wey' were poor, but did not go into details about what made them so.

Quality Standard – Green corridors should be clean, litter free and clear to ensure that they are accessible. They should contribute to nature conservation particularly through the protection and enhancement of suitable planting and in urban areas enhance the linkages between green areas.

Accessibility Standards

7.26 The results show that most people (52%), walk to green corridors (most of which are footpaths). 29.7% of respondents go by car, while 15% cycle. 42% would walk less than 10 minutes to a green corridor, with 41.4% willing to travel up to 20 minutes away.

7.27 Responses for length of time expected to travel, and mode of travel to green corridor sites were similar across all areas of the Borough, however it was noted that a significantly higher number of respondents from Farncombe cycled to green corridor sites.

7.28 There is no realistic way of setting accessibility standards for green corridors as they are very much opportunity led, and there is already an extensive network. The Rights of Way Improvement Plan states that the County Council will particularly focus on the quality of the more heavily used footpaths near to urban areas and that opportunities need to be sought through the planning process to improve linkages or fund work (potentially including Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding) that may be needed. No accessibility standard has therefore been set.

Applying the Standards

7.29 Although no standard has been set, it is important to ensure that opportunities are not lost to improve connections to the rights of way network or other green corridors particularly where they arise through new development. It is important to ensure that there are excellent opportunities available to encourage people to walk, not only just for exercise but to reduce reliance on the private car. The Council will encourage contribution toward, or provide, opportunities to enhance the existing provision of green infrastructure, including designated sites, and improve the connection of existing open spaces.

7.30 The quality of green corridors is considered to be satisfactory by most respondents, and the County Council has a programme of maintenance and improvement works in place for Public Rights of Way. It has not been possible to survey the quality

of green corridors due to their extensive nature, and again much of this work is the responsibility of the County Council. However, a quality standard has been set which can be used to assess an established green corridor and potentially those in the vicinity of any new development to ensure that they are of an acceptable standard. In addition green corridors have an important part to play in linking areas of open space within built-up areas, providing a pleasant environment and wildlife corridors. This is reflected in the standard.

Policy Options

7.31 There are limited policy options available in terms of green corridors as most work is opportunity led and much is out of the direct control of the Borough Council. The exception to this is the Downs Link, which Waverley manages in partnership with the County Council. Waverley has also sought developer contributions towards footpaths and cycleway provision for major developments such as the housing scheme at Farnham Hospital.

7.32 It is considered important to work in partnership with relevant bodies such as Surrey County Council, Surrey Wildlife Trust, and National Trust. Green corridors within urban areas also help to connect areas of open space and then with the countryside. Although these links can be fragmented there are opportunities to enhance them through the greening of these routes particularly within urban areas, providing a more pleasant environment. This could also be assisted through ensuring that new development retains existing mature vegetation and hedgerows. This would also have beneficial implications for biodiversity.

7.33 The Rights of Way Improvement Plan can be used to assist the Borough in assessing the corridors against the priorities identified by the community along with improving the quality of other green corridors not under the control of the County. It must be also be recognised that there are many bridleways and that the needs of horse riders must be acknowledged where appropriate, particularly in relation to safety.

Key Actions

- **Support the work undertaken on green corridor sites and developing their links to population centres, particularly deliver the objectives outlined in the Downs Link Management Plan**
- **Seek to balance recreation needs with conservation needs within green corridor open space**
- **Promote green corridors to local residents as ideal ways to access open space areas and local facilities for the movement of people, and consequently reduce the need for motorised travel**

Outdoor Sports Facilities 8

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8 Outdoor Sports Facilities

Definition

This type of open space can be privately or publicly owned and have natural or artificial surfaces, including tennis courts, bowling greens, sports pitches, golf courses, athletics tracks, school and other institutional playing fields, and other outdoor sports areas. The primary purpose of this type of open space is to provide opportunities for participation in outdoor sports.

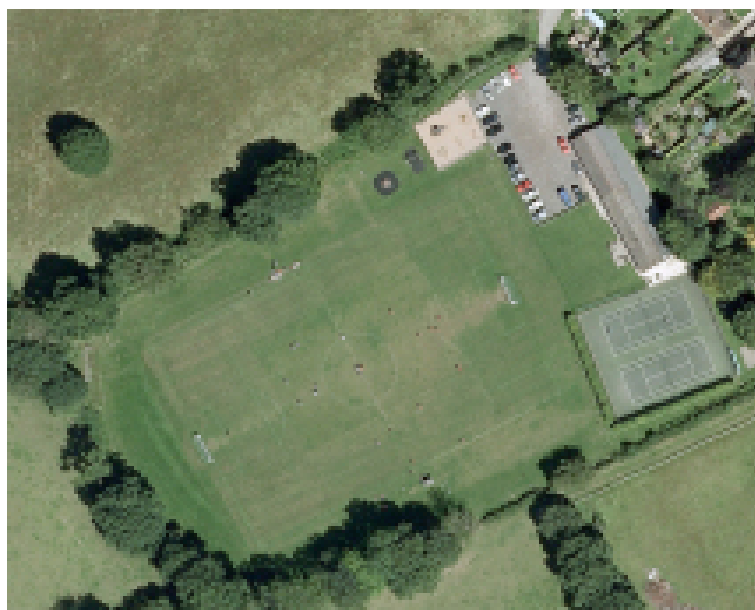
Background

8.1 Leisure and Lives is a core priority in the Council's Corporate Plan 2012 - 2015. The plan seeks to review the arrangements for the management of Waverley's sports pitches and recreation grounds, to ensure that local sports groups are given the greatest possible encouragement to take on devolved responsibility for their own local playing pitches.

8.2 The Waverley Local Plan (2002) Policy LT8 seeks to resist the loss of sports grounds and playing fields to development unless suitable alternative provision can be made.

8.3 The Waverley Playing Pitch Strategy was carried out in 2003, which identified current and projected shortfalls to 2013, and:

- Analysed the current level of pitch provision within the Borough
- Reviewed the quantity and quality of sports pitches across the Borough
- Identified the geographical spread of pitches
- Identified how facilities for pitch sports can be improved
- Identified the demand for pitches in the Borough



Picture 8.1 King George V Playing Field, Dunsfold

Future Work

8.4 Since the start of this PPG17 Study, it has been decided that the 2003 Playing Pitch Strategy should be updated during 2012. As such the current strategy as outlined in Local Plan Policy LT8 and guidance in national policy is to be continued until the results of the new strategy can be incorporated. The results of the PPG17 study survey

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are included here for information, as are the key results from the 2003 study. The comments received from respondents to the survey questions have been included as a useful indicator of what some residents currently feel about the quality, quantity and access to outdoor facilities in the Borough. An audit was carried out for the PPG17 and also identified tennis courts, golf courses and bowling greens in accordance with the definition of outdoor sports.

8.5 The Borough Council has appointed the Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) to carry out a study of the quality of those pitches owned by Waverley and the Town and Parish Councils during 2012. This should result in a priority list of sites for improvement works.

Consultation Results

8.6 In the general survey, respondents indicated that outdoor sports facilities are the 8th most important type of open spaces in the borough, with 75.8% suggesting that outdoor sports facilities are important or very important.

8.7 Over the 12 months preceding the survey, respondents visited an outdoor sports facility:

- Daily 4.4%
- Weekly 28.5%
- Monthly 17.4%
- Occasionally 49.7%

8.8 63.1% of respondents considered that the amount of outdoor sports facilities is about right, while 26.8% feel that there is too little provision. Postcode analysis shows that the latter respondents mainly come from North Farnham, South Farnham, Godalming, and Farncombe, while a smaller, though a significant number came from Hindhead and Witley.

8.9 Outdoor sports facilities are rated as being of good or very good quality by 48.8% of respondents, and average by 42.2%.

Clubs and Organisations and Schools Surveys

8.10 Questionnaires were sent out to clubs, organisations and schools. Meetings were held with many of the clubs and organisations, and their comments have been noted for the review of the Playing Pitch Strategy.

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Quantity Standards

8.11 Very few comments were received about outdoor sports facilities in the Borough from the general survey, however the pitches in Farnham and Godalming are considered good or very good by 63.2% and 61.1% respectively. A low percentage thought that the pitches were poor or very poor, and the majority of these respondents also came from Farnham.

8.12 Most of the Parish Councils that responded thought that provision was right and that there were enough suitable facilities for their needs; however, Chiddingfold thought that there was too little provision in the parish. There is a lot of local interest in sports, but little space available to provide facilities nearer to the centre of the village. The school sports field in Bramley is no longer used by the school and is under the ownership of the County Council, which has made no decision about its future use.

8.13 The 2003 audit identified 245 playing pitches in Waverley. This figure included all known public, private, school and other pitches whether or not they were in secured in public use. They comprised:

- 84 adult football pitches
- 31 junior football pitches
- 37 mini soccer pitches
- 43 cricket pitches
- 22 adult rugby union pitches
- 3 junior rugby union pitches
- 17 grass hockey pitches
- 8 full sized synthetic turf pitches

8.14 The total area of these pitches was estimated at 205.5 ha.

8.15 Of the 245 pitches identified, 169 (69%) were secured for the local community.

8.16 The research findings of the 2003 PMP Playing Pitch Strategy showed the following results in respect of the quantity of pitches. Projections relate to 2013:

Cranleigh

- Current shortfall of junior football and cricket pitches
- Projected shortfall of junior football and cricket pitches

Farnham

- Current shortfall of junior football and cricket pitches, as well as adult and junior rugby pitches
- Projected significant shortfall of junior football and cricket pitches, large shortfall of adult and junior rugby pitches

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Godalming

- Current shortfall of junior rugby pitches
- Projected shortfall of junior football, cricket and junior rugby pitches

Haslemere

- Projected shortfall of junior football and junior rugby pitches
- Projected shortfall of junior football, cricket and junior rugby pitches

8.17 The study recommended that all existing playing fields are protected with consideration only given to disposal where alternative high quality provision is made available.

8.18 It also recommended that any new provision should be considered in multi pitch site format. Such sites are cost effective in terms of maintenance and ancillary facilities and encourage a sporting atmosphere. There is also the increased likelihood of obtaining external investment for multi use sites.

8.19 Until a more specific standard may be specified as a result of the revised Playing Pitch Strategy, the National Benchmark Standard recommendation for all outdoor sport will continue to be used.

Quantity Standard – 1.60 ha per 1,000 population

Quality Standards

8.20 The 2003 Playing Pitch Strategy identified a number of quality issues and areas in need of improvement. Those most frequently highlighted by clubs in Farnham, Godalming, Haslemere and Cranleigh were:

- Need for improved changing facilities
- Improved drainage to pitches
- Levelling and marking of pitches

8.21 Specific pitches were identified and these issues will be reconsidered in the review of the 2003 strategy.

8.22 In the current PPG17 study, 9% said that they were poor or very poor, and the majority of these comments came equally from north and south Farnham.

8.23 The Waverley Cultural Strategy 2009 -2014 highlighted the following in relation to sports provision by voluntary and private sectors:

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8.24 Sports club facilities, both indoor and outdoor in the area, include a mix of publicly and privately-owned sites. In both sectors the responses pointed to a general need for improvement; partly because of constant use over the years and partly to accommodate expansion plans. Money, or the lack of it, was a recurring theme, with many clubs looking for funding partners to supplement their own resources, usually a combination of member fees and subscriptions and small grants and donations. Even where special fund-raising efforts were being made this was still felt to be inadequate. Yet the responses revealed that a number of clubs are already actively working with partners such as Waverley Borough Council in trying to achieve their ambitions.

8.25 A multi-sports and leisure club facility with outdoor tennis courts and pool are currently being constructed at Monkton Lane, Farnham (commenced 2011) This will allow the relocation of the Farnham Rugby Club and is also providing four playing fields, and pavilion as well as the erection of a multi-use games area and the provision of a bowls green. This development may also address some of the issues identified for improvement in the Playing Pitch Strategy.

8.26 A general quality standard is proposed:

Quality Standard – Outdoor sports facilities should be clean and litter free, the pitches and playing surfaces should be maintained, safe, level and with good drainage. Toilets, changing facilities and parking should be of an acceptable standard and provided where possible. Bins should be provided to reduce the occurrences of litter and dog fouling problems.

Accessibility Standards

8.27 Fields in Trust note in Planning and Design for Sport and Play, that local outdoor sports should be located where they will be accessible on foot, by bicycle or public transport. While it suggests that distance thresholds, which identify the maximum distance that typical users can reasonably be expected to travel are a useful measure of accessibility, it also notes that time is more important to users than distance in many instances, and so travel by motorised private transport is still, and will remain an important measure.

8.28 PPG17 recommends that it is best to define catchments by using the distance 75% - 80% of users are willing to travel. Respondents were asked how far in minutes they should be expected to travel in order to access amenity greenspace using their preferred method of transport. For this survey the favoured method of transport was driving and the 75th percentile was within the 10 to 20 minute drive category; this category also received the greatest percentage of responses.

8.29 51.7% of respondents travel by car, while 41.2% will walk.

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8.30 33.3% suggested that they would only travel up to 10 minutes away. 53.9% of respondents indicated that they would be prepared to travel for up to 20 minutes to an outdoor sports venue, and this is not surprising given that people are likely to have to travel to away matches. 10.6% said that they would be prepared to travel up to 30 minutes away. A standard will be set once the Playing Pitch Strategy has been reviewed and a detailed audit with clubs undertaken. In the meantime, it is suggested that the FIT accessibility standards be used as follows:

Type of Space	Standard
Playing pitches	Within 1.2km of all dwellings in major residential areas
Tennis (community tennis courts)	Within 20 minutes travelling time (walking in urban areas, by car in rural areas)
Bowls	One green within 20 minutes travel time (walking in urban areas, by car in rural areas)

Table 8.1 : Accessibility Standards

Policy Options

8.31 On the basis of the deficiencies identified in the 2003 Playing Pitch strategy, financial contributions will continue to be sought from developments across the Borough, either through the Council's adopted Planning Infrastructure tariff or other Section 106 funding to support improvements in sites. In addition, if all existing open space, sports and recreation facilities identified in the PPG17 Assessment are protected from development, proposal for re-development to a non open space, sports and recreation based use should first be required to demonstrate that the site is surplus to requirements and unsuitable for all other leisure and recreational uses, not just its existing use, as in Policy LT8 of the Waverley Local Plan (2002). This should continue unless otherwise suggested through the Playing Pitch Strategy review.

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Key Actions

These are general actions which were identified in the 2003 Strategy and through recent meeting with local sports clubs and organisations. The Review of the Playing Pitch Strategy should incorporate these aspirations:

- Revision of Borough- wide Playing Pitch Strategy in 2011
- Secure and promote the use of further school sites for community use, particularly where deficiencies have been identified (2003 Strategy)
- Support aims for sport and leisure contained in the Waverley Cultural Strategy 2009 - 2014
- Use the forthcoming Sports Turf Research Institute (STRI) study to ascertain the quality of playing pitches to derive a priority list of sites for improvement works and identify those that could potentially receive a proportion of Planning Infrastructure Contribution or Section 106 funding from new developments to enable playing pitch improvements.
- Develop more robust provision and quality standards for playing pitches within an open space guidance document for Section 106 developments
- Standardise and formalise leasing arrangements with recreation ground committees on outdoor sports facility sites
- Leisure Service to engage in more regular consultation with outdoor sports facility users (particularly formal lease holders) as a means of maintaining playing pitch quality. (Identified as a major issue through consultation with formal users of Waverley Borough Council outdoor sports facilities)
- Formalise sporting activity on outdoor sport sites to encourage more effective use of the sites. The sites that have been identified through the PPG17 consultation with sports clubs include:
 - Broadwater Park (Godalming)
 - Holloway Hill Recreation Ground (Godalming)
 - Woolmer Hill Recreation Ground (Haslemere)
 - Haslemere Recreation Ground
 - Heath End Recreation Ground (Farnham)
 - Wrecclesham Recreation Ground (Farnham)
 - Bourne Recreation Ground (Farnham)
 - Rowledge Recreation Ground (Farnham)
- Any new provision should be considered in multi pitch site format, rather than at single site locations (2003 Strategy) to allow flexibility of activities and to make best use of the sites for a wide range of people.
- Seek to improve the overall quality of the setting of specific sports pitches and other activities through application for *Green Flag* accreditation for the following sites: