

London Borough of  
Barnet

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**Barnet Open Space,  
Sports and  
Recreational Facilities  
Assessment**

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Final Report

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background to the Assessment

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As an outer London borough, many parts of Barnet have relatively easy access to open countryside. However, people also need green spaces close to where they live. A network of well designed, well maintained open spaces, outdoor sports and recreational facilities is vital to the success of the borough as a place where people want to live, work and visit. The Borough's management of its open spaces is regarded amongst the best in the country and has been recognised through the borough's seven Green Flag Awards for 2007-2008.

Planning for open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities is now firmly part of the statutory planning process and national guidance is clear that it should be an integral part of planning how the borough as a whole will develop. Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 advises local authorities to draw up their own standards for open space, sports and recreation provision for inclusion within their Local Development Frameworks and highlights that these standards need to be based on a locally based assessment of needs. Such assessments allow local authorities to identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of facilities in their areas. They form the starting point for establishing an effective strategy for open space, sport and recreation at the local level and for effective planning through the development of appropriate policies in plans.

This assessment has been undertaken in the context of the preparation of the Local Development Framework and the need to provide a robust evidence base for policies relating to open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities.

Like most London Boroughs, Barnet has a relatively fixed supply of spaces for leisure and recreational use, which consists of provision that has been developed, acquired and gifted to the Council over a long period of time. For the most part therefore, the main emphasis is likely to be how to manage the Council's existing spaces more effectively and sympathetically, or how to improve the range of facilities provided within existing spaces in order to provide the residents of Barnet with a diverse range of green spaces and recreational opportunities, both managed and natural. However, there is some potential for new provision where there are major redevelopment opportunities. It is necessary, therefore, for the Council to have a clear understanding of open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities supply and demand in order to develop policies for provision in these areas. It is may also be possible for the Council to explore opportunities for alternative solutions such as opening up areas which currently do not have public access, where there are particularly acute shortages of provision.

This assessment contributes to the evidence base of the Local Development Framework (LDF) by providing:

- A robust audit of open space, outdoor sport and recreational facilities within the borough, classified in terms of their primary function and typology;
- An understanding of residents' perceptions and needs in relation to open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities;
- An understanding of any features or actions that might improve residents' enjoyment of open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities and encourage increased usage;
- Analysis of the spatial distribution of spaces and facilities, including areas of deficiency;
- Assessment of the accessibility of spaces and facilities in the borough by a range of modes;
- Analysis of areas of deficiency in terms of quantity, distribution and accessibility; and
- Assessment of the quality and value of open space and recreational facilities in order to identify priorities for improvement.

An Appendix Volume accompanies this report, containing all of the maps referred to within the assessment, as well as a full review of the policy, legislation and best practice guidance associated with open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities. The Volume also includes a report outlining the outcome of the two consultation events held as part of the assessment.

## **1.2 Objectives of the Assessment**

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This Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment seeks to provide the necessary information to support policies to protect and secure the existing open space network and its intrinsic values, while improving the quality and potential uses of open spaces to cater for increasing future demand arising from growth and the changing needs of the community.

An integrated and strategic approach to open space, outdoor sports and recreational facility planning is essential to safeguard the quality of life of the borough's residents. The study is an assessment of existing and future needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities, through a comprehensive audit of open space across the borough and consultation with the borough's local communities and open space users, leading ultimately to the development of standards for the provision and quality of parks across the Borough.

On the basis of the above, the objectives of the assessment are to provide:

- An understanding of the current use/demand for open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities within Barnet;
- An assessment of residents' and stakeholders' perceptions about Barnet's open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities, and ascertain if residents' needs are currently being met;
- Identification of any features or actions that would improve residents' enjoyment of open space and encourage increased open space usage in Barnet;
- A consistent approach to the protection and management of the Borough's significant landscapes, ecosystems, habitats and cultural heritage areas across the open space, outdoor sports and recreational facility network;
- Coordinated structuring of open space provision to further the objectives of the Core Strategy and other DPDs;
- Appropriate standards for particular types of open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities to ensure adequate future provision of accessible high quality open spaces and sports and recreation facilities meeting the needs and expectations of local communities;
- A consistent and strategic basis for assessing planning applications and a framework for assessing whether particular planning applications are complementary to the outcomes of this assessment;
- A framework for prioritising investments according to identified deficiencies; and
- A basis for negotiation for S106 Agreements and aligning funding priorities between London Borough of Barnet and other partners.

The recommendations of this study should be taken forward and developed by the Council into policies for open space and recreational facilities.

## **1.3 Spatial Structure of Barnet**

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Barnet is an outer London borough and, although some areas in the southern part of the borough are relatively dense and urban in character, the borough is generally renowned for its green, leafy and attractive suburban neighbourhoods and open spaces which range from

Hampstead Heath in the south to open countryside, woodlands and farms in the north of the borough.

Barnet is one of the greenest boroughs in London with a large proportion of the area within its boundary lying in the Green Belt (2,466 hectares – 28% of the borough), and Metropolitan Open Land (690 hectares – 8% of the borough). The borough has over 200 parks and open spaces, covering 848 hectares. Within the traditional suburbs, smaller areas of open space contribute to the green and leafy character of built up areas and provide residents with important local opportunities for leisure and recreation. All these open spaces help to define the character of the borough and contribute significantly to Barnet's unique identity, quality of life and social and economic well-being.

Barnet's open spaces are an important element of the Borough's character and careful protection of these assets is fundamental to the borough's spatial planning vision.

#### **1.4 The Spatial Strategy for Barnet – Three Strands Approach**

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Barnet is also the fastest growing outer London borough with over 32,000 new homes planned over the next 20 years. In order to ensure that this growth is accommodated in a way which preserves the green and suburban character that people find attractive, the Council has developed the Three Strands Approach, which is the planning and regeneration strategy underpinning the Core Strategy:

- Protect: the green lungs of north London provide by Green Belt, Metropolitan Open land and other valuable open spaces
- Enhance: the classic city-suburbs, conservation areas and town centres
- Growth – new communities in areas of the borough undergoing regeneration and strategic development, particularly in the west of the borough.

The strategy for growth is to target brownfield locations and regeneration areas in order to ensure that there is less pressure on Green Belt and the lower density suburbs. Barnet is part of an emerging growth corridor stretching from north-west London to Luton Airport along the M1/A1 corridor. There are significant opportunities for growth at the London end in Barnet with large development sites, in particular at Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon, Colindale and Mill Hill East.

Development within the key regeneration areas has a number of implications for the planning of open space outdoor sports and recreational facilities as the additional population will increase pressure on existing open spaces within these areas and create demand for new spaces and facilities. Large scale redevelopment also presents opportunities for creating new spaces. The principal growth areas and the implications of these for population growth and new open space provision are set out below and summarised in **Table 1**.

##### **1.4.1 Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon**

In December 2005 Barnet Council adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance a framework for the regeneration of the area – the *Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon Development Framework*. The outline planning application for the Brent Cross and Cricklewood area was submitted in March 2008. The existing Brent Cross Shopping Centre is to be enhanced and linked to a new town centre, involving the creation of 7,500 new homes and 22,000 new jobs, 3 schools, new health facilities, and investment of more than £400 million in improving transport. The scheme includes improvements to the River Brent and nearby areas of ecological interest, the creation of new parks and open spaces and improvements to Clitterhouse Playing Fields.

West Hendon is a major estate renewal to provide up to 2,171 new homes being undertaken in parallel but independently of the regeneration of Cricklewood/Brent Cross. Significant transportation improvements are also outlined in the proposal, including upgrading and new interchanges at Cricklewood railway station and improvements to A5/Cricklewood Lane and Cricklewood Lane/Claremont Road junctions.

A total of 8.5 ha of additional open space is proposed within the outline planning application for Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon. As well as extending existing spaces, such as Clitterhouse Playing Fields, a total of 9 new parks will also be created. More details of the proposed provision are outlined in Section 5.4.1 Subject to the applicants receiving approval for the application, development is predicted to start in 2011.

#### **1.4.2 Colindale**

Colindale is the borough's second largest Opportunity Area. An Area Action Plan for Colindale was recently submitted to Government and includes proposals to accommodate around 10,000 new homes. Colindale comprises a number of development opportunities, the most important being the redevelopment of Grahame Park Estate (which is to provide 1,770 new dwellings and has outline planning permission) and Beaufort Park (where planning permission has been granted for 3,000 units, the first phase of which is completed and occupied).

The first phase of the masterplan for Grahame Park Estate involves an increase in the overall area of public and private open space from 16.74 hectares to 17.9 hectares. There will be an overall reduction in public open space including communal gardens and an increase in private garden space, reflecting a concern expressed by residents over unusable and degraded areas of open space. Graham Park Open Space will decrease in size from 5.79 to 5.5 hectares, though the quality of the open space will be significantly improved and the layout of the routes through the redeveloped estate will mean that the open space will be more accessible from the development and the surrounding area.

The Area Action Plan includes proposals for a new park on the site of the Peel Centre (referred to as Aerodrome Park). The AAP also includes requirements for improvements to Montrose Park and development of better links between the main open spaces, including Grahame Park and the proposed Aerodrome Park within the Colindale AAP area, Watling Park to the north east of Colindale and the smaller open spaces including Colindale Park, Rushgrove Park, Silkstream Park, Woodcroft Park, Lyndhurst Park and new proposed open spaces in Grahame Park Estate and Beaufort Park.

#### **1.4.3 Stonegrove and Spur Road Estates**

Stonegrove and Spur Road are post-war and failing interconnected housing estates located in the north west of the borough at the edge of the London Green Belt. Outline planning consent for both estates was approved in October 2008 and the initial pilot was completed in May 2008. The proposal includes the demolition of 603 existing residential units, community and school buildings and the erection of 937 new residential units, new community hall and church, alongside proposals for associated public and private open space. The application includes a total provision of 8.12ha of open space including public open space, private back gardens, squares, courtyards and dedicated play space, approximately 71% of the site area. Of this, 0.57ha is dedicated to formal children's play space and 1.3ha to private rear garden space. The proposal also includes a £150,000 S106 contribution to improve and enhance existing recreational facilities at Edgwarebury and Stonegrove Parks.

#### **1.4.4 Dollis Valley Estate**

There is a proposal to redevelop 436 flats to provide around 1,000 new homes in the Dollis Valley Estate which is in the north of the borough in the Green Belt. The Dollis Valley scheme is at the very early stages of development and a development partner has not yet been appointed to the scheme.

#### **1.4.5 Mill Hill East**

The Area Action Plan for Mill Hill East was adopted in January 2009. This incorporates proposals for the redevelopment of the former Inglis Barracks to provide 2,000 new homes and 500 jobs. The proposals include around 5.5 hectares of public open space including sports pitches and natural areas will be provided comprising:

- up to four new local parks and small open spaces;

- retained woodland; and
- sports pitches.

In addition to onsite provision, the AAP seeks developer contributions to improve existing open space and access to open space in the surrounding area, including work to local footpaths and improvements to Bittacy Park including the creation of a new entrance onto Bittacy Hill and a pedestrian link to the site.

**Table 1: The principal growth areas, their implications and new open space provision**

Area	Population Increase	NEW DWELLINGS	Existing Open Space (Ha)	Planned New Open Space (Ha)	Ratio of Planned New open space to increase population
Cricklewood/ Brent Cross	c. 18,000	7,500	25.3 ha	8.5	0.47 per 1,000
Mill Hill	c. 5,000	2,000	No public open space	5.5	1.1 per 1,000
Colindale	c. 25,000	10,000	31.08	4.71	0.19per 1,000
TOTAL	c. 48,000	19,500	56.31ha	18.71ha	0.39per 1,000

Considering that the existing provision of open space per 1,000 population in Barnet is 3.63ha, the ratio of proposed new open space to population within the growth areas in Barnet is relatively low. This means that open space in these areas is likely to be significantly more intensively used in the future. This was given particular consideration in the context of assessing the value of open spaces (as set out in Section 11 of this report) and subsequently developing priorities for investment as it was considered that open space located in proximity to the growth areas is likely to be particularly valuable and potentially a higher priority for investment to ensure that these spaces can support a wide range of functions.

Further details of the Growth Area open space proposals are outlined in Sub-Chapter 5.4 of this report.

## 2 Legislation, Policy and Guidance

### 2.1 Introduction

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Parks, open spaces and recreational facilities are planned for, managed and maintained by a variety of agencies operating in a complex legislative and policy context. This chapter provides an overview of the key planning policies and best practice guidance that have directly influenced this study. Further to this, there are a range of documents to offer assistance in developing open space, sports and recreational policies into practical delivery and implementation. The policy and document review has informed the Open Space and Recreational Facilities Assessment in two principal ways:

- The methodology has been developed to reflect policy and best practice guidance reviewed; and
- Key issues for open space provision specific to Barnet have been identified which have been taken into account in the analysis

A full comprehensive review of the relevant policies, existing standards and best practice guidance is contained within the Appendix Volume. Section 2.2 provides an overview of the conclusions drawn from the review.

### 2.2 Policy Context

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#### 2.2.1 Summary

The following national, regional and local legislation, policy and guidance have been considered as part of this assessment:

##### **National**

- Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation (2002)
- Assessing needs and opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17 (2006)
- PPS9 – Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (2008)
- Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (2008)
- Open Space Strategies(Best Practice Guidance) GLA/ CABE (2009)
- Our Towns and Cities: The Future - Delivering an Urban Renaissance Urban White Paper (2000)
- Green Spaces, Better Places: Final Report of the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce (2002)
- The Sustainable Communities Plan : Building for the Future (2003)
- Green Flag Parks Award Scheme (2005)
- UK Sustainable Development Strategy (2005)
- Towards a Level Playing Field: A guide to the production of playing pitch strategies (2006)
- Making England an Active and Successful Sporting Nation: A Vision for 2020; Sport England 2005

##### **Regional/ Sub-Regional**

- London Plan: Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London (2008)
- Connecting with London's Nature: The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy (2002)
- Valuing Greenness: Green spaces, house prices and Londoners' priorities (2003)

- Guide to preparing Open Space Strategies: Best practice guidance of the London Plan (2004)
- Guide to preparing play strategies: Planning inclusive play spaces and opportunities for all London's children and young people (2005)
- Strategy 2007-2016 by Pro-Active North London Partnership (2007)
- London Borough of Brent Draft Sports Facilities Improvement Strategy (2007)
- LB Haringey Sport Physical Activity Strategy (HSP) (2002)

### **Local**

- Barnet– A Successful City Suburb: A Sustainable Community Strategy for Barnet 2008-2018 (2008)
- Barnet Unitary Development Plan ( Adopted 2006)
- Local Development Framework - Core Strategy Issues and Options (June 2008)
- Planning Obligations Framework (Section 106) SPD, (September 2006)
- Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon Development Framework (2004)
- Mill Hill East Area Action Plan (2008)
- Colindale Area Action Plan (date)
- London Borough of Barnet Playing Pitch Assessment Strategy (2004) (Draft)
- Premier Parks Strategy (2004)
- Barnet Play Strategy 2007-2011 (2007)
- London Borough of Barnet Corporate Plan 2007/08/ - 2010/11 (2007)
- London Borough of Barnet Years 6&9 Sport and Physical Activity Survey (2007)
- Primary School Capital Investment Programme – Draft Strategic Planning Report (2007)
- Operational Plan for the Management of the London Borough of Barnet's Green Spaces 2007 to 2011 (2007)
- Annual Resident's Attitude Survey (ARAS) 2007/08 (2007/2008)
- The Three Strands Approach -Protection, Enhancement and Growth (2008)
- Barnet Sport, Physical Education Strategy 2008 to 2013 (2008)
- Draft London borough of Barnet Characterisation Study (2009)

### **Benchmarks and Standards**

- National Playing Fields Association – Six Acre Standard
- Greater London Authority – London's Open Space Hierarchy
- English Nature –Accessible Greenspace Standard (ANGSt)
- Sport England Playing Pitches
- Civic Trust – Green Flag Award

### **2.2.2 Conclusions**

The review of key policy, guidance and legislation has influence the formulation of our approach and methodology and has provided a key contextual basis to undertake the assessment. The sections below detail how a review of policy, guidance and legislation at a national, regional and local level has informed this Open Space and Recreational Facilities Assessment

## National

- This study is undertaken in the context of the emphasis in Government policy on the need for a **local approach** to setting open space policies and standards (PPG17) and the need for evidence based policy and decision making at a local level (PPS12);
- The standards and recommendations arising from this study will form the **basis of planning policies** to be developed through the LDF and will underpin development control decisions and **negotiation of development contributions**;
- The methodology for this Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Needs Assessment applies the five key attributes outlined in the Companion Guidance (accessibility, quality, multi-functionality, primary purpose and quantity) adopting both a qualitative and quantitative approach to the audit of sites in Barnet, as outlined in Section 2.3;
- The assessment methodology reflects the emphasis in PPG17 on the need to assess the quality, range of provision and accessibility of open space and recreational facilities in addition to overall quantities of provision in order to identify **potential barriers to usage**;
- The methodology, including the open space typology used for this assessment is based on **guidance in PPG17** and the **Companion Guide** (adapted to the Barnet context through discussions with Council officers and the consultation event);
- Government policy encourages local authorities to consider open spaces as part of a **continuous network of open space** and to treat the open space network as an **integrated system**. The approach to analysis during the assessment is undertaken in this context. In particular, maintaining and improving links between strategic areas of open space is one of the key objectives of policy at regional and local level, this is explored when developing objectives and priorities for open space;
- As outlined in PPS9, this assessment will contribute to the protection of the borough's biodiversity by ensure that parks and open spaces are provided so that everyone can enjoy and learn about the natural world. **Natural and semi-natural green space are considered as a separate typology** within this assessment and the quality and value assessment captures the qualitative element;
- PPS 12 states that all evidence should derive from the participation of the local community as well as other key stakeholders who have a stake in the future of the area. Within this assessment, we have **sought to consult widely with a range of stakeholders** as part of informing the evidence base and subsequent setting of open space standards for Barnet; and
- The analysis undertaken during the assessment reflects the Government's emphasis on **increasing participation in sport** and widening access to sport and physical activity, particularly among low participation groups such as women, people with disabilities, people over 50, people from ethnic minorities and those on low incomes.

## Regional

- The open space typology incorporates the **hierarchy for open space** set out in the London Plan, adapted to the Barnet context;
- The **accessibility criteria** for different types of open space set out in Table 3D.1 of the London Plan, as well as accessibility for playing pitches in Sport England's publication 'Towards a Level Playing Field', 2001 (drawn from the Council's existing assessments) and are used as benchmarks to set quantity and accessibility standards for open space in Barnet;

- The approach for **supply and demand analysis** and development of objectives and priorities for provision are in accordance with the best practice guidance published by CABE and GLA in March 2009;
- There is a **correlation between open space provision and wider health and prosperity** in the borough as highlighted in the GLA's report 'Valuing Green Spaces'. Quality open space also has a positive impact on house and land values with implications for areas of planned regeneration in the borough. This assessment evaluates the quality of sites as part of the audit undertaken;
- The CABE/GLA guidance augments the recognition that **open space is multi-functional** so an Open Space Assessment should reflect a widely shared vision and that many stakeholders should be consulted and involved;
- The Guidance specifically recommends that GIS be used to record and analyse open spaces. Arup have **integrated the use of a GIS database** through the methodology, so that both spatial analysis and assessment are key components of the study;
- **Quantity** standards required: area of open space per thousand population;
- **Quality** standards required: a description of the required design and management standards, including inclusive design standards;
- **Accessibility** standards required: a distance threshold (for example, 400 metres) that takes into account any physical barriers to movement and the location of entrances to open space; and
- A comprehensive review of the each individual site in Barnet was undertaken by **populating a proforma** for each site with the information and data required to set appropriate standards for open space.

### Local

- The borough as a whole has an extensive open space network which is a central characteristic of the borough and the **protection, enhancement and positive management of this network** is one of the Council's key corporate objectives; as reflected in the emphasis on protection of Green Belt and other open space in the Council's Three Strands Approach;
- The UDP identifies areas of **deficiency of open space** – one of the aims of this Assessment is to review these areas of deficiency in light of a more up to date assessment;
- The assessment considers the **distribution of provision** across the borough and its quality, in order to identify areas with particularly good quality provision and areas where provision is deficient or poor;
- UDP policies on open space emphasise the need to: protect the borough's current assets; improve, enhance, link and extend where possible; address areas of deficiency; and provide new open spaces where possible and appropriate. These objectives are explored throughout the assessment in order to **set a series of specific priorities for open space and recreational facilities** in Barnet;
- In line with the integrated approach advocated in PPG17, the CABE guidance and London-wide guidance, the assessment takes account of other Council strategies and policies (such as those relating to Education) in order to ensure that the assessment forms the basis of an **integrated approach to planning open space and recreation** across Council departments;
- The assessment will take into account the **particular issues and priorities identified in surveys and research undertaken to date by the Council**, including in particular the Playing Pitch Assessment, the Years 6 and 9 Sport and Activity Survey and the Play Strategy;

- Barnet exhibits relatively strong levels of participation among young people. Young people also express very strong and positive attitudes towards sport and physical activity, with sizeable proportions interested in taking up an activity or joining a sports club. However, there is a need to **examine overall policies** with a view to increasing the proportion of young people participating, particularly amongst the various ethnic groups, gender and also to develop opportunities for those households without access to a car;
- The **quality of the borough's maintenance of its parks has been reflected** in the increase in the number of the borough's parks gaining a Green Flag Award (from four in 2006 to seven in 2008). The criteria for awarding Green Flag awards (and possibly for designating Premier Parks) informs the assessment of site quality during the audits;
- Areas which the Playing Pitches Strategy (2004) identified as having **shortfall in provision of particular types of pitches** at peak times and where pitches were considered to be of poor quality have been reviewed through the consultation exercise and during the site audit process;
- There is likely to be an overall reduction in open space as a result of the Schools Investment Programme, however, there will be an overall **improvement in quality of open space and accessibility to the general public out of school hours**. It will therefore be necessary to take this into account in the analysis of supply and demand;
- Significant planned **population growth** will place additional pressure on open space and create additional demand for open space and recreational facilities usage in the borough as well as creating opportunities for additional provision as part of larger development proposals; and
- The assessment takes account of **planned regeneration proposals** (particularly in the West of the borough) when considering future demand for open space and opportunities for new provision (Chapter 5).

## 3 The Scope and Approach

### 3.1 Open Space Typologies

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There is clearly a wide range of types of open space, sports and recreational facilities, both outdoor and indoor which could be covered in an assessment of this type. It was agreed with the Council at inception stage that the priority was to assess green spaces and outdoor recreational facilities. Built indoor facilities are therefore not included within this assessment, except where they fall within parks or other open spaces.

Planning Policy Guidance 17 classifies open spaces into typologies according to their primary purpose in order to develop a more structured approach to auditing and assessing open space. This typology was used to structure the pro-forma for auditing open space outdoor sports and recreational facilities. Sites were initially identified through a desktop review with Council officers of existing sources such as Council maintenance databases and policy documents and then supplemented through consultation with stakeholders.

The audit covered all open spaces, outdoor sports and recreational facilities for which there is legitimate public access. The Council owns a large majority of these but privately owned sites have been included where the public has the right of access. The assessment does not cover open spaces, outdoor sports and recreational facilities that are not accessible to the public. Spaces such as golf courses and private sports clubs are not therefore included in the assessment. The assessment also excluded allotments as the Council has undertaken a separate study of allotments in the borough.

Consideration was also given as to whether to include cemeteries in the assessment. These did not form part of the original database provided by the Council as the major cemeteries in Barnet are maintained by the Corporation of London rather than Barnet. On balance, it was considered that, although many cemeteries have an important role in providing habitat and often provide green landscape and visual 'breaks' in the built environment, cemeteries in Barnet do not perform a recreational role and should not therefore be included in the assessment.

Many areas of Barnet, in particular the lower density suburbs such as Hampstead Garden Suburb have a wealth of smaller pieces of open spaces which are important in a local context. It was considered that it was necessary to have a minimum size threshold in order to focus the scope of the study, while still providing a robust assessment of the quantity and quality of provision in the borough. It was therefore decided at the beginning of the study to exclude smaller pieces of green space below 0.25 ha.

In addition the database of sites developed in consultation with the Council and amenity groups contained a number of incidental areas of open space such as highway verges, some of which exceeded 0.25 ha. In accordance with the terminology in PPG17, these areas were classed as 'space left over after planning' (SLOAP). As part of the audit, smaller green spaces which did not perform an obvious function but had a landscape amenity role were classed as 'amenity green space'. The importance of all these spaces to the contribution of green infrastructure in the borough is recognised.

Once the audit was completed, discussions were held with Barnet officers as to how to approach the assessment of quantity, accessibility, quality and value with a view to developing standards, in the context of the information from the surveys and the results of the consultation. As part of these discussions, it was agreed that the assessment would focus on:

- Public Parks;
- Children's Play;
- Outdoor Sports (in particular playing pitches); and
- Natural and Semi Natural Green Space.

Although amenity green space and incidental space (SLOAP) were included in the audit in order to provide a database which is as comprehensive as possible, it was not considered appropriate to assess these further in terms of their distribution, quality and accessibility in order to develop standards.

The CABE and GLA best practice guidance recognises that Open Space Strategies cover a wide range of types of spaces and that the assessment needs to provide sufficient information to make strategic decisions about open space. A range of more focussed strategies may be produced to expand further on certain types of open spaces or uses within open spaces and recreational facilities.

### **3.2 Method for survey**

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The aim of the study was to produce a qualitative and quantitative audit of open spaces within the Borough, which identifies opportunities for improvement and enhancement. Site assessments were undertaken to record a range features and characteristics of open spaces, using a standard pro-forma to ensure comparable data collection (see the Appendix Volume).

An initial list of sites to be audited was provided by the London Borough of Barnet planning team, primarily based on sites for which Barnet has maintenance responsibilities. This was augmented through discussions with Barnet officers to identify further sites which are privately owned but have public access and other sources such as the Unitary Development Plan, GiGL and the Ecology Handbook (London Ecology Unit). A meeting was also held with Education officers in order to ensure that information was recorded regarding schools with extended community use out of school hours. The list of sites to be audited was also reviewed at the first consultation event to identify any gaps. A list of 274 sites to be audited was eventually agreed with the Council.

The pro-forma was designed to enable a range of information to be captured for each site, following a standard criteria-based approach to ensure a consistent, quantitative assessment. In order to classify the sites, PPG17 typology criteria was applied, in which primary and secondary facilities as well as physical attributes were recorded. Site description and facilities were assessed on a scoring criteria of 1-5 (1 being poor, 5 being good). The pro-forma also enabled the recording of additional comments relating to both typology and the value of the open space, contributing to the qualitative aspect of analysis.

Other information recorded for each site assessment included:

- access arrangements;
- charges;
- transport descriptions; and
- environmental classifications.

Surveys were conducted between February and April 2009 by a team of planning consultants. Subsequent supplementary surveys were carried out in May and June where additional sites were identified.

### **3.3 Method for Analysis**

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In order to undertake a robust audit of Barnet's open space, outdoor sports and recreational facilities, and provide appropriate recommendations for standards, the study methodology was derived from relevant planning policy, guidance and legislation material (see Chapter 2) and adapted to the local Barnet context.

For the purposes of the assessment, the borough was split into six areas comprising 3 to 4 wards within each sub area. This was based on the three constituency areas being divided into two separate areas of similar geographical characteristics.

The analysis groupings were as follows:

1. Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb
2. East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse
3. Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet
4. High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge
5. Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill
6. Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon

An overview of the method for analysis is outlined within **Diagram 1**, which clarifies the processes and stages undertaken. Details of the method of analysis are set out below, including the approach to settling standards.

### **3.3.1 Stages 1 and 2: Setting Quantity and Accessibility standards**

This audit classified each open space into the following primary typologies based on their primary function:

- Parks and Gardens – Metropolitan, District or Local
- Provision for Children and Young People
- Outdoor Sports and Recreation Sites – Local Authority owned, Clubs and Schools
- Natural / Semi-natural Green Space– Nature reserves and Green Corridors
- Amenity Green Space
- Other – e.g. incidental spaces such as ‘SLOAP’ and grass verges.

As set out in Section 2.1 above, this assessment then focused on particular typologies of open space and recreational facilities for which it was considered appropriate to develop standards for quantity, quality and accessibility.

#### **Public Park Provision**

Parks were categorised as either Metropolitan, District or Local according to their size. London’s public open space hierarchy (London Plan Consolidated with Alterations since 2004, 2008) provides a benchmark for the provision of open space across London. It categorises spaces according to their size and sets out maximum distance which Londoners should have to travel in order to access each size of open space. The hierarchy states that parks over 60Hectares are classified as Metropolitan, Barnet does not contain any parks this size. All parks in Barnet over 20 hectares were classified as District Parks and all Parks under 20ha were classified as Local Parks. A number of sites classified as Local Parks are under 2ha, and the GLA hierarchy states that these should be classified as small open spaces or pocket parks. However for the purposes of this assessment all parks under 2ha have been classified as Local Parks.

Unlike the other typologies, parks typically serve a variety of functions, including sports, play and nature conservation. They generally contain a variety of features such as grassed areas; children’s play equipment, formal planting and sports pitches. They are typically fenced and contain information signs, bins, seats and pathways. A number of parks also provide toilets and cafés. Features such as this, as well as their size, distinguish them from less formal open space provision which has been categorised as amenity green space.

#### Quantity

The boundaries of all parks were mapped in a GIS database using information provided by LB Barnet, collected on the site visits and provided at the first consultation event. The overall quantity of parks was calculated by extracting the size of each site from the GIS database. This was then used to calculate the area of park provision per head of population for each of the assessment areas in hectares per 1,000 population. From this it was possible to identify geographical areas which had below average provision. Where parks fell

within two or more assessment areas the space was attributed to the area in which the central point of the site fell.

Indicative park thresholds for district and local parks were calculated by mapping the catchment area around each park. The GLA hierarchy states that District Parks should be 1.2km from homes and Local Parks should be 400m. These distances were mapped from the boundary of each park. From this it was possible to calculate average catchment area of each park (i.e. the area of the borough within 1.2km of a District Park boundary or 400m of a Local Park). In order to calculate the number of people living within the average catchment area of each park the catchment area was multiplied by the Borough's population density. Similarly the number of households was calculated by applying the Borough's average household size to the catchment area.

### Accessibility

In assessing the accessibility of parks a range of indicators were used to identify how well the existing distribution of space meets needs of the community. The accessibility assessment comprises four criteria:

- 1) Whether the park is on or adjacent to the Public Rights of Way Network
- 2) Whether the park has an above average number of London Cycle Routes within 100m compared to the rest of the sites in the parks category
- 3) Whether the park has an above average number of bus routes within 640m compared to the rest of the sites in the parks category.
- 4) Whether the site has an underground station or national rail station within 940m.

The threshold distances applied above (100m, 640m and 900m) are used by TfL when mapping out PTAL levels, to determine the accessibility of a particular area. Thus, we have adopted similar accessibility indicators as part of our assessment. The assessment was used to identify sites which particularly good or poor accessibility.

### Quantity and Accessibility Standards

In order to develop a quantity standard two alternative approaches were undertaken, the first was geographical and based on the area required to ensure adequate coverage of the borough; the second was based on the provision required to meet the needs of an increased population. Geographical analysis identified the number of parks that would need to be provided in order to ensure that the entire borough is within 1.2km of a District Park and 400m of a Local Park. The Borough contains a significant amount of Green Belt and this area was excluded from the analysis. This analysis divided the area of the borough not currently within the catchment area by the average catchment area of each type of park. Further details about this method can be found in Section 6.3.

The population increase analysis calculated the number of additional parks that would need to be provided in order to maintain the provision of park per 1,000 population currently experienced in the borough despite the forecast increase in population.

It was agreed at the first consultation workshop that the geographical analysis would be used to set standards for provision. In order to set **quantity** standards, as highlighted in Chapter 12, the proportion of the Borough not within the catchment of a District Park or a Local Park was analysed. The resultant standard, provided in Section 12.6.1 therefore allows for the entire borough to be within a suitable catchment area of both a district and a local park.

The accessibility standards were developed using the GLA standards, as outlined in the London Plan (2008), where District Parks have a catchment of 1.2km and Local Parks have a catchment of 400m (GLA Standard as contained in the London Plan, 2008).

### **Children's Play Provision**

Sites containing children's play equipment but serving no other function, were classified as Provision for Children and Young People. In addition to these dedicated sites, the site visits identified children's play equipment at a number of other sites with different primary typologies. Information recorded on the site visits was cross referenced with information provided by LB Barnet to identify the type of children's play facility at each of the site, this was recorded as either Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAPs) or Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAPs) in accordance with the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) definition. The total number of sites with play provision, the type of this provision (i.e. LEAP or NEAP) and the type of site in which the facility was located was then assessed. The total area in use as children's play provision was estimated by applying the NPFA definitions which state that LEAPs are 0.04ha and NEAPs are 0.1ha. This was then used to estimate the amount of play provision per child for each in the assessment areas, in hectares per 1,000 children. From this it was possible to identify geographical areas which had below the average Borough provision.

The NPFA standards state that LEAPs should be within a 5 minute walk which equates to a 240m radial distance and NEAPs should be within a 15 minute walk or 1,000m radial distance. The next stage of assessment mapped these distances from every site with play facilities. Distance was mapped from the site boundary, it is recognised that at larger sites the play facility may be located some distance from the site boundary thereby increasing the walking distance. This study did not involve mapping the exact location of the play facility within the site so the catchment distance has been mapped from the park boundary, this approach was agreed at the second consultation event. Data from the GIS database was used to derive the area of the borough within the catchment area of either a LEAP or a NEAP. Those parts of the Borough not within a catchment area were then identified.

#### Accessibility

The accessibility of sites with children's play provision was assessed using the method described above for parks.

#### Quantity and Accessibility Standards

In order to set **quantity** standards for children's play, as highlighted in Chapter 12, the proportion of the Borough not within the catchment of a LEAP or a NEAP was analysed. The resultant standard, provided in Section 12.6.2 therefore allows for the entire borough to be within a suitable catchment area of either LEAP or NEAP.

The resultant **accessibility** standards have been developed using the NPFA standards, where LEAPs have a catchment of 240 m, and NEAPs, a catchment of 600 m (NPFA Standard).

### **Outdoor Sports Provision**

#### Quantity

Facilities with sports provision were identified on the site visits. The pro-formas was used to record sites with playing pitches, outdoor tennis courts, basketball / netball courts and bowling greens.

The Active Places database was then used to identify the public access arrangements at each of the sites. The Active Places database is owned and maintained by Sport England and provides a database of all sports facilities in England. The database provides details of the type of facilities offered and access arrangements, and includes local authority leisure facilities as well as commercial and club sites. Sites were classified as local authority owned or private club with public access. In addition the Active Places dataset was used to identify school sites which allow public access outside school hours. School sites were not visited as part of this study; however their facilities were included in the overall quantity assessment, additionally a number of sports facilities which have public access were not visited as part of the survey work undertaken for this study at the instruction of LB Barnet.

All sites have been included in the quantity and accessibility assessment, however only sites visited have been included in the quality and value assessment.

The number of pitches and type of site (i.e. local authority, club or school) was then assessed. Information collected on the site visits along with the Active Places dataset was used to calculate the number of pitches and type of pitch at each site. In order to calculate the overall pitch area in the Borough average pitch sizes were applied. The average pitch sizes were taken from the Sport England document "Design Guidance Note: Comparative Sizes of Sports Pitches & Courts" (July 2008).

A total quantum of playing pitches in each of the geographical areas was then calculated in hectares per 1,000 population. Areas with below the average Borough provision were identified.

The Sport England standard states that everyone should be within 1.2km of a playing pitch (*Towards a Level Playing Field, A Guide to Production of Playing Pitch Strategies; Sport England*). A 1.2km catchment was mapped around all of the sites containing playing pitches in order to identify areas of the borough not within a catchment area.

This study has not involved a comprehensive assessment of non-pitch sports facilities, however sites included in this study which contain bowling greens, outdoor tennis courts and basketball / netball courts have been mapped.

#### Accessibility

The accessibility of sites with playing pitches was assessed using the method described for Parks above.

#### Quantity and Accessibility Standards

In order to set **quantity** standards for outdoor sports facilities, the proportion of the Borough not within 1.2km of a playing pitch was analysed, as well as current provision of pitches per 1,000 population. Current provision was compared with future population needs based on anecdotal evidence from the consultation events and material from the Draft Playing Pitch Strategy (which shows a current deficit in provision) in order to recommend a standard for Barnet. The resultant standard, provided in Section 12.6.3 therefore allows for greater provision of sports facilities in the borough.

The **accessibility** standard was developed using the Sport England standard of ensuring that the entire borough population is 1.2km distance from sports facilities.

#### **Natural and semi-natural green space**

During the site visits, sites which clearly had nature conservation value were recorded as local nature reserves, in addition a number of sites were recorded as green corridors. Green corridors were most easily identified through review of maps of the borough including the UDP Proposals Map; this review resulted in a couple of sites being reclassified as green corridors after the site visit.

In addition the Barnet Unitary Development Plan (2006) which contains all the Borough's sites of nature conservation importance as classified by the GLA hierarchy (Metropolitan, Borough Grade I, Borough Grade II and Local), was used to identify sites which are recognised as having important nature conservation value but have been primarily categorised as something else in this study. An example of this is Hampstead Heath Extension which is a Site of Metropolitan Nature Conservation Importance but is primarily classified as a District Park.

The quantitative analysis includes all sites which are recognised as having nature conservation importance, regardless of their primary classification, and as such some of these sites also appear in quantity assessments under different typologies.

Using the information recorded on the site visits, the type of landscapes at each nature conservation site was assessed. Using the same method as for other typologies, the overall

quantity of natural greenspace per 1,000 population for each geographical area was calculated, and areas with below the average Borough provision identified.

The GLA classification of every site was recorded; there were only three sites (Barnet Gate Wood, Chesterfield F/P and Baring Road/Castlewood Road) which did not appear in the GLA hierarchy and were therefore categorised as 'other'. Where a larger site had been split into smaller sites in order to provide a more detailed analysis, the GLA classification of the larger site has been awarded, for example the Lower Dollis Valley has been split into seven separate sites and all of these sites have been classified as Borough Grade II.

The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy (page 118) states that everywhere should be within 1km of a nature conservation site of Metropolitan or Borough Grade. A 1km catchment was therefore mapped from all sites classified as such in order to identify the parts of the Borough not within this catchment area. Additionally the Strategy notes that a distance of around 500m is a reasonable distance to local nature sites, and this distance has therefore also been mapped.

### Accessibility

The accessibility of natural and semi-natural green spaces was assessed using the method described for Parks above.

### Quantity and Accessibility Standards

In order to set **quantity** standards, as highlighted in Chapter 12, two alternative approaches were considered. Firstly, the proportion of the Borough not within the 500m catchment area of a nature conservation site was analysed. An alternative to this approach would be to apply a population based standard. The premise of this would be to maintain the current standard of provision despite the forecast increase in population. This latter approach provides an unrealistic standard for Barnet. Thus, the resultant standard, provided in Section 12.6.4 therefore allows for the entire borough to be within a suitable catchment area of a nature conservation site.

The **accessibility** standards were developed using the GLA standards, as outlined in the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, where everyone should be within 1km actual walking distance from an accessible Metropolitan or borough site (GLA Standard, as contained in the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, 2002) and everyone should be within 500m walking distance of a local nature site (GLA Standard, as contained in the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, 2002).

### **Amenity Greenspace**

Amenity greenspace can be defined as areas whose primary function is to provide a visual break between urban development for aesthetic and environmental reasons. Areas which do not fall easily into any of the aforementioned categories but still have an important role for local residents serving a variety of purposes including providing areas for dog walking, areas for children to play and creating a visual break in the urban landscape, have been categorised as amenity greenspace.

As amenity green space is not an exclusive category and the range of other spaces included in this study perform an amenity function, it would not be considered appropriate to develop standards for amenity green spaces. Furthermore, as the assessment excludes sites of less than 0.25 ha it is not considered to accurately reflect the overall provision of amenity green space in Barnet. The aim of the study has not been to capture and record every single green space in the borough but has been to provide a reasonable assessment of the spatial distribution of the main types of open space and recreational facilities.

Amenity greenspace should be integrated within new areas of residential, mixed use and commercial development within Barnet. The exact level and type of provision should therefore be responsive to the nature of the development and the existing level and type of open space provision. In certain areas of the Borough amenity greenspace and other forms of open space form an integral part of the urban fabric and contribute towards local

character and distinctiveness. For this reason it will be important to consider the future developments planned for Barnet within key areas for growth.

### **3.3.2 Stage 3: Quality standards**

Each site was assessed in terms of quality according to a series of criteria suitable to each typology. The scores from each site came from the information collected on the site visits. The assessment resulted in each site being awarded a score of 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Fair' or 'Poor'. The results were used to identify areas with particularly high or low quality parks.

In order to test the sensitivity of these results they were compared to a number of other sources of information, including:

- The LB Barnet Playing Pitch Assessment (2003) and Playing Pitch Strategy (2004)
- Nature Conservation in Barnet, London Ecology Unit
- Open Spaces in Barnet – Report of the Working Group (February 2009 and April 2009)
- Site specific comments raised at the consultation event

Further details about the criteria used for each typology are contained in Chapter 10.

### **3.3.3 Stage 4: Value of open space**

Each open space was then assessed in terms of value at a day long workshop attended by members of the LB Barnet Parks and Open Spaces team. Scores were based on the information gathered during the site visits, demographic information and the knowledge of LB Barnet's Parks and Open Spaces officers. Each site was assessed in turn, with each site systematically being located on a map in order to be placed in an accurate geographical context. Analysis also involved examining site photographs and discussing the attributes of the site, before awarding a score for each of the value criteria. The value assessment included an assessment of the following:

- Context
- Function / Role
- Landscape / Biodiversity
- Demographic Analysis
- Events / Education
- Usage

Further details about the value assessment can be found in Chapter 11.

### **3.3.4 Stage 5: Meeting the Needs: Setting Policy Recommendations and Priorities**

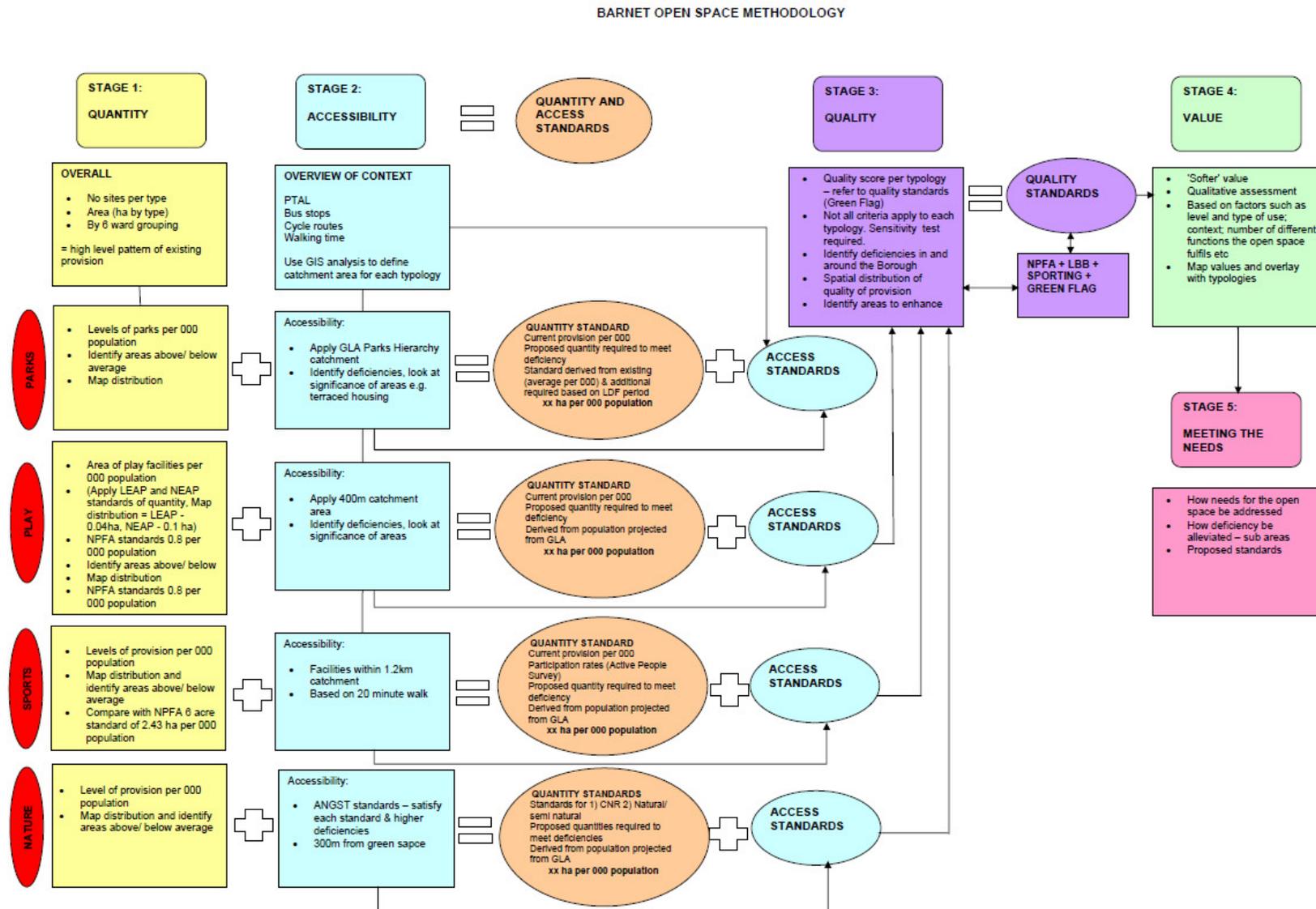
This stage seeks to identify specific areas within Barnet that are deficient in open space and recreational facilities and provide recommendations to enable enhancement of facilities. This stage seeks to identify site specific opportunities for addressing deficiencies in Barnet as well as solutions for tackling poor quality spaces. For each typology, an overview of quantitative deficiencies is provided, followed by a comprehensive schedule of deficiencies associated with quality, value and accessibility. This serves to highlight particular sites that have a combined Quality/ Value score of Low/ Low or Low/High. The analysis then explores:

- Why a site scored particularly poorly in the quality assessment e.g. sports facilities, information;
- Why a site scored particularly high or low in the value assessment and provide commentary on key elements of value e.g. a site scored well for landscape, function and context but is not located in an area of high deprivation;
- Whether a site has been identified as a site with poor accessibility; and

- Whether a site is in an area of lower than average provision.

Opportunities for improvement and provision of new open spaces are explored for each typology and guidance is provided on achieving each standard. Opportunities are considered across the six geographical areas, so that any recommendations can be considered in the context of neighbouring open spaces. Key constraints to implementation of opportunities and recommendations are also summarised.

Diagram 1: Overview of Methodology



### 3.4 Consultation

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A key aim of this study is to assess residents' and key stakeholders' perceptions regarding areas of deficiency and opportunities for improvement. Qualitative, constructive consultation to inform recommendations is crucial in providing standards to respond to local need. As part of this aim, Arup held two consultation workshop events at the North London Business Park, one on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2009 aimed at residents groups and interest groups and one on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2009 for Council officers. More information can be found within the Appendix Volume.

#### 3.4.1 Consultation Workshop 11<sup>th</sup> March 2009

The purpose of the workshop was to find out local residents view's about the provision and quality of open space, sport and recreational facilities in their local area. More information regarding the consultation workshop can be found in within the Appendix Volume. In particular the workshop sought to:

- Identify any omissions and amendments to survey work
- Gauge awareness of local facilities
- Evaluate perception of facilities/ open space
- Distribution and Quality
- Identify views on the distribution and accessibility of open space
- Identify views on the quality of provision and any suggestions for improvements
- Identify perceived gaps in provision
- Usage
- Review demand for open space, sport and recreation facilities compared with existing provision
- Identify needs of particular user groups, e.g. elderly, children, young people
- Identify if open spaces are well-used/under-used
- Identify the reasons why spaces are not used – e.g. accessibility, quality, lack of facilities
- Use of facilities by type, frequency and user demographics
- Identify opportunities
- Identify potential for new or extended spaces
- Identify potential to improve linkages between spaces and accessibility
- Expectations of open space in terms of quality and quantity

Consultation also included issues of accessibility and barriers to groups using areas of open space and sports facilities. One of the issues raised at the consultation event (and through Parks Working Party) was the need for more active engagement of the community, including raising the profile and publicity of open spaces and the work of these groups. All spaces referred to by either the Parks Working Party draft report or within the first consultation were then cross referenced with this study to ensure results were not anomalous.

The consultation event forms part of a series of events that the Borough will undertake during the development of the LDF. Planning Policy Statement 12 provides that to be 'justified' a Development Plan Document needs to be founded on a robust and credible evidence base involving participation of the local community and others having a stake in the area. The workshop contributes to the Borough fulfilling this requirement.

**Workshop Attendees**

The event was attended by 25 consultees from a wide range of interest groups. Some attendees had a particular focus on a specific site, while others had an interest in a particular topic, for example nature conservation or sports provision. A full list of attendees can be found in the Consultation Report in the Appendix Volume.

**3.4.2 Consultation Workshop 25<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

A second stakeholder consultation event was held on 25 June 2009 in the North London Business Park. The event was attended by 15 officers from within the Council. More information regarding the consultation workshop can be found within the Appendix Volume. The purpose of this event was as follows:

- Enable Council Officers to understand the methodology adopted for the assessment;
- Review and discuss the results;
- Comment in the identified areas of deficiency for each of the main typologies;
- Comment on the emerging approach to developing standards;
- Comment on opportunities for new or extended spaces; and
- Comment on opportunities for improving accessibility to open spaces.

Further details of the consultation events, please see Section 4.2.

## 4 Factors Influencing Demand

### 4.1 Socio-economic profile

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There are a number of key demographic social and economic indicators which influence the open space needs of individual parts of the borough. The demographic profile of a borough has a direct influence on sport participation levels and open space usage, as people's involvement in sport generally varies according to age, gender, socio-economic factors and ethnicity. Actual participation rates in sport and exercise have therefore been considered within this section of the assessment, as they are wholly influenced by socio-economic factors such as age, gender and ethnicity and provide a crucial insight into local usage trends in Barnet. This section of the Open Space Assessment highlights the following:

#### 4.1.1 Demographic

- With a 2008 population of 331,500 Barnet is the second most populous borough in London. Based on GLA figures, Barnet's population is projected to reach 384,615 by 2026, an increase of 16% on present levels. According to GLA estimates, Barnet could be the most populous London Borough by 2012. Population growth is likely to be highest in wards in close proximity to regeneration areas including Colindale, Edgware, Golders Green, Mill Hill, Underhill and West Hendon;
- In terms of age, the population is skewed - Barnet has the second highest proportion of children and young people in London and a marginally higher proportion of people aged 65+ than the regional average;
- Barnet has a marginally higher proportion of female residents than the London average – activity rates for females in Barnet are also higher than the London average;
- Older residents in Barnet have higher 'zero sports participation' rates than neighbouring Boroughs – which may indicate a gap in provision for this age group;
- Barnet is characterised by a relatively high proportion of Asian/ Asian British – Indian residents – particularly in West Hendon and Colindale; and
- Non-white residents in Barnet are more active in sport than their counterparts in neighbouring Boroughs.

#### 4.1.2 Economic

- The majority of male and female residents in employment work more than 38 hours per week. This is similar or slightly higher than both the London and national averages;
- Unemployment levels are lower than the regional and national average, although Burnt Oak, Colindale and Coppetts wards all have high unemployment rates.

#### 4.1.3 Housing

- High population densities are found in Burnt Oak, West Finchley and Woodhouse wards. Population density is an indicator of open space need since open spaces are likely to be within reach of a greater number of people, and potentially be used more often due to a lack of private amenity space. Low densities are found in Mill Hill, Totteridge and High Barnet, which are all in the north of the Borough;
- The highest densities of children and young people are in Burnt Oak, Golders Green and Colindale wards. The lowest densities are in High Barnet, Totteridge and Mill Hill;
- Almost two thirds of dwellings in Barnet are houses or bungalows. However, East Finchley, Hendon and West Finchley wards have a relatively high proportion of flats as part of the housing stock;
- Dwellings are more likely to be owner occupied in Barnet than in the rest of London;

- Although the average residential dwelling density across Barnet is 14.6 per ha, Burnt Oak, West Finchley and East Finchley wards all have densities above 25 dwellings per ha.

#### **4.1.4 Deprivation and crime**

- Burnt Oak, Colindale, East Finchley, West Finchley and Edgware SOAs are all within the 10% most deprived areas in the UK. In 2004, Barnet had no areas within this deprivation bracket;
- Barnet has a relatively low crime rate, compared with the national average;
- Car ownership is above the London average, although one in three households does not have access to a car. Lowest access to a car levels are in the two most deprived wards of Burnt Oak and Colindale;
- In London, Barnet is third from bottom of London Boroughs in the public transport connectivity index. Transport links east-west are particularly poor.

#### **4.1.5 Health and satisfaction with sports facilities**

- Almost three quarters of residents in Barnet consider themselves to have good health (LB Barnet Health Profile (April 2008)) - this is a higher proportion than the London and regional average;
- 21.9% of adults in Barnet do moderate exercise of up to 30 minutes at least 3 days a week and only 29.3% were club members. In both categories, these rates placed Barnet in the middle 50% when compared to the rest of the country;
- In terms of satisfaction with local sports provision, Barnet was placed in the bottom 25% in the UK;
- Young people rated the delivery of council owned leisure facilities in Barnet much higher than adults – 53% of young people rated the service good or excellent, where adult residents gave a low rating of 23%. The satisfaction rating for London as a whole is 52%;
- Use of Barnet's parks and open spaces and council owned leisure facilities has decreased since last year.

#### **4.1.6 Key Issues**

This section has drawn out key demographic issues for the Open Space Assessment, based upon a selection of the socio-economic indicators. Our methodology looks to integrate these factors into the overall assessment. In particular, factors such as deprivation and proximity to growth areas are integrated to the quality and value assessment sections of the methodology. Therefore, the following key indicators must be considered when looking at the need for open space in Barnet

- High population density - provides an indication of greater demand for access to open space and sports facilities;
- Areas with a relatively high density of residential dwellings and areas with a high proportion of dwellings as flats or apartments, - housing type is a good indicator of open space need as, like density, it provides an indication of access to private open space in the form of gardens or yards;
- The child population as a proportion of the total population - child population densities provide an indication of the need for children's play provision within the Borough;
- The age profile of residents - influences the range and type of recreation provision needed, especially in relation to children's play and the balance between dedicated and informal recreational activities;
- Proximity to public transport and car ownership. Owning a car and accessibility to public transport is likely to increase accessibility to larger and more distant open spaces. It

may also increase accessibility to a range of open spaces for users such as the elderly and families with dependent children;

- A prevalence of illness and disability - recent best practice guidance identifies the contribution of open space towards healthy living, stating that open spaces have a preventative effect on ill health as a population;
- Proximity to key growth areas within Barnet, including the Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon regeneration area, Colindale and Mill Hill East, where there will be significant extra demand for open space and sports facilities;
- Areas in the most 10% deprived SOAs in the country – as an indicator of access to open space.

In terms of participation rates, older residents in Barnet have higher 'zero sports participation' rates than neighbouring Boroughs. Considering the high numbers of older people living within the borough, this may indicate a gap in provision for this age group. Although participation rates across most age groups under 55 are high compared with boroughs such as Enfield and Waltham Forest, in a national context, Barnet is within the middle 50%. There is a notable dissatisfaction with local sports provision and use of Barnet's parks and open spaces and council owned leisure facilities has decreased since last year (London Borough of Barnet Survey of Residents 2008).

Further details of the socio-economic profile of LB Barnet can be found in the Appendix I in the Appendix Volume.

## **4.2 Key Issues from consultation**

As directed by policy and best practice guidance, an assessment of the future requirements for open space and recreational in Barnet should be informed by undertaking consultation with key stakeholders and residents. Two consultation events were held as part of the assessment. Both workshops were useful in raising a number of resident and stakeholders' concerns about the provision and distribution of green spaces in the Borough, as well as highlighting some site-specific issues. All issues raised have been considered by the project team as part of the overall assessment. The Consultation Report can be found in the Appendix Volume.

### **4.2.1 Consultation Workshop 11<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

As part of the assessment, the study team, along with officers from the London Borough of Barnet held a consultation workshop on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2009 at the North London Business Park. The purpose of the workshop was to find out local residents views about the provision and quality of open space, sport and recreational facilities in their local area. 25 consultees attended the event from a wide range of interest groups.

Below provides a summary of the key issues highlighted from the consultation workshop. A full record of comments, as well as site specific issues, can be found within the Consultation Report in the Appendix Volume. Key issues raised at the event include:

#### **Information Gaps**

- Several participants at the workshop considered that areas of nature conservation importance and Metropolitan Open Land were not well represented and that parks and metropolitan open land should be recorded as two separate categories;
- It was also suggested that local nature reserves should be a separate category, to highlight the suggested deficiency of nature reserves in the Borough;
- Participants considered that more information about biodiversity should be recorded as part of the site audits, and directed the study team to 'Nature Conservation in Barnet' for useful information;
- Additional resources such as the Active People Survey, GiGL and the Sport England Facility Calculator were suggested as extra resources to augment the study material.

**Provision and Distribution**

- Attendees felt that open spaces are essential to the character of a suburban Borough and it is considered that open spaces are important for improving quality of life by helping to relieve stress;
- Small, semi-private spaces such as the land to the rear of Briarfield Avenue and the play spaces in Hampstead Garden Suburb are extremely valuable to the local community;
- Greater protection of smaller sites (under the 0.25 ha threshold audited as part of this assessment) is required, such as March Lane;
- Some attendees expressed concern that Barnet Council will seek to claim that low use of a facility or open space would be a reason to use the land to build on;
- There is a perceived deficiency of Local Parks within the Church Farm area;
- Some participants suggested that there is a lack of areas for children to play in (note this is different to children's play areas), and that in particular, children in the area near Summers Lane suffer from poor recreational provision;
- Barnet Council have a proposal to turn King George V Playing Fields into an Astro turf pitch;
- Some participants felt that more funding is required for the provision and management of open spaces, and expressed concern that Premier Parks receive a disproportionate amount of funding, to the detriment of other open spaces.

**Quality**

- Some attendees were of the view that there is currently a lack of management presence, which needs to be improved to create safer places;
- There is a conflict between over-management and encouraging wildlife;
- Some attendees expressed a need for need for a greater number of informal of spaces - residents like the informality of some of Barnet's open spaces which provide opportunities for children to climb trees rather than climbing frames, encouraging contact with nature.

**Accessibility**

- Alternative and more sustainable means of travel to the car are needed. Current provision of cycle lanes to parks was deemed nonexistent;
- Poor attitudes towards public transport and walking/ cycling are considered a major barrier to implementing alternative travel options to open spaces in Barnet;
- There is a need to consider what is an acceptable distance to walk to a park or open space, considering barriers, such as major roads;
- Suggested that better signage to parks needed;
- There is a need to increase connectivity and linkages between spaces, particularly for conservation purposes.

**Opportunities**

- Opportunities to use green space as an educational resource should be maximised;
- Opening school playing fields and playgrounds after hours and increasing dual use;
- Greater provision for 7-14 years required within children's play areas, including skate parks and BMX tracks;
- Outdoor gym facilities – alfresco gyms – particularly for older people;
- Greater awareness and promotion of open spaces in Barnet;

- There is scope to get children involved in the maintenance of open spaces;
- Arkley Fields South could be made into a common.

### **Sports and Recreational Facilities**

- Some participants felt that there is a general lack of provision of space for sport and recreational activities;
- It was suggested that there is a requirement for more and better quality sports facilities. Current facilities are perceived to be poor in quality;
- Barnet Council's leisure facilities now consist of gyms with treadmills and machines, and aerobics classes rather than badminton, basketball, netball, trampolining, gymnastics, climbing, football, athletics etc, facilities;
- There are too few tennis courts in the area;
- Barnet has some of the most expensive sports facilities in England. Residents are considered to be 'priced out' of using many of the Borough's facilities - private gym fees are too expensive.

### **Site-specific comments**

A number of comments about specific open spaces and recreational facilities were made during the workshop. Additional green spaces were also identified by attendees at the event (see the Appendix Volume), and, where appropriate, these were surveyed and included in assessment.

#### **4.2.2 Consultation Workshop 25<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

The event was structured around a presentation prepared by Arup. The event was interactive and attendees were encouraged to discuss each of the topics as they arose. The presentation was structured around the following topics:

- Introduction (including purpose of the assessment, timescale, work undertaken, key results of first consultation and objectives for the event);
- Socio-economic profile;
- Methodology and Approach;
- Future Growth in Barnet;
- Initial Quantity and Accessibility Results:
  - Parks
  - Children's Play
  - Sport Provision
  - Nature Conservation Areas
- Approach to Assessing Quality;
- Approach to Assessing Value;
- Next Steps.

The following issues were raised during the course of the consultation event:

### **Planned Future Growth**

It was noted that Arup has looked at the planned future growth in the Borough by reviewing planning applications and policy documents. From this they have estimated that there will be approximately 20ha increase in green space provision in the three main development areas (Cricklewood / Brent Cross; Mill Hill and Colindale).

### **Deficiency Areas**

It was agreed that Arup would compare the current UDP open space deficiency areas against the deficiency areas that are identified within the Study to determine the variations.

**Green Belt**

It was noted that overall the Borough has good coverage in terms of access to either a district or local park and that a large area of the borough is Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and that this should be subtracted from the calculations in order not to distort the findings. It was agreed that the geographical analysis will be refined by removing the Green Belt and MOL.

**Accessibility**

It was agreed that accessibility is vital as a criterion to judge adequacy of open spaces.

**Children's Play Provision**

Arup explained that for children's play provision, the catchment areas start from the edge of the park. It was suggested that the threshold catchment should be taken from the exact location of the play facility because in some cases it could be located a considerable distance from the park gates, for example Oakhill Park. It was noted that this would reduce the catchment areas covered and that getting to the play facility through the park is part of the experience. It was eventually agreed that catchment areas should start from the edge of the site.

**Non-Pitch Sport**

The Sports Development Team consider the provision of basket ball courts to be of importance because they provide opportunities for teenagers. Arup highlighted that the assessment so far covered football, rugby and cricket pitches. Information on other types of outdoor sports such as bowls, basketball and tennis courts was only held where these facilities are within parks and are therefore covered by the survey.

**Sites Outside the Borough Boundary**

It was noted that only sites within the borough boundary have been included in the assessment. It was suggested that a commentary about some of the key sites adjacent to the Borough could be included in the report, but that their catchment area would not be factored into the quantitative analysis.

**Hampstead Garden Suburb Private Gardens**

It was suggested that there are a number private gardens with resident's access in Hampstead Garden Suburb which could be included in the study. It was noted many of these sites do not have public access and are under the 0.25ha threshold and as such it is not suitable to include them in the assessment.

**Quality Assessment**

Arup sought LBB's advice on the best approach to assessing quality. It was recognised that there is only limited guidance on how the quality of open spaces should be assessed and the London Plan does not cover this in any detail.

Arup suggested that the following, which represent an adaption of the green flag criteria, could be used to assess quality of parks:

- Facilities and their variety/quality (using a formula);
- Signposting and information provision;
- Cleanliness, vandalism and management/maintenance assessment;
- Welcoming – based on safety, disabled provision, noise characteristics;
- Quality and variety of natural features/landscape;
- IMD & Open Space provision correlation and socio-economic analysis; and
- Potential for improvement (including design).

Quality can be assessed using the survey information, as well as the knowledge of the Arup team and LBB staff, but it was important to screen facilities according to their primary purpose, which needs to be determine for each site.

It was generally agreed that sports will be included as a facility within a park. It was noted that different open spaces have different functions and that LBB would not want to see all facilities available in all open spaces. It was agreed that the list of facilities would be tailored to the type of open space and that the quality assessment would focus on parks and natural green space, but also consider play space and outdoor sports provision as far as possible given level of information in the survey. It was noted that parks are typically not lit and LBB wouldn't want parks to automatically score poorly because they are not lit.

#### **Assessment of Value**

It was suggested that it is very difficult to assess value without community involvement, and that other similar assessments have only assessed the value of sites which are considered for disposal or change of use.

It was noted that Barnet do have a list of assets for each park, some tree surveys and a list of events, but they do not have any up to date information on usage. It was agreed that an assessment of value would be undertaken based on a workshop with Barnet officers and analysis of the information available.

#### **Tranquillity**

It was agreed that assessing tranquillity of each park is not within the scope of this study.

### **4.3 Implications for the Study**

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The socio-economic demographic analysis of the Borough, as well as the outcomes of the consultation event, has been incorporated into our assessment.

#### **Change in Assessment Typology**

- The most significant outcome is the creation of a dedicated natural and semi-natural green spaces category following the consultation event;
- The importance of the Borough's natural green spaces is also recognised in the quality and value assessment;
- The quality assessment includes a section on natural features where points are available for the variety of natural features and the site's classification in the GLA hierarchy and other nature classifications such as SSSI;
- The value assessment also places considerable weight on the natural features of each site with points being awarded for landscape character / mature trees, water bodies and wildlife corridors.

#### **Quality Assessment**

- Discussion about the most suitable method for the quality assessment that took place at the second consultation event had considerable bearing on the final methodology;
- The criteria against which each open space is scored have now been tailored to the specific type of open space in order to capture the specific quality requirements of each type of open space.

#### **Greenbelt**

- Following this event the quantity assessment was redone to exclude Green Belt;
- A commentary on open spaces on the edge of the Borough boundary has also been provided.

#### **Opportunities for enhancement**

- The consultation event highlighted the opportunity for open spaces to be used as an educational resource. This factor has been incorporated into the value assessment where points are available for sites currently used as outdoor classrooms and sites with potential to be used as such in the future to indicate enhancement opportunities;

- The importance of non-pitch sport was also noted at this event, and consequently an additional assessment of bowling greens, outdoor tennis courts and basketball / netball courts have been undertaken in order to highlight opportunities for enhancement.

**Site-specific issues**

- In addition all site specific comments raised at the consultation event were crossed checked with the quality and value assessment to ensure the findings tallied with the opinion of residents;
- The sites identified during the consultation event, which had not previously been surveyed, were incorporated into the Assessment.

**Socio-economic/ Demographic Analysis**

- In light of the socio economic analysis, key demographic social and economic indicators that influence the open space needs of individual parts of the borough have been included in the value assessment;
- We have used GIS and the appropriate datasets, e.g. IMD, Census data, in order to analyse the interface between key demographic indicators and open space provision;
- During the assessment of value, points have been awarded to those sites located in the most deprived 10% and 20% LSOAs of the Borough, as an indicator of providing much needed access to open space;
- High population density provides an indication of greater demand for access to open space. The population density of the area in which the park is located has also been assessed as part of the value assessment, with those sites located in the densest parts of the Borough being awarded additional points;
- Housing type is a good indicator of open space need as, like density, it provides an indication of access to private open space in the form of gardens or yards. Therefore, the proximity to flats has also been assessed as part of the value assessment; those sites located near to high concentrations of flats have been awarded additional value points;
- The proximity of a site to key growth areas within Barnet, including the Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon regeneration area, Colindale and Mill Hill East, have also been incorporated in order to reflect where there may be significant extra demand for open space and sports facilities.

## 5 Overview of Open Space in Barnet

### 5.1 Overview of Existing Open Space

Overall the Borough of Barnet has good open space provision. **Figure 1** illustrates that there is a considerable amount of open space which is distributed across the Borough. Larger open spaces tend to be located in the north of the Borough, with smaller parks located further south in the more densely built up areas. Another feature of open space in the Borough is the Dollis Valley which forms a continuous green corridor through the centre of the Borough.

As discussed in Chapter 2 all sites were classified in to the following primary typologies:

- Parks and Gardens – Metropolitan, District or Local
- Outdoor Sports and Recreation Sites – Local Authority owned, Clubs and Schools
- Provision for Children and Young People
- Natural / Semi-natural Green Space– Nature reserves and Green Corridors
- Amenity Green Space
- Other – e.g. ‘SLOAP’ and grass verges.

**Table 2** categorises all site by their primary typology.

**Table 2: All sites by Primary Typology**

Open Space by Primary Typology	Number of Sites	Area (ha)
Parks	73	481.07
- <i>District Parks</i>	7	207.34
- <i>Local Parks</i>	66	273.73
Children’s Playgrounds	6	1.26
Outdoor Sports Provision	54	380.34
- <i>Local Authority</i>	23	220.03
- <i>Clubs</i>	19	74.83
- <i>Schools</i>	12	85.93
Natural / Semi-natural Green Space	49	367.38
- <i>Nature Reserve</i>	28	286.59
- <i>Green Corridor</i>	21	80.79
Amenity Green Space	49	15.50
Other	43	32.35
<b>Total</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>1277.9</b>

In total 274 sites covering a total area of 1277.9 ha have been included in this study. Since only a proportion of school sites will be used for sports pitches, when considering the overall quantum of open space in the Borough it is suitable to exclude them. This results in an overall area of 1191.97 ha of open space, which is approximately 14% of the Borough. In addition to these sites there are a number of other areas of open space not included in this study, most notably the private areas of Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land; the overall area of green space in the borough is therefore considerably higher.

In order to calculate the area of open space in the Borough which is easily accessible to the public the total area of parks, local authority owned sports sites, sports clubs with public access and nature conservation sites have been summed to total 1143.31 ha. When this is divided by the total Borough population of 314,564 it equates to 3.63ha of open space per 1,000 residents.

Public parks are the most abundant form of open space provision in the Borough representing 40% of the total open space area surveyed. Parks have been classified as either Metropolitan, District or Local according to their size. The Borough does not have any Metropolitan Parks, but does contain seven district parks and 66 local parks. Large commons such as Monken Hadley and Hampstead Heath Extension which play the role of a park are distinctive part of Barnet. Approximately 5.5% of the total Borough area is formal park. Natural / semi-natural green spaces have the second largest land take representing 30.8% of all open space area.

LB Barnet contains 16 Premier Parks, which are exemplar parks due to their attractiveness, accessibility, maintenance and facilities (see 5.3 below). Within this Study, 10 of these Premier Parks have been classified as local parks and two as district parks. The remaining four sites have been primarily categorised as sports sites. **Table 3** identifies how each Premier Park has been classified.

**Table 3: Primary classification of Premier Parks**

Local Parks:	District Parks:	Sports Sites:
Childs Hill & Basing Parks Cherry Tree Wood Edgwarebury Park Friary Park Hendon Park Mill Hill Park, Old Court House Swan Lane Open Space Victoria Park; and Watling Park.	Oakhill Park; and Sunny Hill Park.	Lyttleton Playing Fields; Tudor Sports Ground; Victoria Recreation Ground; and West Hendon Playing Fields.

Premier Parks are managed to provide a high quality recreational experience with an appropriate range of facilities, all of which are measured against the Civic Trust's Green Flag Award criteria. More detailed analysis of parks in the Borough can be found in Chapter 6.

There are six sites classified as children's play areas, these are sites whose primary function is to provide formal children's play provision and do not contain any other features such as grassed areas or playing pitches. Formal play provision in the form of LEAPs and NEAPs is provided at a number of other sites that have a different primary function, most often district or local parks. A commentary about all sites which contain play provision can be found at Chapter 7.

There are 54 sports sites in the Borough which have public access. Sites which do not have public access have been excluded from this study. Of these 54 sites the majority are local authority owned, with a significant number being owned and managed by sports clubs. The remainder of sports sites are schools which have facilities which the public can use outside of school hours. Further commentary about the playing pitches at each of these sites can be found in Chapter 8.

This study has identified 49 sites of natural / semi natural greenspace, of these 28 are nature reserves and 21 form part of a green corridor. Sites classified as green corridor have been classified as such through analysis of the Borough map. The main green corridor in the Borough is the Dollis Valley, with additional green corridors running along Pymmes Brook, Mutton Brook and Folly Brook. Where sites are nature reserves and also form part of a green corridor they have been classified as nature reserves.

A number of sites in this study not primarily categorised as natural / semi natural green space are recognised to have nature conservation value. In Chapter 9 all sites which appear in the Barnet Unitary Development Plan's list of sites of nature conservation importance have been included in the quantity assessment, regardless of their primary typology.

As part of this study 49 amenity green spaces have been included. These are located across the Borough and are typically found in housing areas. Generally speaking these areas are grassed and do not have any formal street furniture. This study does not include a comprehensive assessment of all amenity greenspace in the Borough.

43 sites assessed at part of this study do not fall into any of the above categories, the majority of these are incidental pieces of open space which have no specific purpose such as spaces termed 'space left over after planning' in PPG 17 (SLOAP) and grass verges which fall under the size threshold of this study. In addition one urban farm was visited. Allotments were excluded from this study; however one allotment at Welsh Harp Nature reserve was visited and is included in the 'other' category. The study of allotments is a specialist field for which the LB Barnet has a separate dedicated strategy.

## 5.2 Comparisons with Other Borough's

In order to understand Barnet's existing open space provision, comparisons were made with the level of supply across other London Boroughs. **Table 4** provides an overview of existing and future quantity standards, where available, for a range of inner and outer London Boroughs. This table was derived using previous Open Space Assessments, as follows:

- London Borough of Enfield / Atkins (2006) Enfield Open Space and Sports Assessment
- London Borough of Hackney / Atkins (2004) Hackney Open Space and Sports Assessment
- London Borough of Haringey / Atkins (2003) Haringey Open Space and Sports Assessment
- London Borough of Haringey (2008) Haringey Open Space and Recreation Standards SPD
- London Borough of Merton / Atkins (2002) *Merton Open Space Study*
- London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (2007) Borough's Sport, Open Space and Recreation Needs Assessment
- London Borough of Sutton / Scott Wilson (2005) *Sutton Open Space Study*
- London Borough of Wandsworth / Atkins (2007) *Wandsworth Open Space Study*
- Royal Borough of Kingston / Atkins (2006) *Kingston Open Space Assessment*

In terms of provision of overall open space, Barnet's existing 3.63ha per 1,000 population scores poorly compared to similar outer London Boroughs, such as Richmond (17ha) and neighbouring Borough of Enfield (7.33ha). However, a significant amount of Barnet's open space is within the Greenbelt and Metropolitan Open Space, which are outside the remit of this assessment. This must therefore be considered in interpreting these results.

- Barnet's existing supply of public parks (1.55ha per 1,000) scores much more comparably with other outer London Boroughs, scoring higher than both Kingston (1.12ha per 1,000) and Merton (0.81ha per 1,000). However, nearby Enfield has a

greater existing provision of public parks, with 2.59ha available for every 1,000 residents;

- Existing children's play space for Barnet is 0.01ha per 1,000 population. Whilst this is similar to supply of children's play facilities in Wandsworth (0.013ha), Kingston's current provision is 0.15ha, with the aim of achieving future standards to 0.8ha per 1,000;
- Barnet's playing pitch provision of 0.51ha per 1,000 is comparable to Wandsworth, Kingston but also Hackney, which is an inner London suburb. Only Merton has a significantly higher supply of playing pitches at 3.6ha per 1,000;
- Natural greenspace supply within Barnet is 2.36ha per 1,000, which is similar to Kingston but less than Boroughs such as Wandsworth and Enfield, which are well served by 3.13 ha and 4.87ha of natural green space per 1,000 population respectively.

A full list of open space provision within Barnet by typology is available in the Appendix Volume.

**Table 4 Comparison of Existing and Future Quantity Open Space Standards across London**

London Boroughs	PARKS		CHILDREN'S PLAY SPACE		PLAYING PITCHES		NATURAL GREEN SPACE		OPEN SPACE	
	Existing	Future	Existing	Future	Existing	Future	Existing	Future	Existing	Future
Inner London										
Hackney	1.49ha per 1,000	1.36ha per 1,000	No quantity standards available	No quantity standards available	0.58ha per 1,000	0.65ha per 1,000	1.45ha per 1,000	1ha per 1,000	2.30ha per 1,000	2.01ha per 1,000
Haringey	No quantity standards available	1.65ha per 1,000	No quantity standards available	3sqm of play space per child	1 pitch for every 2,813	0.57ha per 1,000	No quantity standards available	1.82ha per 1,000 <sup>1</sup>	1.7ha per 1,000	2.22ha per 1,000
Outer London										
Enfield	2.59ha per 1,000	2.43ha per 1,000	No quantity standards available	0.8ha per 1,000	1 pitch for every 899 adults	0.78ha per 1,000	4.87 per 1,000	1ha per 1,000 <sup>2</sup>	7.33ha per 1,000	No quantity standards available
Kingston	1.12ha per 1,000	1.11ha per 1,000	0.15ha per 1,000	0.8ha per 1,000	0.59ha per 1,000 <sup>3</sup>	No quantity standards available	2.24ha per 1,000	1ha per 1,000	5.70ha per 1,000	No quantity standards available
Merton	0.81ha per 1,000	No quantity standards available	No quantity standards available	No quantity standards available	3.6ha per 1,000	+8% football; +5% cricket, rugby and hockey	0.3ha per 1,000	0.26ha per 1,000	4ha per 1,000	No quantity standards available
Richmond	No quantity standards available	All population to be within: local park - 400m; district park - 1.2km;	No quantity standards available	All population to be within 400m of an equipped playground	No quantity standards available	2.43ha per 1,000 (playing fields); 1 multiple pitch within 1.2km catchment	No quantity standards available	All population to be within 500m of a wildlife site	13 ha per 1,000	No quantity standards available
Sutton	No quantity standards available	No quantity standards available	No quantity standards available	No quantity standards available	No quantity standards available	No quantity standards available	No quantity standards available	No quantity standards available	2.88ha per 1,000	2.88 ha per 1,000
Wandsworth	2.45ha per 1,000	2.15ha per 1,000	0.013ha per 1,000	0.021ha per 1,000	0.31ha per 1,000	0.29ha per 1,000	3.13ha per 1,000 <sup>4</sup>	1ha per 1,000 <sup>5</sup>	4.07ha per 1,000	No quantity standards available
<b>BARNET</b>	<b>1.55ha per 1,000</b>		<b>0.01ha per 1,000</b>		<b>0.51ha per 1,000</b>		<b>2.36ha per 1,000</b>		<b>3.63ha per 1,000</b>	

Note: Future quantity standards for Barnet are determined within chapters 6, 7, 8, and 9 of this study

<sup>1</sup> SINC<sup>2</sup> SINC<sup>3</sup> Public playing fields<sup>4</sup> LA designated SINC<sup>5</sup> For wards with less than 1ha per 1,000 of SINC

### **5.3 Proposals and Initiatives**

In addition to understanding current existing supply, it is important to consider planned improvements to the open space network, both in terms of additional new provision and in terms of committed investment and initiatives to improve existing open space. There may be opportunities to extend and develop these schemes and initiatives in order to add further value and spread the benefits. These schemes also provide examples which could help to identify the next range of opportunities to improve and integrate the open space network.

#### **5.3.1 Green Flag Awards and Premier Parks**

The Borough has 16 premier parks which are exemplar parks and the Council's primary green space assets. While Premier Parks primarily provide for informal recreation they also often contain considerable provision for sport and include facilities such as playgrounds, and cafes. Premier Parks are managed to provide a high quality recreational experience with an appropriate range of facilities, all of which are measured against the Civic Trust's Green Flag Award criteria. Currently seven of the Premier Parks have Green Flag Status. Barnet Council have strategically allocated Premier Parks across the Borough to ensure that most homes are located within 1 mile.

The Council has developed a 5 year improvement plan for all Premier Parks with the objective of an overall improvement year on year in terms of the number of parks achieving Green Flag status. When the full standard is achieved this standard will be maintained.

The conclusions of this study and in particular the analysis of areas of deficiency and quality and value of current provision will help inform the Council's decisions about investment in the Borough, including the priorities for Premier Parks.

#### **5.3.2 Dollis Valley Green Walk**

The Dollis Valley Green Walk is an important green corridor through the heart of Barnet along the Dollis Brook, incorporating a range of open spaces and serving residents from a number of wards within the borough. The walk is moderately flat and provides wildlife and recreational uses, from dog-walking to seasonal football, as well as areas for play. However, in parts the corridor is poorly maintained and feels unsafe.

The Dollis Valley Green Walk has won a grant of £600,000 as part of the Mayor of London's Help a London Park initiative, which is to be spent on:

- Footpaths;
- Lighting and entrances creating safer routes for walking;
- Accessibility, increasing use of the walk and open spaces as a safe route for walking to the neighbouring shops, work, school and public transport links;
- Play facilities by installing new equipment for toddlers and juniors in Windsor Open Space, natural play facilities near Brent Park and new play equipment in Riverside Walk;
- Introduction of new wildlife habitats including a new wetland woodland habitat and reed bed, restoration of hedgerows and the enhancement of the current hay meadows;
- Landscaping including entrances into the parks which will be made more attractive and welcoming; and
- Information boards, finger posts and so on to encourage visitors to explore the network identifying points of interest and places to visit.

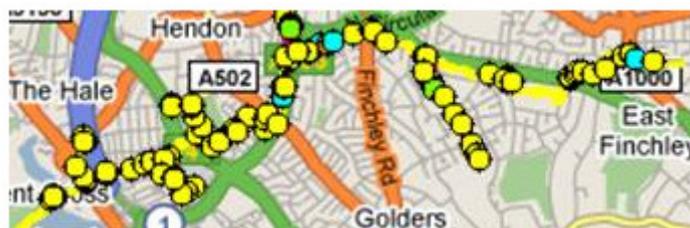
#### **5.3.3 Capital Ring**

The Capital Ring is a green route that encircles London, linking parks and open spaces. The route is also known as the 'walkers' M25' and consists of 15 sections within 7-16km radius

of Charing Cross, each averaging a distance of 7.8km. The Capital Ring is one of six strategic walking routes established by TfL and maintained by the London Walking Forum.

Section 11 of 15 incorporates a green route between Hendon Park and Priory Gardens, Hendon. The section within Barnet links Hendon Park in the east, along the River Brent through Brent Park, various spaces along the route of the A1 and through Hampstead Garden Suburb to Cherry Tree Wood in East Finchley. The route also links into the Dollis Valley Green Walk. Other points of interest outlined within the route include Mutton Brook, Highgate Wood and Queen's Wood.

Section 11 coincides with the Dollis Valley Greenwalk, offering an opportunity for further funding from the GLA as well as better co-ordination with regard to signage along the route. The London Walking Forum has identified 84 issues along the Capital Ring, which require funding. The geographic location of these issues is illustrated in the image below.



#### Location of Capital Ring Issues in Barnet

##### 5.3.4 Friends of Parks Initiatives

There are a number of active civic, amenity and Friends groups in the borough. These groups are generally formed from an informal group of local residents with an interest in their local park or open space. These groups include Friends of Edgwarebury Park, Friends of Friary Park, Friends of Hendon Park, Friends of Mill Hill Park and Friends of Oak Hill Park. These groups meet regularly, develop newsletters, organise clearance schemes, litter picks, walks and other activities. One of the issues raised at the consultation event (and through Parks Working Party) was the need for more active engagement of the community, including raising the profile and publicity of open spaces and the work of these groups. A full list of all community groups consulted within this assessment can be found in the Consultation Report.

##### 5.3.5 Other Proposals

A number of future proposals for open spaces in the Borough were highlighted during the first consultation event (see sub-chapter 4.2). These included converting Arkley Fields South into a Common and Barnet Council's proposals to turn King George V Playing Fields into an Astroturf pitch.

#### 5.4 Growth Area Proposals

Barnet's three Growth Areas all contain proposals to increase the provision of open space as well as enhance existing supply. **Table 5** outlines the quantity of existing and additional open spaces as within each Growth Area, which are further detailed below.



Existing open space	Area (Ha)	Proposed improvements?	Proposed new open space	Additional area (Ha)
Colindale Park	1.09		To be retained and improved	None
			Aerodrome Park	5.00
			New green space for residents to be provided within Beaufort Park	*
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>4.71</b>
<b>TOTAL PROPOSED OPEN SPACE IN GROWTH AREA</b>				<b>18.74</b>

**5.4.1 Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon**

A total of 8.53ha of additional open space is proposed within the planning application for Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon. As well as extending existing spaces, such as Clitterhouse Playing Fields, a total of 9 new parks will also be created. **Map 1** provides an illustration of the indicative location of open spaces.

**Map 1: Open Space Masterplan for Cricklewood, Brent Cross and West Hendon**



New open space proposals include:

- ‘woodland’ garden at Claremont Park;
- neighbourhood wide facilities and amenities, such as a 1,000m<sup>2</sup> play area, at Eastern Park;
- linear landscape park at Brent Terrace Park;
- nature park at Brent Riverside Park;
- city park at Office District Park;
- wild flower meadow at North Circular Nature Park;
- nature gardens at Railway Land; and
- strategic cycle and pedestrian routes at Eastern Lands Linear Park.

An Open Space Hierarchy is proposed within the Brent Cross Cricklewood area to ensure well distributed and diverse open spaces. This is outlined in **Table 6**.

**Table 6 Open Space Hierarchy for Brent Cross Cricklewood**

Type of Space	Size Range	Radial Distribution
Community Park	15-20ha	1,200m
Medium Open Spaces	1.2-2.7ha	400m
Small Open Spaces	0.05-0.6ha	250m

### 5.4.2 Mill Hill East

The Area Action Plan for Mill Hill East proposes an additional 5.5ha of public open space, which will be achievable partly through four new local public parks of sufficient size to provide a range of facilities. These parks will be located in areas with panoramic views, such as over Wembley and Highgate Hill, and will be of sufficient size to provide a range of facilities and uses. These uses include informal recreation, landscape gardens, wildlife areas and sustainable drainage infrastructure. The 5.5ha of public open space will also incorporate the retention of woodland north of the Greenbelt and sports pitches for community and school use.

As well as increasing onsite provision, policies require developer contributions to improve existing open spaces and accessibility to sites, such as Bittacy Hill Park. Under Children's play provisions, the APP outlines that developers are also required to provide for play space following an assessment of need.

The APP states that public open space and play space within Mill Hill East should be functional as well as accessible. In particular, play spaces should be within residential areas with safe access.

**Map 2** provides an overview plan of the location of open spaces, as well as other environmental infrastructure, within the AAP area.

#### Map 2: Open Space and Sustainable Urban Drainage Masterplan for Mill Hill East AAP



### 5.4.3 Colindale

The Colindale Area Action Plan proposals include the creation of the 5ha Aerodrome Park. The AAP identifies the new open space as an exemplar park to address the recreational deficiencies in the area immediately north of the park as well as meet the needs of new residents. Proposals include publicly accessible sports and leisure facilities, areas of nature conservation and flood management systems as well as a high quality and safe

environment. Direct access is outlined from Colindale Avenue and the public transport interchange as well as via a new link to Colindeep Lane. **Map 3** illustrates the proposed Aerodrome Park and surrounding redevelopment.

**Map 3: Aerodrome Park Proposal**



Proposals within the AAP also include improvements to Montrose Park, Silk Stream Park and Grahame Park in order to ensure existing and new residents have access to good quality public open spaces. These are outlined in **Map 4**.

**Map 4: Open Space Masterplan for Colindale AAP**



Figure 3.6 Colindale AAP public realm plan

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## 6 Park Provision in Barnet

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the current supply of public parks within the Borough through the application of London's public open space hierarchy defined in Chapter 2. It provides an analysis of the current provision in terms of its quantity and accessibility and identifies areas of deficiencies in provision.

### 6.2 Quantity and Distribution

Within Barnet a total of 73 public parks were identified. Together these spaces comprise some 481.07 ha of land within the Borough. Overall there are seven District Parks and 66 Local Parks in Barnet. The parks vary considerably in size; the smallest is Hamilton Road Playground which is 0.04ha and the largest is Monken Hadley Common which is over 41ha. The Borough does not contain any parks large enough to be classified as Metropolitan Parks.

The parks are not distributed evenly across the Borough; there is a concentration of larger parks in the northern, more rural parts of the Borough. High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge (Area 4) has by far the largest area of parks; it contains three District Parks (Monken Hadley Common, King George V Field and Brook Farm/Wyatt's Farm) and 12 Local Parks. It does not contain significantly more parks than the other areas but the parks which are located in this area tend to be larger. In comparison East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse (Area 2) does not contain any District Parks and only 9 Local Parks, covering a total area of just 22.7ha. **Figure 2** illustrates the distribution of Public Parks.

A table of all parks, their size and the area in which they are located can be found in the Appendix Volume. More information about the distribution of parks across the borough is contained in the **Table 7** below.

**Table 7: Distribution of Public Parks**

Geographical area	Number of Parks		Total area of public parks	Population 2001	Public park area per 1,000 (ha)
	District	Local			
1: Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb	1	12	60.98	48,237	1.26
2: East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse	0	9	22.68	58,141	0.39
3: Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet	1	11	90.72	59,244	1.53
4: High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge	3	12	161.84	44,017	3.68
5: Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill	1	13	87.41	45,858	1.91
6: Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon.	1	9	64.26	59,067	1.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>487.89</b>	<b>314,564</b>	<b>1.55</b>

Overall within the Borough there is 1.55 ha of public park provision per 1,000 population. However, the table above demonstrates that the levels of provision vary significantly between assessment areas. This information is also illustrated on **Figure 3**. The overall level of provision ranges from 0.39 ha per 1,000 population in Area 2 to 3.68 ha per 1,000 population in High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge (Area 4). This variability is largely due to the

spatial distribution of parks in the Borough, but also the distribution of population - the assessment areas which are located more centrally tend to have a higher housing density and higher population. It should be recognised that assessment area level comparisons are potentially misleading and should be viewed in the context of overall levels of open space provision and the pattern of land uses within each area. In practice residents of Barnet will use parks in all areas, and in addition to formal parks there may be other forms of open spaces available to residents.

### **6.2.1 Area of Deficiency**

Three of the assessment areas fall below the Borough's park provision average of 1.55ha per 1,000 population, these are:

- 1 - Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb
- 2 - East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse; and
- 6 - Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon.

This analysis only uses the current provision to identify deficiency; it is not based on a policy for improvement. Within these areas it is possible to identify more specific areas which have a deficiency of park provision. As set out in Chapter 2 areas of deficiency have been identified by mapping the catchment areas of parks using the London public open space hierarchy. **Figure 4** illustrates the parts of the Borough not within a Local Park; **Figure 5** illustrates the areas not within the catchment of a District Park and **Figure 6** shows the areas not within the catchment of either a Local or District Park.

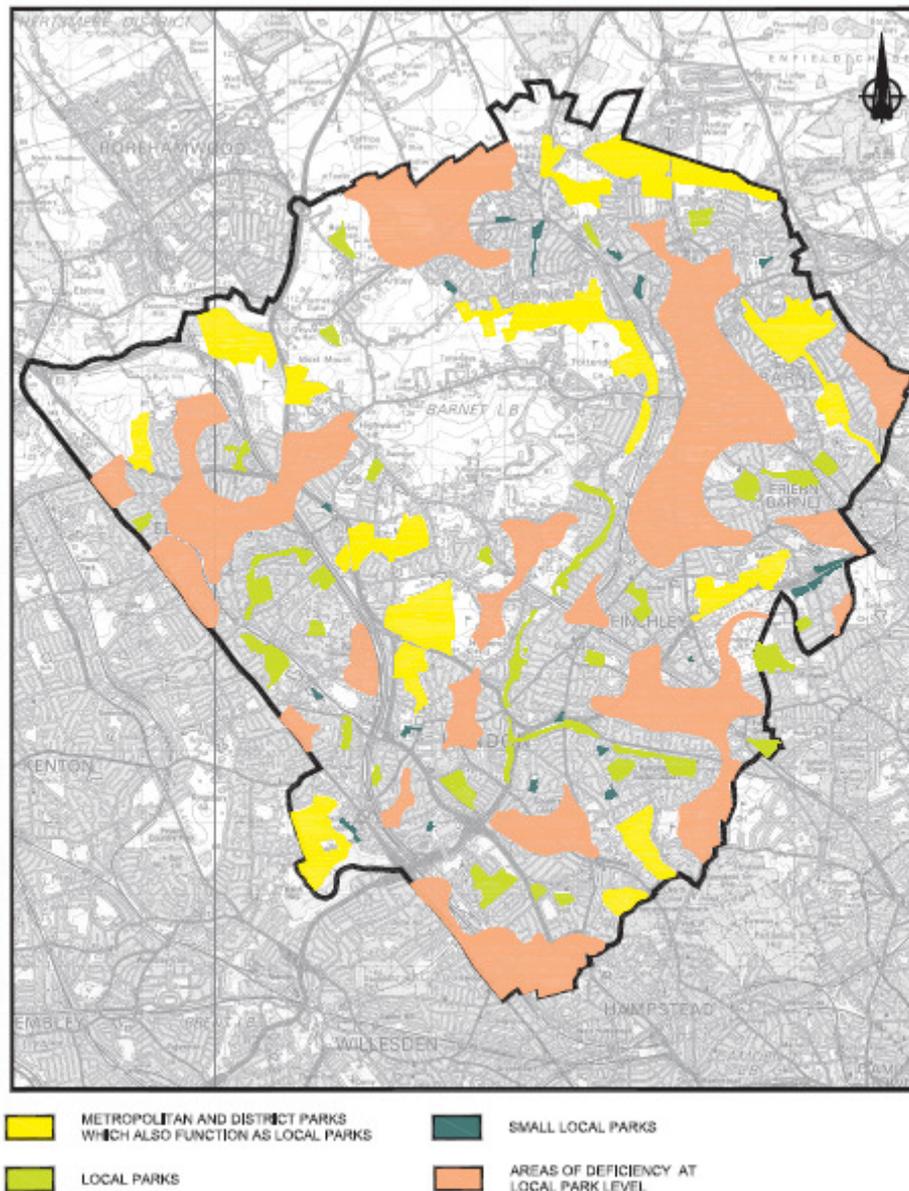
North and East Finchley and Brent Cross / Cricklewood have a particular deficiency in District Park provision. It is important for the assessment to relate quantitative deficiencies to the character, density and other needs of areas within the Borough. Deficiency areas with a high proportion of dwellings that are terraced flats or apartments are likely to be more significant than other deficiency areas as residents are less likely to have access to private gardens. Totteridge does not have access to a District Park but has a lower population density. Furthermore, areas with a more suburban character, such as Totteridge, may also have significant concentrations of private open space which, although may not be accessible to the general public, provides relief from the built up area and contributes towards visual amenity. There are large areas of open space in Totteridge which are private Green Belt but with some public footpaths traversing them, for example there is a footpath from Totteridge Lane to Darlands Lake. These footpaths are currently not prominent and poorly signposted. There are also pockets of deficiency in Burnt Oak/ Edgware, however in this area there is a large number of local parks which make up the shortfall.

Local Parks are more evenly spread across the Borough and overall most areas of the Borough are well served, however a section of the Borough from New Barnet to Oakleigh Park and parts of North Finchley, East Finchley and an area to the North East of Hendon are not within 400m of a Local Park.

This study has not considered parks outside the Borough boundary; however in reality residents who live on the edge of the Borough are likely to use open spaces located in neighbouring boroughs. The most notable example of this is the proximity of East Finchley to Hampstead Heath in Camden and Highgate Wood and Queens Wood in Haringey. Also Grovelands Park in Camden, which is located to the East of Southgate Underground Station, is easily accessible to Barnet residents living in Southgate. There is also a large area of open space at Canons Park, which is located within the Borough of Harrow, but in close proximity to Edgware.

The Barnet UDP identifies areas of public open space deficiency in the borough based on the open space hierarchy, and areas of deficiency at local park level, the map included in the UDP can be found below in **Map 5**.

**Map 5: Area of Deficiency as identified in the Barnet UDP**



It would be misleading to directly compare the results of the two studies due to differences in methodology, however broadly speaking the areas of deficiency as illustrated above show similarities with the findings of this study. The UDP assessment did not exclude areas of Green belt and as such has identified Rowley Green as an area of deficiency which is not identified in this study. As in this study a section of the Borough from New Barnet southwards to Oakleigh Park is highlighted as having a deficiency. The UDP also recognises a deficiency in East Finchley, the area to the North East of Hendon, and Golders Green.

The UDP identified the southern most part of the Borough in Cricklewood as having a deficiency; this area is recognised to have a small area of deficiency in this study however the area not within a catchment area seems to have been reduced with the provision of the Claremont Road Millennium Park. Similarly the area of deficiency in East Finchley is smaller in this study than the UDP due to the inclusion of Oak Lane Open Space as a Local Park. The UDP also identifies Edgware as having a deficiency. This study identifies Edgware as

having poor access to a District Park, and parts of Edgware as also having poor access to a Local Park.

### 6.2.2 Approach to Analysis

Two strands of analysis have been undertaken to develop a standard for future park provision. The first approach is geographical and identifies the number of parks required to ensure that the entire Borough is within the catchment of a District and Local Park. The second approach considers how many additional parks will be needed to provide for the forecast increase in population.

#### a) Geographical Analysis

In order to identify areas of the Borough which do not have easy access to a park catchments for each type of park have been mapped. The catchments for each type of park were defined using the GLA open space hierarchy set out in Policy 3D.1 of the London Plan. This states that local parks have a catchment of 400m and district parks of 1200m. This assessment does not take into account the quality and function of the parks, but merely looks are where they are located in relation to the population that might use them.

A catchment area was drawn around each park from the park boundary; the catchment shape is therefore very much dependent on the shape of the park. The catchment areas are mapped using radial distance and do not take into account walking routes. From this assessment the average area covered by each parks catchment was calculated by dividing the total area covered by all park catchments by the number of parks. For District Parks the average catchment of each is 829.13 ha and for Local Parks it is 91.26 ha as illustrated in **Table 8**.

**Table 8: Catchment of Parks**

	A	B	C
	Total area covered by catchment of all parks (ha)	Number of parks	Average catchment of each park (ha)
District Parks	5803.93	7	829.13
Local Parks	6023.11	66	91.26

The indicative threshold population for each type of public park type within the Borough is derived by calculating the area of each catchment and applying average population densities. The findings of the 2001 Census show that the Borough has a population density of 36.4 persons per hectare and a household size of 2.4 persons per household. Applying these densities to the average catchment area of each parks means that Local Parks typically serve a catchment with a population of some 3,320 people or 1,380 households. District Parks have a catchment threshold of some 30,180 people (12,580 households). Currently 211,260 people or 88,030 households are within the catchment of a District Park and 219,240 people (91,350 households) are within the catchment of a Local Park.

A significant proportion of the Borough is Green Belt (**Figure 7**) illustrates the extent of the Green Belt) which is largely unpopulated and does not therefore have to be within the catchment of either District or Local Parks. For the purposes of this assessment the Green Belt has therefore been excluded.

Overall 5380.16 ha of the Borough is either within the catchment of a District Park or is Green Belt. The Borough covers a total area of 8673.73ha and therefore 3293.57ha is not within the catchment of a District Park nor is Green Belt. Overall 6035.92 of the Borough is either within the catchment of a Local Park or is Green Belt, meaning that 2637.81 ha falls outside of this.

Applying the above catchment areas to the parts of the Borough which do not currently have access to a park and are not Green Belt (i.e. dividing the area not within a catchment nor

Green Belt by the average catchment of each park) results in a need for four district parks and 29 local parks, as detailed in **Table 9** below:

**Table 9: Number of Additional Parks – Geographical Analysis**

	Total borough area (ha)	Area of Borough within Catchment Area or Green Belt (ha)	Area of Borough not within Catchment Area or Green Belt (ha)	Average catchment area of each park	Number of additional parks required
District Parks	8673.73	5,380.15	3,293.58	829.13	4
Local Parks	8673.73	6,035.92	2,637.81	91.26	29

Assuming each district park is 20ha and each local park is 2 ha this equates to an increase in park provision of 138ha (80ha of District Park and 58ha of Local Park). In practice it is not feasible to achieve complete coverage of the borough as opportunities to provide new open space will not necessarily coincide with the deficiency areas. However this analysis gives an idea of the quantum of open space required to achieve ideal coverage.

#### **b) Population Increase Analysis**

The population of the Borough of Barnet is forecast to grow to 384,600 by 2026, representing an increase of over 70,000 residents. This approach calculates the number of parks required to accommodate this extra population. Effectively this calculates the number of additional parks required to maintain the current population to park ratio given the increase in population. Currently there is one Local Park for approximately 45,000 population, and one District Park for 5,000 people.

Currently there are seven District Parks serving a population of 314,564, in future it is estimated that 9 District Parks will be required to serve a population of 384,600. The Borough currently has 66 Local Parks; in order to serve the increase population an extra 15 Local Parks will be needed.

**Table 10: Number of Additional Parks –Population Increase Analysis**

	Number of parks	Existing population	Future population (2026)	Total number of parks needed	Additional parks
District	7	314,564	384,600	9	2
Local	66	314,564	384,600	81	15

Assuming each district park is 20ha and each local park is 2 ha this equates to an increase in park provision of 70Ha.

### **6.3 Accessibility**

The accessibility assessment comprises four criteria:

- 5) Whether the park is on or adjacent to the Public Rights of Way Network
- 6) Whether the park has an above average number of London Cycle Routes within 100m compared to the rest of the sites in this category
- 7) Whether the park has an above average number of bus routes within 640m compared to the rest of the sites in this category
- 8) Whether the Park has an underground station or national rail station within 940m.

**Figure 8** illustrates public parks in relation to cycle routes in the London Cycle Guide and Public Rights of Way. **Figure 9** illustrates public parks in relation to rail and underground stations and bus stops and bus routes.

67% of parks are not on or adjacent to the Public Rights of Way Network. 77% of are parks not on/adjacent to a cycle route, but on average there are nine London Cycle Routes within 100m of each site. All parks are within 640m of bus stop, although number of bus routes serving bus stops varies. On average there are five bus routes which stop within 640m of each park. 44% of parks are not within 940m of train or underground station.

Nine Parks scored well against all four accessibility criteria:

- Brook Farm/ Wyatt's Farm
- Brunswick Park and Waterfall Walk
- Childs Hill
- Hendon Park
- Hampstead Heath Extension
- Oakdene Park/Gordon Road
- Oakhill Park
- Whetstone Strays
- York Park

10 Parks scored poorly against all four accessibility criteria:

- Bounds Green/ Fairview Open Space
- Boysland Open Space
- Edgwarebury Park
- Elm Park
- Hadley Cricket Outfield
- Hamilton Road Playground
- Jubilee Gardens
- Oak Lane Open Space
- Princes Park
- Rushgrove Park

A table of accessibility scores for all parks can be found in the Appendix E as contained in the Appendix Volume.

#### **6.4 Key Summary and Conclusions**

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Overall park provision in the Borough is good although the distribution of parks across the borough is not even and certain parts of the Borough suffer from poor access, most notably East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse (Area 2). In order to ensure that the entire borough is within 1200m of a District Park, an additional four would need to be provided and strategically located. In order to ensure complete geographical coverage (applying a 400m catchment) for Local Parks an additional 29 would be needed. In order to maintain the current level of park provision relative to population, an extra two District Parks and 15 Local Parks are needed to accommodate the forecast increase in population.

Generally speaking the parks located in the southern part of the borough are more accessible than those in the more rural northern parts of the Borough. There are ten parks which are not accessible by foot, cycle, bus or rail.

#### **Provision**

By providing the 4 District and 29 Local Park suggested by the geographical analysis the standard of provision increases to 1.62 ha per 1,000 population in 2026, this takes account of the forecast increase population. The following areas are outside the catchment of a Local Park, as illustrated on **Figure 4**.

- Area 1 – Hampstead Garden Suburb, central Golders Green
- Area 2 – North Finchley, Church End, Holders Hill
- Area 3 – Brunswick Park, Oakleigh Park, New Barnet
- Area 4 – Woodside Park, Totteridge, Barnet Gate, Bowley Green, and High Barnet
- Area 5 – Highwood Hill, north east Edgware, north Mill Hill, Barnet Copthall
- Area 6 – Hendon (north and east)

**Figure 5** illustrates the areas of the Borough outside the catchment of a District Parks. These can be summarised as the whole of East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse (Area 2), the south of Friern Barnet (in Area 3), Edgware (in the north west of Area 5), Colindale (in the west of Area 6) and Cricklewood (in the west of Area 1).

High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge (Area 4) and Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill (Area 5) contain a significant amount of Green Belt and it may therefore not be necessary to accommodate additional parks in these areas. Additionally some of the areas where a deficiency has been identified may be home to areas of private open space and similarly will not need additional park provision, the most notable example of this is Hampstead Garden Suburb. Finally some areas may also be scheduled to accommodate new areas of open space as a result of growth area plans.

### **Accessibility**

The majority of sites which have poor accessibility are located in residential areas away from the main road where bus routes run.

Two of the parks (Boysland Open Space and Edgwarebury) with poor accessibility are located in northern Edgware in Area 5. The Temple Fortune area where Princes Park is located also has poor accessibility. Hadley Cricket Outfield, which also has poor accessibility, is situated in northern High Barnet, on the periphery of the Borough and away from major housing areas. Hamilton Rd Playground and Oakland OS are both located to the north East Finchley, in Area 2.

It may be possible to examine bus routes and location of bus stops and ensure there are well signposted and well lit footpaths leading to the bus stops.

## 7 Children's Play in Barnet

### 7.1 Introduction

One of the key functions of open space is to serve children's play needs. Play contributes towards child development through the development of a wide range of physical, social and emotional skills and abilities.

National Playing Fields Association (NPFA, 2001) recommends providing a hierarchy of provision in order to satisfy the needs of different age groups. These are:

- (a) Local Areas for Play (LAP)
- (b) Local Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP)
- (c) Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAP)

This assessment considers the provision of formal children's play areas in the form of LEAPs and NEAPs only. It is recognised that other open spaces in the Borough, including local and district parks, amenity green space and natural and semi-natural green space, also provide vital areas for children to play, despite not containing any play equipment.

### 7.2 Quantity and Distribution

In total there are 49 sites in the Borough which have formal play provision, one of these sites (Victoria Park) contains two LEAPs and therefore in total there are 50 sites of formal play equipment, this comprises 30 LEAPs and 20 NEAPs. These facilities have been classified as such by the London Borough of Barnet based on assessment against the NPFA criteria for classification as a LEAP or NEAP. All sites containing children's play provision are illustrated on **Figure 10**.

Assuming each LEAP covers an area of 0.04ha and each NEAP is 0.1ha (using NPFA definitions), overall there is 3.2ha (or 32,000 m<sup>2</sup>) of formal play provision, which equates to 0.05ha per 1,000 children aged under 15 years.

As with parks, the distribution of play space is not evenly spread across the Borough. Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb (Area 1) and Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon (Area 6) have high levels of provision and there are particular deficiencies within East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse (Area 2), Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet (Area3) and High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge (Area 4).

It should also be noted that there may be play areas with privately owned, smaller areas of open space or housing estates which are not included within this assessment.

**Table 11: Distribution of Play Provision**

Geographical area	Total area play provision (ha)	Child Population (aged 0 – 15)	Provision Per 1,000 children (ha)
1: Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb	0.70	9,971	0.07
2: East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse	0.46	10,127	0.04
3: Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet	0.44	11,816	0.04
4: High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge	0.36	9,040	0.04
5: Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill	0.50	9,984	0.05
6: Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon.	0.74	12,830	0.06
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.20</b>	<b>63,768</b>	<b>0.05</b>

**Figure 11** illustrates the provision of children's play facilities in relation to the number of children in each of the areas.

Formal play provision is most commonly found in local parks, with 16 containing LEAPs and 13 containing NEAPs. Four of the district parks also contain play provision; Oakhill Park and Sunny Hill Park both contain NEAPs and Hampstead Heath Extension and Edgwarebury Park both contain LEAPs.

Six sites in the Borough were classified as dedicated children's play areas; these are Percy Road Playground, Barfield Playground, Deansbrook Play Area, Cricklewood Play Area, Market Place Playground and Fairway Children's Playground.

A table of all sites with play facilities can be found in the Appendix Volume.

**Table 12: Type of Play Provision**

Type of Open Space Area	Type of Children's play provision	Number	Estimated Area (Ha)
District Parks	LEAP	1	0.04
	NEAP	2	0.2
Local Parks	LEAP	16	0.62
	NEAP	13	1.3
Green Corridor/Amenity Green Space	LEAP	4	0.16
	NEAP	1	0.1
Dedicated Children's play areas	LEAP	3	0.12
	NEAP	3	0.3
Public Outdoor Sports Provision	LEAP	6	0.24
	NEAP	1	0.1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>3.2</b>

NB: The number of sites adds up to 50 because Victoria Park contains two LEAPS.

Overall less than half of the Borough's local and district parks have formal play provision, only a small percentage of sports sites and green corridor sites contain play facilities, although play facilities would not be expected at these sites.

**Table 13: Play Provision by Open Space Type**

Open Space Type	Total number of sites	Number of Sites with Play Provision	Percentage with Play Provision
District Parks	7	3	43
Local Parks	66	28	42
Green Corridor	21	4	19
Children's playground	6	6	100
Public Outdoor Sports Provision	23	7	30
Amenity	48	1	2

The NPFA standards for play provision states that LEAPs should be within 240m radial distance and NEAPs should be within 600m radial distance. **Figure 12** identifies areas of the Borough which are outside the 240m catchment of LEAPs and 600m catchment of NEAPs.

Overall 3,965 ha (46%) of the Borough is within either 240m of LEAP or 600m of NEAP. Broadly speaking, applying this ratio means that an additional 3.8ha of play space is required to achieve complete coverage to NPFA standards, i.e. all parts of the borough would be within either 240m of a LEAP or 600m of a NEAP. Applying the existing ratio of 3

LEAPs to every 2 NEAPs, this could be achieved by providing an additional 35 LEAPs and 24 NEAPs.

### **7.3 Accessibility**

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All play spaces are within 640m of bus stop, although number of bus routes serving bus stops varies. On average there are five bus routes which stop within 640m of each play space. 29% of play spaces are not within 940m of a train or underground station, although it would not generally be expected that children would travel to a play site by train. Overall 61% of children's play space is not on or adjacent to the Public Rights of Way Network and 73% of play spaces are not on/adjacent to a cycle route, on average there are ten London Cycle Routes within 100m of the perimeter of the site. Six play spaces scored poorly against all four accessibility criteria, these are:

- Barfield Playground
- Deansbrook play area
- Fairway children's playground
- Edgwarebury Park
- Princes Park
- Rushgrove Park

Seven play spaces scored well against all four accessibility criteria:

- Childs Hill
- Hendon Park
- Hampstead Heath Extension
- Oakhill Park
- Riverside Walk North
- Windsor Open Space
- York Park

**Figure 13** illustrates children's play provision in relation to cycle routes in the London Cycle Guide and Public Rights of Way. **Figure 14** illustrates children's play provision in relation to rail and underground stations and bus stops and bus routes.

A table of accessibility scores for all play areas can be found in the Appendix Volume.

### **7.4 Key Summary and Conclusions**

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Large areas of the Borough are not currently within walking distance of a LEAP or NEAP, and a significant increase in the number of sites with play facilities would be needed to achieve complete coverage. Accessibility to play sites via public rights of way, the cycle network, bus and rail varies considerably between sites, with seven facilities being assessed as having poor accessibility via all of these methods.

The London Borough of Barnet is currently undertaking the Playbuilders project which will enable the additional provision of play spaces. The Department of Children, Schools & Families (DCFS) has allocated Barnet Council funding to finance the building of 11 play areas in 2009-10 play spaces under the Playbuilders Project. The project will contribute directly to the twin aims of the Council's Local Area Agreements (LAA) 'tackling disadvantage and building success' by targeting investment to the neediest areas. The investment will improve the living environment for the more disadvantaged communities in the Borough. It will assist the achievement of specific LAA targets such as reduction in childhood obesity rates.

The overarching aim of this initiative is to deliver safe, accessible and exciting play areas in every local area. The initiative will deliver new play facilities for 8 – 13 year olds and fill a gap in existing facilities. The additional facilities will be located in housing estates and greenspaces. These additional facilities will improve the physical safety of younger children whilst allowing an alternative attraction in our parks and open areas for families with older children. 11 play spaces will be completed by March 2010 and a further 11 play spaces by March 2011.

The priorities for locating the new facilities are as follows:

- Accessible to where young people live
- Close to either a cycle route or a bus route
- Ability for the site to be constructed during the timescale
- Whether the site is an existing area where young people gather
- The safety of the site and whether young people feel safe
- As equitable distribution of sites as possible across Barnet wards.
- Existing play provision suitable for the target age group (8 - 13 year olds).

### **Provision**

There is currently 0.010ha of formal play provision per 1,000 population, if an additional 3.8ha is provided this will equate to provision of 0.018 ha per 1,000 population in 2026. This assessment only looks at the provision of formal play space in the form of LEAPs and NEAPs, however other open spaces offer much broader locations for children to play in and the importance of non-formal play provision is recognised in the GLA Guide to Preparing Play Strategies.

The most substantial access deficiencies are generally located on the northern fringe of the Borough and in the central parts of the Borough south of Totteridge, however these areas have a small population. There are a number of more urban parts of the Borough which do also not have access to either type of play facility. The following areas of Barnet are considered to represent areas that have a deficiency in access to children's play provision:

- Totteridge
- Barnet Vale
- North of Edgware
- High Barnet
- Southgate
- Colney Hatch
- Golders Green
- West Hendon
- Church End, West Finchley and Woodhouse

A number of these areas have open spaces where it may be possible to provide play equipment in the future as listed below:

- Totteridge – King George V Field B and Totteridge Green
- Barnet Vale – Greenhill Gardens and Highlands Gardens
- High Barnet – Byng Road Rugby Field
- Southgate – Brunswick Park & Waterfall Walk and Lincoln Avenue Open Space

- Colney Hatch – Coppetts Wood, Woodhouse Open Space and Friern Park
- West Hendon - Welsh Harp Reservoir and West Hendon Playing Fields
- Church End, West Finchley and Woodhouse – Glebelands and Victoria Park

Further research into these sites would need to be undertaken to assess their suitability for play provision.

The Barnet Playbuilders study has identified 11 sites, plus one reserve site, where the additional funding will be targeted, these sites have subsequently been agreed by the Council's Cabinet. A new play facility will be provided at Bethune Park. Provision of a play facility at this park will increase the proportion of the Borough within the catchment of a play facility; however the site is in between New Southgate Recreation Ground and Friary Park both of which already have play facilities. The sites listed above have been identified solely through geographical analysis, whereas the Playbuilder Study considers a wider range of criteria as identified above.

There is already some form of play provision at the other 10 sites, and reserve site, the enhancement/ replacement of facilities at these sites or provision of additional facilities will not increase the proportion of the Borough within the catchment of a play facility, but any additional provision will of course increase the quantity of provision per 1,000 children.

### **Accessibility**

Three of the sites with poor accessibility are in Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill (Area 5); these are Deansbrook Play Area, Fairway Children's Playground and Edgwarebury Park. The major problem with play spaces is that they are not well location in relation to public rights of way and cycle routes. Due to the short distances travelled to play areas improving access to play space via public rights of way should be a priority.

## 8 Playing Pitches and Outdoor Sports in Barnet

### 8.1 Introduction

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This chapter identifies the existing outdoor sports provision within the Borough. This is based upon the survey findings and the Active Places dataset (March 2009).

The objective of this assessment with regards to outdoor sports is to provide an overview of outdoor sports provision in the borough. This assessment does not, however, provide a more detailed analysis of sports pitches using the Sport England eight stage Playing Pitch Model contained in Towards a Level Playing Field guidance. The Companion Guide to PPG17 outlines a range of techniques, including the Playing Pitch Model which might be appropriate to employ in undertaking an open space assessment. A number of these tools and techniques have been adopted for this study but it was agreed that a detailed playing pitch assessment in accordance with the model did not form part of the scope of work, especially given that a Playing Pitch Strategy had already been undertaken by the Council. As recognised in Best Practice Guidance published by the GLA and CABE Space (Open Space Strategies: Best Practice Guidance; Mayor of London and CABE; 2009), some open space types such as playing pitches will require more detailed sub strategies which will complement the overarching open space strategy for the borough. It is therefore recommended that the existing playing pitch strategy is up-dated in accordance with the Sport England guidance to supplement this overarching study.

The assessment of playing pitches in the Borough includes the following types of pitch:

- Adult football
- Junior football
- Gaelic Football
- Cricket
- Senior Rugby Union
- Junior Rugby Union

Sites with playing pitches have been classified as local authority owned, club owned or within schools. **Figure 15** illustrates the locations of playing pitches in the Borough. Only playing pitches which have public access have been included in this study. The Borough has a number of sites where one or more pitches are provided but where as a matter of policy or practice are not available for hire by the public. This includes a large number of school sites that have dedicated pitches for educational use, and are not used for league fixtures during the evenings or weekends. These sites have been excluded from this study.

The following non-pitch sports have also been included in this assessment where they are provided in parks:

- Bowling greens
- Tennis courts
- Basketball/ Netball courts

### 8.2 Quantity and Distribution

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Overall the borough is well provided for in terms of playing pitches, in total there are:

- 129 adult football pitches;
- 53 junior football pitches;
- 6 Gaelic football pitches;
- 45 cricket pitches;

- 23 senior rugby union pitches; and
- 22 junior rugby union pitches.

The majority of these pitches are managed by the London Borough of Barnet, however there are also a number of pitches which are either owned by clubs but provide public access or are in schools which allow public access outside of school hours. The table below provides a more detailed breakdown of the type and ownership of playing pitches in the Borough.

**Table 14: Type and Ownership of Playing Pitches**

	Type	Number	Assumed Pitch Size (Ha)	Total Pitch Area (Ha)*
Adult Football Pitches	Local Authority	99	0.7	69.3
	Club	17	0.7	11.9
	School	13	0.7	9.1
Junior Football Pitches	Local Authority	33	0.34	11.22
	Club	8	0.34	2.72
	School	12	0.34	4.08
Gaelic Football Pitches	Local Authority	2	1.17	2.34
	Club	1	1.17	1.17
	School	3	1.17	3.51
Cricket Pitches	Local Authority	22	0.49	10.78
	Club	13	0.49	6.37
	School	10	0.49	4.9
Senior Rugby Union Pitches	Local Authority	3	0.7	2.1
	Club	8	0.7	5.6
	School	12	0.7	8.4
Junior Rugby Pitches	Local Authority	16	0.26	4.16
	Club	0	0.26	0
	School	6	0.26	1.56
Total	All	277	NA	159.21

\*The pitch area has been calculated by applying average Sport England standards.

There is considerable variation in the provision of playing pitches per population across the Borough, with High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge (Area 4) and Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill (Area 5) having very good provision and East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse (Area 2) very poor provision. High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge (Area 4) and Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill (Area 5) both have a few large sites containing a large number of pitches, for example High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge (Area 4) contains King George V Field which has 16 full adult football pitches, 1 junior football pitch, 1 Gaelic football pitch and 3 cricket pitches. Barnet Cophall Leisure Centre, which is the largest sports facility in the Borough, is located in Area 5.

**Table 15: Distribution of Playing Pitches**

Geographical area	Area of playing pitch (ha)	Population	Provision Per 1,000 Population (ha)	Provision per 1,000 population (acre)
1: Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb	16.38	48,237	0.34	0.84
2: East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse	6.05	58,141	0.10	0.26
3: Coppetts, Brunswick Park,	21.4	59,244	0.36	0.89

Oakleigh, East Barnet				
4: High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge	48.08	44,017	1.09	2.70
5: Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill	37.28	45,858	0.81	2.01
6: Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon.	30.02	59,067	0.51	1.26
<b>Total</b>	<b>159.21</b>	<b>314,564</b>	<b>0.51</b>	<b>1.25</b>

The provision of playing pitches per 1,000 population is illustrated on **Figure 16**.

Playing pitches are relatively evenly spread across the Borough. Sport England advises that all areas should be within 1200m of a playing pitch. Applying this standard to Barnet means that almost the entire borough is within a reasonable distance of a playing pitch. There are three very small areas on the northern perimeter of the Borough which do not have access, although these are generally unpopulated. This is illustrated on **Figure 17**.

Despite the good geographical coverage of playing pitches the Playing Pitch Assessment (2003) and Draft Playing Pitch Strategy (2004) find that there is a need for some additional pitches based on the current level of demand. A number of clubs indicated a need for additional pitches either because they do not currently have access to one or because the quality of the facility is limiting / preventing use. The Playing Pitch Strategy implies that the issue of quality of pitch is the more significant of the two factors. The findings of the Playing Pitch Strategy were echoed at the consultation event where there was perceived to be a general lack of provision of sports and recreation facilities in the Borough. It was also noted that there is a lack of public tennis courts in the area.

In addition there are a number of non-pitch sports facilities in the Borough, namely tennis, bowls and basketball/ netball. The distribution of these is illustrated on **Figure 18**. There are nine open spaces which were recorded as having bowls facilities, 34 have tennis courts, and 26 have a basketball/netball court.

Bowling greens are fairly well distributed across the Borough, with each assessment area containing one or two. The bowling greens tend to be located at larger sites,

Tennis provision also reasonably well spread, although only five sites in Area 2 contain courts - Tudor Sports Ground, Rowley Sports Club, HDSA Sports Ground, Woodside Park and Old Court House Recreation Ground. There is a cluster of sites which all have tennis provision in Friern Barnet, the sites include Friern Park, Bethune Recreation Ground, Friary Park and New Southgate Recreation Ground. It should be noted that there is a large number of private tennis clubs in the borough which have not been included in the assessment as they are only open to members.

There is a concentration of sites with basketball / netball provision in Area 6, particularly around Burnt Oak. This area is fairly high density, with a reasonably young population who can utilise the facilities. There are some areas in the Borough which are not currently near to basketball / netball courts, most notable are the south of the Borough near Golders Green and the north of the Borough in Arkley / Barnet Gate.

Oakhill Park is the only site to contain bowls, tennis and basketball/netball.

Area 2 has the lowest provision of non pitch sports facilities as identified in this study. The area only has one site with a bowling green; this is Old Court House Recreation Ground. Barnet Playing Field/ King George V Playing field is the only site in Area 2 with a basketball / netball pitch.

This study has only identified these facilities where they are located within parks and is by no means a comprehensive representation of all the tennis courts, bowls facilities and basketball/netball court in the Borough.

### 8.3 Accessibility

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This analysis refers to sites with playing pitches only. There are five sites with playing pitches in the Borough which do not have any bus stop within 640m of the boundary of the site, these are King George V Field B, East Barnet Old Gramarians, Mill Hill High School, Old Elizabethans Sports Club and Totteridge Cricket Club. On average each site has seven bus routes stopping within 640m of the perimeter of the site. Just over half (52%) of all sports sites are not within 940m of an underground or rail station. Approximately 62% of sites are not on or adjacent to the Public Rights of Way Network. On average there are 8 London Cycle Guide Routes passing within 100m of each site.

13 sports site scored poorly against all four accessibility criteria:

- Brondesbury Cricket, Tennis and Squash Club
- Byng Road Rugby Field
- Camdenians Sports Centre
- Chase Lodge Playing Field
- HDSA Sports Ground
- King George V field B
- Mill Field
- Mill Hill High School
- Old Elizabethans Sports Club
- Rowley Lane Sports Club
- Summers Lane Rugby Pitches
- The Compton Sports Centre
- Totteridge Cricket Club

Eight sites scored well against all four accessibility criteria:

- Ashmole School
- Barnet Playing Field/ King George V Playing Field
- Brook Farm / Wyatt's Farm
- Brunswick Park and Waterfall Walk
- Childs Hill Park
- Hendon Park
- Victoria Recreation Ground
- York Park

**Figure 19** illustrates playing pitch provision in relation to cycle routes in the London Cycle Guide and Public Rights of Way. **Figure 20** illustrates playing pitch provision in relation to rail and underground stations and bus stops and bus routes. A table of all accessibility scores can be found at the Appendix Volume.

## **8.4 Key Summary and Conclusions**

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The Borough is well provided for in terms of distribution of playing pitches, with almost the entire Borough being within a reasonable catchment area according to Sport England standards. Although the distribution of pitches is considered satisfactory the Playing Pitch Strategy has still identified that there are currently not enough pitches to serve the Borough's population primarily due to the poor quality of the existing pitches. 13 sites are not accessible in terms of walking, cycling, bus and rail.

### **Provision**

Although the Borough has adequate geographical coverage it is recognised that there is a high demand for such facilities which is currently not being met. The Draft Playing Pitch Assessment was undertaken some time ago, but we can only assume that the demand is still high. However, in the absence of comprehensive data on demand and usage it is difficult to quantify with any degree of certainty the future provision that might be required.

In terms of distribution, East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse (Area 2) has notable deficiencies in playing pitch provision per 1,000 population.

### **Accessibility**

Ten of the 13 sites with poor accessibility are located in Edgware, Mill, High Barnet, Totteridge which are all locations in Areas 4 and 5.

Although majority of the borough is within 1.2km of a playing pitch shown in **Figure 17**, as per the Sport England standard, there are many areas with poor accessibility in terms of all aspects of travel. Considering the relatively large catchment area, it is important that playing pitches are made accessible as possible, although they will be generally located away from populated areas, owing to space requirements.

## 9 Natural and Semi Natural Green Space in Barnet

### 9.1 Introduction

This chapter considers the existing provision of natural and semi-natural green space in the Borough. The accessibility of these spaces is considered in relation to the framework used by the GLA as part of the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, which is also included in the Barnet Unitary Development Plan (2006).

### 9.2 Quantity and Distribution

Overall 49 sites have been classified as nature conservation sites or green corridors. In addition there are 29 sites which are recognised as having important nature conservation value in the Barnet Unitary Development Plan (2006) but have been primarily classified as something else in this study, for example Hampstead Heath Extension is a Site of Metropolitan Nature Conservation Importance but is primarily classified as a District Park. The following quantitative analysis includes all sites which are recognised as having nature conservation importance, regardless of their primary classification, and as such some of these sites also appear in earlier quantity assessments under different typologies.

In some instances larger sites of nature conservation have been split into smaller sites in order to provide a more detailed analysis, for example the Lower Dollis Valley has been split into seven separate sites.

Overall there is 742.98 ha of natural greenspace in the Borough, by far the majority of sites are medium sized (between 2 – 20ha), with ten sites larger than 20ha and 16ha sites smaller than 2ha. All natural and semi natural green spaces are illustrated on **Figure 21**.

**Table 16: Size of Natural Green Space Sites**

	Number of Sites	Total Area (Ha)
Sites > 20 Ha	10	350.53
Sites 2 Ha – 20 Ha	52	374.71
Sites < 2Ha	16	17.74
Total	73	742.98

The natural greenspace in the borough contains a wide variety of natural features; the most popular feature is grassed areas which are found at 60 of the 78 sites. A significant (73%) proportion of sites also contain forest or woodland. The rarest natural features are commons and wetlands which were only recorded at 9 and 8 of the sites respectively. Further details are contained in the table below:

**Table 17: Type of Natural Green Space Sites**

Type	Number of Sites
Forest / Woodland	57
Natural Heath	36
Common	9
Grassed Area	60
Scrubland	22
Wetland	8

Open / Running Water	45
Formal Landscape	12

This assessment has only included nature conservation sites which have public access. Private land which is designated Metropolitan Open Land or Green Belt has therefore not been included.

Overall there is 2.36ha of publically accessible natural greenspace per 1,000 population, however as with play areas and parks there is a significant variation in distribution, as illustrated in **Table 18**. Area 2 only has seven sites covering an area of 38.49ha, this equates to just 0.66 ha per 1,000 population which is the lowest in the borough. High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge (Areas 4) and Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill (Area 5) have the highest level of provision; High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge (Area 4) has a high level of provision with 6.65 ha per 1,000 population. In addition these areas have the highest amount of Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land, neither of which have been assessed as part of this study although some specific sites are located within the Green Belt. Privately owned areas, such as golf courses, which do not have public access have also been excluded from this study. The provision of natural and semi natural green space in relation to the area's population is illustrated on **Figure 22**.

**Table 18: Natural and Semi Natural Green Space by Area**

Geographical area	Number of sites	Total Site Area (Ha)	Ha per 1,000 population
1: Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb	12	77.59	1.61
2: East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse	7	38.49	0.66
3: Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet	10	84.36	1.42
4: High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge	23	292.92	6.65
5: Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill	15	184.45	4.02
6: Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon.	11	65.19	1.10
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>743.00</b>	<b>2.36</b>

As described in Chapter 2, all sites have been classified according to their position in the GLA hierarchy (Metropolitan, Borough Grade I, Borough Grade II or Local Importance). Overall, 11 sites in this study are classified as sites of a Metropolitan Importance in their own right or fall within larger sites classified as such. There are 15 sites classified as Borough Grade I, 25 sites which are Borough Grade II and 18 local sites. The remaining three sites have been categorised in this study as green corridors but do not appear in the Barnet UDP (2006) as sites of nature conservation importance.

A table of all nature conservation sites is appended to this report.

The majority of the Borough is within 1km of Metropolitan or Borough Grade Nature Conservation sites; overall 7818ha of the Borough is within the catchment area meaning that less than 10% of the Borough is more than 1km from such a site. This is illustrated on **Figure 23**. The small sections of the Borough outside this catchment are in Central Hendon, Cricklewood and East Finchley.

Similarly the majority of the Borough is also within 500m of any Nature Conservation site; 6935ha of the Borough is within 500m of a site meaning that 1739 ha or 20% of the Borough is not. The areas falling outside the catchment area are parts of Colindale, central Hendon, Finchley, Chipping Barnet, New Barnet, Oakleigh Park, Cricklewood and the eastern part of Friern Barnet. Areas within 500m of a nature conservation site are illustrated on **Figure 24**.

### 9.3 Accessibility

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A significant number of nature conservation sites are located in outlying parts of the Borough and as such have poor public transport accessibility. Five sites are not accessible by bus, these are: Baring Road Castlewood Road, Darlands Lake Local Nature Reserve, King George V Field, King George V Field B and Sulloniacis Pastures. On average each site has seven bus routes stopping within 640m of the perimeter of the site. Overall 67% of nature conservation sites are not within 940m of an underground or rail station. 41% of nature conservation sites are not on or adjacent to the Public Rights of Way network. On average there are eight London Cycle Guide Routes passing within 100m of each site.

Fifteen sites scored poorly in all four accessibility criteria.

- Arkley South Fields
- Barfield Nature Park
- Bruno's Field
- Chesterfield Playing Field
- Clay Lane
- Copthall South Fields
- Darlands Lake Local Nature Reserve
- Drivers Hill
- Edgwarebury Park
- Glebe Lane Pastures
- King George V Field B
- Mill Field
- Rowley Green Common Nature Reserve
- Sulloniacis Pastures
- Woodridge Nature Reserve

Eight sites scores well against all four accessibility Criteria:

- Barnet Playing Field / King George V Playing Field
- Brent Park
- Brook Farm / Wyatt's Farm
- Brunswick Park and Waterfall Walk
- Dean's Brook
- Hendon Park
- Whetstone Strays
- Windsor Open Space

**Figure 25** illustrates natural and semi natural green space provision in relation to cycle routes in the London Cycle Guide and Public Rights of Way. **Figure 26** illustrates natural and semi natural green space provision in relation to rail and underground stations and bus stops and bus routes. A table of all accessibility scores can be found in the Appendix Volume.

## 9.4 Key Conclusions

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Barnet has a large number and wide variety of nature conservation sites, the northern parts of the Borough are particularly well provided for, and as you would expect, the more urban parts of the Borough have fewer sites.

### Provision

There is a large variation in provision across the geographical areas. High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge (Area 4) and Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill (Area 5) are treble and double the average provision respectively. This is to be expected, as these areas are north of the Borough where there is a greater amount of available space.

It should be noted that Finchley (in Area 2) has a shortage of nature conservation sites, not of Borough and Metropolitan Importance.

In the four areas with a below average provision of semi and natural green space there are areas of adjacent natural green space that should be taken account of when analysing deficiencies in provision, for example Hampstead Heath is adjacent to Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb (Area 1). It is also worth noting that although cemeteries have been excluded from this study, St Pancras and Islington Cemetery is a large area of open space with nature conservation value that is located in East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley and Woodhouse (Area 2). Furthermore, Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet (Area 3) is close to adjacent Green Belt and Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon (Area 6) is close to Brent County Park and the Brent Reservoir.

In order to address the apparent shortages, new development schemes should be encouraged to provide new areas of natural and semi natural green spaces.

### Accessibility

All except one of the fifteen sites which have poor accessibility are located in High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge (Area 4) and Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill (Area 5). These are all located in areas which are distant from areas of housing, within areas of Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land, and distant from adequate bus routes, walking routes and paved cycleways. Improved cycle and pedestrian routes to these areas would help increase accessibility. Accessibility could also be enhanced by improving wayfinding and signposting.

## 10 Quality

### 10.1 Rationale for Approach

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PPG 17 states that local authorities should use the information gained from their assessments of needs and opportunities to set locally derived standards for the provision of open space, sports and recreational facilities in their areas and that local standards should include a qualitative component against which to measure the need for enhancement of existing facilities.

PPG 17's Companion Guide offers more detailed guidance. It states that quality depends on 'fitness of purpose' and that, recognising that most open spaces are multi functional, it is important to determine the 'primary purpose' of each open space. It goes on to point out that quality, multi functionality and primary purpose are delivered through good design and sustained and protected by good management and maintenance. It further states that it may be appropriate to use quality benchmarks and that the more those quality standards are measurable, the easier it will be to identify those open spaces or facilities in need of enhancement and set priorities in a transparent manner.

#### 10.1.1 Current best practice

The 2004 Green Flag standard is accepted as a benchmark for judging the quality of open space. Under the Green Flag Standard the criteria by which an open space is judged are grouped under eight main headings:

- **Welcoming** - how to create a sense that people are positively welcomed into a space;
- **Healthy, Safe and Secure** – how best to ensure that the site is a safe and healthy environment;
- **Well Maintained and Clean** – what people can expect to find in the way of standards of cleanliness, facilities and maintenance;
- **Sustainability** – how a green space can be managed in environmentally sensitive ways;
- **Conservation and Heritage** – the value of conservation and care of historic heritage;
- **Community Involvement** – ways of encouraging community involvement;
- **Marketing** – methods of promoting or marketing a site; and
- **Management** – how to reflect all the above in a coherent and accessible management plan, statement or strategy.

In addition, Bristol's Parks and Green Spaces Strategy is acknowledged as best practice, especially within the latest 2009 CABE and Mayor of London best practice guidance for Open Space Strategies, which also acknowledges that the quality standards should relate to information collected in the on-site audit survey and it is important to use an appropriate benchmark, such as the Green Flag.

Bristol's Strategy acknowledges that defining and creating good quality for a space is challenging, but recognises that the quality experience is based on good maintenance, good management and repair, a variety of facilities and types of spaces, safety, no dog mess, provision of multi functionality and the provision of good information. Bristol offers more priority to quality than it does to accessibility or quantity, based on customer research. PPG 17 states that audits of quality will be particularly important as they will allow local authorities to identify potential for increased use through better design, management and maintenance. At the stakeholder consultation event in June 2009, accessibility was stated to be a vital criterion in determining standards.

Consequently, based on the above, the basic methodology for Quality is based on both the Green Flag criteria (the method used to designate Premier Parks in LB Barnet) and the Bristol method and is set out broadly first and then in more detail.

### 10.1.2 Methodology

The quality assessment comprises five strands of assessment: facilities, how welcoming the site is, cleanliness, provision of information and natural features. All information used in the assessment was gathered during the site visits, with the exception of information about the GLA classification of natural green spaces which was done through desk based analysis.

The data necessary to collect and how to score such data is set out, as follows:

- **Facilities** – this is scored in respect of sport and non sport facilities. For sports facilities one point was awarded for each of the potential eight sports facilities which may be present at the site, these are outdoor swimming pool, artificial turf, all weather pitch, children's play facility, golf, outdoor tennis, grass playing pitches and basketball / netball courts. The non sports facilities component is scored by totalling the scores awarded for the following facilities - bins, seats, toilets, parking and café/restaurant. During the site visit each of these facilities was scored out of 5 meaning a maximum score of 25 was awarded to each site. A value of excellent, good, fair or poor was awarded for each site for both sports facilities and non sports facilities using the method set out below.
- **Welcoming** – this was scored by totalling the four relevant pro-forma questions - noise, safety and security, lighting and disabled access. As before these were scored as 1 to 5 during the site visit meaning a total of 20. This score was converted into a value of excellent, good, fair or poor.
- **Cleanliness** – this was scored by totalling the three relevant pro-forma questions - vandalism, litter and dog fouling. A maximum score of 15 was awarded to each site and converted into a value of excellent, good, fair or poor.
- **Information** – The information question on the pro-forma was scored out of 5 and this was converted into a value of excellent, good, fair or poor.
- **Natural Features** – this scored in respect of variety of natural facilities and quality. For variety a point was awarded for each of the potential nine natural features which may be present at the site. These are forest/woodland, natural heath, common, grassed areas, scrubland, wetland, open/running water, formal landscape and farmland. The score from 0 – 9 was then converted into a value of excellent, good, fair or poor. For quality of natural features all sites which were either a site of Metropolitan Nature Conservation Importance or SSSI were awarded a value of Excellent; sites classified as either Borough Grade I or II was awarded a value of Good; Local nature conservation sites were awarded a value of Fair and all sites which do not have a classification in the GLA hierarchy were recorded as Poor.

As mentioned above the scores for each component of the assessment were translated into scores of Excellent, Good, Fair or Poor. Sites which achieved over 75% of the maximum points available were awarded 'Excellent', sites in the 50% - 75% bracket awarded 'Good', 25% - 50% were awarded 'Fair' and those sites scoring below 25% of the maximum points available scored 'Poor'.

All the scores above for each quality standard elements above were then totalled for each open space to produce an overall score. This was done by awarding three points for every 'excellent' two points for every 'good', one point for every 'poor' and zero points for every 'fair'. The scores for non sport facilities, sports facilities, variety of natural space and quality of natural space were all halved in order to ensure that each of the five categories had the same weighting. This resulted in each site being awarded an overall score of excellent, good, fair or poor.

The quality of sites was assessed in relation to the primary typology of the site. The method set out above details the approach taken for parks. This method was modified slightly for the

quality assessment of sports sites and natural / semi-natural green spaces. For the quality assessment of sports sites the assessment of natural features was not included, and the assessment therefore comprised of facilities, how welcoming the site was, cleanliness and information only. For natural / semi-natural green spaces the quality assessment did not include an assessment of sport and non sport facilities or information, and therefore comprised of how welcoming the site was, cleanliness and natural features only.

Quality assessment has been done on site primary typologies, for example Hampstead Heath Extension is primarily classified as a district park so appears in the Parks assessment and does not appear in the natural/ semi-natural green spaces assessment.

An overall table of scores for each site can be found in the Appendix Volume.

All spaces referred to by either the Parks Working Party draft report or within the first consultation were then cross referenced with this study to ensure results were not anomalous.

## 10.2 Parks

All of the parks in the Borough have been assessed according to the criterion set out above. Barnet's parks vary considerably in terms of quality. Overall five parks have been assessed as 'excellent', these are Golders Hill Park, Victoria Park, Friary Park, Oakhill Park and Edgwarebury Park. 15 sites are assessed as being 'good' quality, 38 are 'fair' and 15 are 'poor'.

Sites primarily classified as parks in this assessment which are also either Green Flag Parks or Premier Parks have all achieved a score of either 'excellent' or 'good' in this assessment, with one exception – Watling Park. This park was assessed as being 'fair' because it scored poorly in terms of information provision and quality of natural features.

The following table compares the scores achieved in each of the assessment areas. All assessment areas have a variety of quality of parks. Areas 4 and 6 do not contain any sites which have been assessed as excellent, but Area 4 does have 6 parks which achieve 'good'. Area 2 contains a particularly high proportion of parks which are 'poor' quality; two thirds of parks in this area received the lowest possible score.

Overall parks tend to score worst in terms of quality of natural features and sports provision, and best in terms of how welcoming they are and cleanliness. Full scores for each site can be found in the Appendix Volume.

**Table 19: Quality Scores for Parks**

Score	Number of Parks	Names of Parks
<b>Area 1: Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb</b>		
Excellent	1	Golders Hill Park
Good	2	Childs Hill Park and Hampstead Heath Extension*
Fair	9	Basing Hill Park, Central Square, Clarefield Park, Claremont Road Millennium Park, Elm Park, Meadway Gate, Princes Park, Willifield Green and Willifield Way Open Space
Poor	1	Claremont Open Space
<b>Area 2: East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse</b>		

Excellent	1	Victoria Park
Good	2	Avenue House Grounds and Cherry Tree Wood
Fair	0	
Poor	6	Charter Green, Coppetts Wood Exchange Land, Finchley Way Open Space, Hamilton Road Playground, Oak Lane Open Space and Woodhouse Open Space/Ingleway
<b>Area 3: Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet</b>		
Excellent	2	Friary Park and Oakhill Park*
Good	1	Brunswick Park & Waterfall Walk
Fair	6	Belmont Open Space, Friern Park, Greenhill Gardens, Hallwick Recreation Ground, Holickwood Park and Kennard Road Open Space
Poor	3	Bounds Green Fairview OS, Church Farm OS and Friern Bridge Retail Park
<b>Area 4: High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	6	Brooks Farm / Wyatts Farm*, Hadley Cricket Outfield, King Georges Field, Monken Hadley Common*, Old Court House Recreation Ground, Swan Lane Open Space.
Fair	8	Highlands Gardens, Jubilee Gardens, King George Field A*, Quinta Drive OS, Ravenscroft Gardens, Stanhope Road OS, Whatstone Strays and Whittings Hill Open Space.
Poor	1	Meadway Open Space
<b>Area 5: Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill</b>		
Excellent	1	Edgwarebury Park
Good	1	Mill Hill Park
Fair	8	Arrandene Open Space*, Bittacy Hill Park, Boysland OS, Deacons Green, Oakdene Park/Gordon Road, Stonegrove Park, Stoneyfields Park, Woodcroft Park
Poor	4	Harcourt Avenues OS, Lyndhurst Park, Meads Open Space and West Way Open Space.
<b>Area 6: Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	3	Hendon Park, Silkstream Park and Sunny Hill Park*
Fair	7	Colindale Park, Grahame Park, Malcolm Park, Rushgrove Park, Sturgess Park, Watling Park, York Park

Poor	0	
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\* District Parks

### 10.3 Outdoor Sports

This analysis has indicated that the sports provision in the borough is generally poor quality. This assessment only includes sites which have been primarily categorised as outdoor sports pitches.

None of the sports sites achieved a score of excellent in this assessment, as illustrated in **Table 20**. 43% all sites were classified as 'Poor' and only 22% of sites were awarded a score of 'Good'. Area 2 has the worst quality sports provision, the area only has two sports sites - Glebelands and Smithsfield – and both of these were classified as 'Poor' quality. These sites scored badly because they do not have a wide variety of sports facilities and have poor provision of information, this was echoed in the Working Party Report which noted that there is no signage at the entrance to the Glebelands site. The report also found Glebelands to be in poor condition and noted that there was a burnt out dog bin and lots of litter and fly tipping at the site. At the consultation event Glebelands was also identified as suffering from poor drainage.

Area three has the highest quality provision with two sites (Bethune Recreation Ground and Victoria Recreation Ground) achieving a score of 'Good'. Bethune Recreation Ground did so because it has several different sports facilities and was well provided for in terms of non sports facilities and information. Bethune Recreation Ground also scored well in terms of sports and non sports facilities and achieved a score of excellent in the welcoming category. The overall score for each site are detailed in the table below and a more detailed breakdown of scores is appended to this report.

**Table 20: Quality scores of Sites with Playing Pitches**

Score	Number of sites	Names of Sites
<b>Area 1: Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	1	Lyttleton Playing Fields
Fair	1	Hendon Youth Sports Centre
Poor	1	Clitterhouse Playing Fields
<b>Area 2: East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	0	
Fair	0	
Poor	2	Glebelands and Smithsfield
<b>Area 3: Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	2	Bethune Recreation Grounds and Victoria Recreation Ground

Fair	2	Dame Alice Owens Ground and New Southgate Recreation Ground
Poor	1	Ludgrove Playing Field
<b>Area 4: High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	1	Tudor Sports Ground
Fair	2	Barnet P/F / Kings George V P/F and Byng Road Rugby Field
Poor	2	Grange Playing Fields and King George V Field
<b>Area 5: Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	1	Chase Lodge Playing Field
Fair	1	Copthall Playing Fields
Poor	2	Clay Lane and Mill Field
<b>Area 6: Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	0	
Fair	2	Montrose Playing Fields and Woodfield Park
Poor	2	Tyrell Way Ball Park and West Hendon Playing Fields

NB: the score for sports facilities relates to variety as opposed to quality of provision – i.e. sites might score poorly because they only have playing pitches but no other provision.

The results of this assessment support those of the Playing Pitch Assessment (2003). This study has not undertaken a detailed assessment of the quality of the playing pitches, however the Playing Pitch Assessment also found that the general provision of facilities and maintenance of sites is poor, and this is reflected in this assessment in the facilities, welcoming and cleanliness criteria. The Playing Pitch Strategy identifies the following sites an immediate priority sites for improvement:

- Barnet Playing Fields;
- Clitterhouse Playing Fields;
- Glebelands; and
- Copthall Playing Fields.

This study supports the findings of the Playing Pitch Strategy because Clitterhouse Playing Fields and Glebelands are both found to be poor quality and Barnet Playing Fields and Copthall Playing Fields are both fair quality. The Playing Pitch Strategy also identifies an addition three sites (Brook Farm Open Space, Edgwarebury Park and Watling Park) as priority sites, these sites were primarily classified as parks in this study and overall their quality was found to be good, excellent and fair respectively. The quality assessment undertaken in this study is much broader than that undertaken in the Playing Pitch Strategy

which specifically considers the quality of the pitch area and associated facilities, the results of the two studies are therefore not directly comparable.

The consultation event also highlighted the quality of playing pitches as a problem in the Borough, the pitches at Oakhill Park and Glebelands (referred to as Summers Lane) were identified as having particular drainage problems.

The findings of the Playing Pitch Assessment (2003) and Playing Pitch Strategy (2004) are now considerably out of date, and in order to comprehensively assess the quality of the Borough's playing pitches against Sport England standards a specialist study should be undertaken.

#### 10.4 Natural Green Space

There is less variability in scores for natural / semi natural green spaces, as illustrated in **Table 21**. No sites received an 'excellent' score and only one site achieved 'poor', this was Chesterfield F/P in Area 4. This site primarily functions as a walkway between allotments and housing development. It has been classified as a natural greenspace due to the role it plays as a green corridor, but it does not appear in the GLA hierarchy.

Area 4 generally has the highest quality natural and semi natural green spaces; 64.7% of the area's natural and semi natural green spaces are 'good' and 29.4% are 'fair'. Area 2 is the only area not containing any 'excellent' or 'good' sites.

In addition to the sites included in the following tables there are a number of sites in the Borough which are recognised as having significant nature conservation value but have not primarily been categorised as 'natural / semi-natural green spaces' and are therefore assessed under their primary typology.

**Table 21: Quality Scores for Natural Green Space**

Score	Number of Sites	Names of Sites
<b>Area 1: Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	3	Big Wood Nature Reserve, Northway Gardens and Northway Gardens Extension
Fair	4	Brookside Walk, Fletchers Gardens, Littlewood Nature Reserve and The Bowls/Fallogen Way
Poor	0	
<b>Area 2: East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	0	
Fair	3	Riverside Gardens, Riverside Walk South and Windsor Open Space
Poor	0	
<b>Area 3: Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet</b>		
Excellent	0	

Good	3	Barfield Nature Park, Brunswick Woods and Everleigh Walk
Fair	2	Baring Road Castlewood Road and Coppetts Wood
Poor	0	
<b>Area 4: High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	11	Arkley Lane and Pastures, Arkley South Fields, Darlands Lake Local Nature Reserve, Glebe Lane Pastures, Hadley Green, Rowley Green Common Nature Reserve, Totteridge Common, Totteridge Fields Nature Reserve, Totteridge Green, Woodridge Nature Reserve and Woodside Park Club Entrance
Fair	5	Barnet Countryside Centre, Barnet Gate Wood, Laurel Way Open Space, Riverside Walk North and Riverside Walk/ Ducks Island.
Poor	1	Chesterfield F/P
<b>Area 5: Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	5	Bruno's Field, Burtonhole Lane and Pasture, Mill Hill Old Railway Nature Reserve, Moat Mount Open Space and Scratchwood
Fair	5	Copthall Railway Walk and Common, Copthall South Fields, Dean's Brook, Drivers Hill and Sulloniacis Pastures
Poor	0	
<b>Area 6: Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon</b>		
Excellent	0	
Good	1	Welsh Harp marginal land SITE B
Fair	6	Brent Park, Brookside Walk, Welsh Harp marginal land SITE A, Welsh Harp marginal land SITE C, Welsh Harp marginal land SITE D and Welsh Harp marginal land SITE E
Poor	0	

## 10.5 Key Summary and Conclusions

### 10.5.1 Summary Parks

Barnet's parks vary considerably in terms of quality – and there is a geographical variation across the Borough. The majority of parks are of fair or poor quality. Sites primarily classified as parks in this assessment which are also either Green Flag Parks or Premier Parks all achieved a score of either 'excellent' or 'good' in this assessment, with one exception – Watling Park, which scored fair.

### **Outdoor Sports**

Sports provision in the borough is generally poor quality, although there is variation between the geographical areas audited. None of the sites audited achieved a score of excellent in this assessment. This assessment only includes those which have been primarily categorised as outdoor sports pitches. It must be noted that the score for sports facilities relates to variety as opposed to quality of provision i.e. sites might score poorly because they only have playing pitches but no other provision.

### **Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace**

There is less variability in scores for natural and semi natural green spaces. No sites received an 'excellent' score and only one site achieved 'poor'. High Barnet, Underhill and Totteridge (Area 4) generally has the highest quality natural and semi natural green spaces; 64.7% of the area's natural and semi natural green spaces are 'good' and 29.4% are 'fair'. East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley and Woodhouse (Area 2) is the only area not containing any 'excellent' or 'good' Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace sites.

## **10.5.2 Conclusions**

### **Parks**

- The majority of parks in Barnet are fair or poor quality.
- There is a concentration of fair and poor quality parks in four parts of the Borough:
  - Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb (Area 1)
  - East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley and Woodhouse (Area 2)
  - Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh and East Barnet (Area 3)
  - Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill (Area 5)
- Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh and East Barnet (Area 3) and Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon and West Hendon (Area 6) do not have any parks of excellent quality.
- In addition, Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon and West Hendon (Area 6) do not have any poor quality parks

### **Outdoor sports**

- None of the sites audited achieved a score of excellent in this assessment.
- Nearly half of all sites audited classified are classified as being of poor quality.
- East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley and Woodhouse (Area 2) and Colindale, Hendon and West Hendon (Area 6)
- The Playing Pitch Strategy (2004) identified the following sites an immediate priority sites for improvement:
  - Barnet Playing Fields
  - Clitterhouse Playing Fields
  - Glebelands
  - Copthall Playing Fields

All of these sites scored fair or poor in our quality assessment, demonstrating the continuing need for further improvements. Clitterhouse Playing Fields are proposed for improvement through the Cricklewood and Brent Cross regeneration proposals.

- Further work is necessary to identify a 'Top 10' for site specific improvement in areas most needing it.

#### **Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace**

- There is less variability in scores for sites classified as Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspaces in Barnet, with no sites receiving an 'Excellent' score.
- There was one 'Poor' site within High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge (Area 4).
- In East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley and Woodhouse (Area 2) and Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon and West Hendon (Area 6), the majority of the Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace sites have been assessed as Fair.

# 11 Value

## 11.1 Rationale for Approach

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PPG 17 recommends that 'value' is taken into account in planning and land management decisions, however, this does not mean the financial value of land. PPG 17's Companion Guide offers more detailed guidance. It stresses that quality and value are fundamentally different and can be completely unrelated. For example, a high quality facility or open space may be located where it is inaccessible and therefore of little value; while if a run-down or derelict facility is the only one in an area it may be immensely valuable.

This means that it is best to assess quality and value separately, ideally against suitable benchmarks. The Companion Guide sets out in section 10.23 – 10.26 the broad components of a methodology. It states that value comprises:

**Context:** a space or facility which is inaccessible is almost irrelevant to potential users and therefore may be of little value, irrespective of its quality. Similarly, if there is significantly more high quality provision in an area than needed, some of it may well be of relatively little value and conversely, if there is very little provision in an area, even a space or facility of mediocre quality may well be valuable. Green spaces which form an integral part of historic environments, however, will almost always be of value, irrespective of their accessibility or condition.

**Level and type of use (in terms of 'primary purpose')**: poorly used spaces or facilities may be of little value (although the visual impact of a poorly used green space can be significant), while well used spaces and facilities are always of high value. In this context 'well used' should be interpreted in terms of people and wildlife, while species richness can also be taken as a specific form of high level 'use'.

The **wider benefits it generates for people, biodiversity and the wider environment**.

The Companion Guide states that assessing the value of a space or facility means evaluating each of these three elements. Evaluating context and levels of use is fairly simple, provided the necessary information is available (and this requires a comprehensive user survey), but evaluating wider benefits is more complicated. The evaluation of context and levels and type of use should therefore account for the following:

**Structural and landscape benefits:** well located, high quality green spaces help to define the identity and character of an area and separate it from other areas nearby – the fundamental principle behind green belts and green wedges.

**Ecological benefits:** green spaces support biodiversity, provide habitats for wildlife and may exhibit geological features. They also serve broader functions in terms of reducing surface water run-off, ameliorating the impacts of air, water and noise pollution, thereby helping to alleviate the extremes of urban climates. In addition, the more that urban residents can experience green spaces close to where they live, the less the impacts on the wider countryside.

**Education benefits:** green spaces offer opportunities for people to see nature at work, the integration of historic buildings and features in the landscape and the influence of people on the natural heritage. In this respect, they can be seen as 'outdoor classrooms'.

**Social inclusion and health benefits:** high quality parks, other green spaces and sport and recreation facilities promote civic pride, community ownership and a sense of belonging and can help to promote well-being. Green spaces are also one of the very few publicly accessible facilities which are equally available to everyone, irrespective of personal circumstances.

**Cultural and heritage benefits:** many of the most valued green spaces have a long history and represent a link with the best of the past; indeed, many designed landscapes and historic parks provide the setting for listed buildings. The character of many conservation

areas comes from the spaces between the buildings every bit as much as the buildings themselves. Green spaces, civic spaces and sport and recreation facilities can also be high profile symbols of towns and cities - for example, Sydney and the 2000 Olympic Games, London's Royal Parks, St Mark's Square in Venice, Central Park in New York or Moscow's Red Square.

**Amenity benefits and a 'sense of place':** green spaces and sport and recreation facilities help to make villages, towns and cities attractive places in which to live, provided local people see them as safe, well maintained and attractive. In addition, in a typical suburban housing development composed of a limited number of house types, it is often the green spaces which make one area different from another, help to create specific neighbourhoods and provide important landmarks.

**Economic benefits:** there are many instances where high quality green spaces or sport and recreation facilities can promote economic development and regeneration. For example, Sport Action Zones are leading the regeneration of some urban areas. Proximity to well designed and maintained green spaces also help to enhance property values.

The main difficulty that arises in evaluating the above criteria is the level of detailed information available. It is therefore necessary to review current best practice to determine a more practical, yet robust and sound method using existing information in the LB Barnet.

The latest 2009 CABI and Mayor of London best practice guidance for Open Space Strategies does not refer to value or offer any guidance on methodology.

#### 11.1.1 Current best practice

Bristol's 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Strategy and the CABI document 'Making the invisible visible: the real value of park assets', February 2009 offer some guidance.

Bristol's 2008 Parks and Green Spaces Strategy recognise that some dimensions of value are captured in existing planning policy, such as protecting archaeology, wildlife and historic landscapes; others are social and require public consultation to identify them; and, assessing value is difficult and time consuming. Therefore, it was decided early on that an assessment of value was unnecessary and unachievable. The approach undertaken was:

- Recognise the importance of value as described in PPG 17 and that valuable sites should be protected alongside policies for quality, accessibility and quantity
- Belief that it is not feasible to prepare an objective assessment of value for any site without extensive local consultation, research and observation
- Belief that a helpful and meaningful comparative scale cannot be devised and therefore a standard cannot be set comparable to those for quality, quantity and accessibility
- Value must still be assessed and given weight in management and planning decisions, especially involving disposal or changes of use

It then sets out the key factors it considered relevant for assessing value as found in **Table 22**:

**Table 22: Key Factors for Assessing Value**

Community Value Factors	Custodial Value Factors
Level of use	Local context or significance
Community views of the space	Accessibility
Community involvement in its care	Landscape significance
Equality considerations	Nature conservation significance
Educational significance (used by schools)	Archaeological/historical interest

Demographic change (is it helpful in meeting future needs and changes)	Legal status
Level of anti-social behaviour	Economic value
Events (does it or could it hold events?)	Sustainability significance

CABE document 'Making the invisible visible: the real value of park assets', February 2009 sets out the many different ways to measure value below.

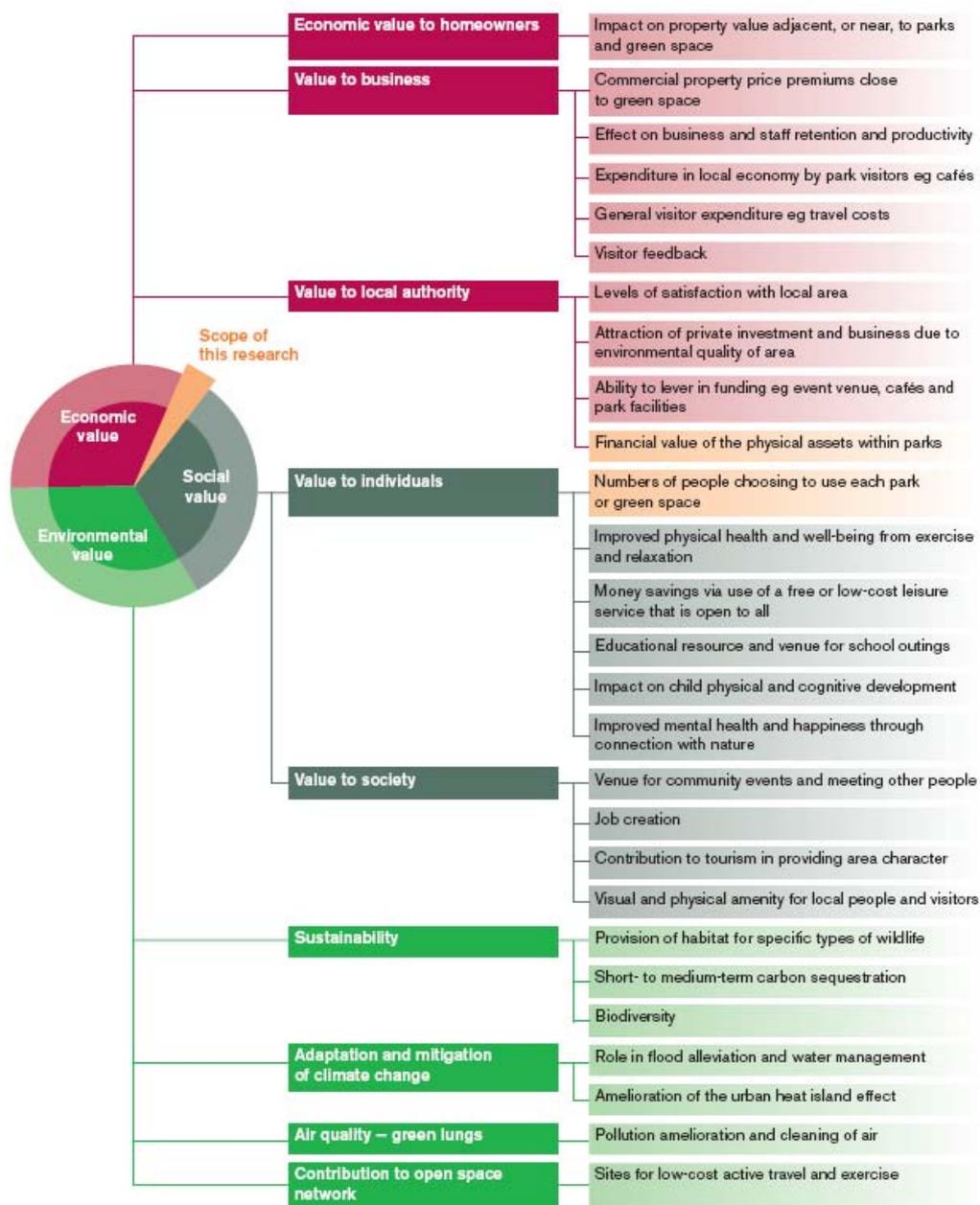
It acknowledges that the value of open space is many and various – improving physical and mental health, supporting biodiversity, flood water absorption, improving air quality, mitigating the urban heat island effect, increasing property prices, facilitating business staff retention, supporting local identity, etc. However, it also stresses that the links between the quality of the space and its value are complex. It goes onto try to develop a methodology that recognises the tangible value (financial cost of replacing the space completely) and the intangible value (simple measure of annualised park user numbers). It offers case studies of Highbury Fields, Islington; Sefton Park, Liverpool and Bristol (as part of its Parks and Green Spaces Strategy development). However, there is not sufficient information in LB Barnet to undertake this type of assessment.

Consequently, whilst current best practice and guidance is helpful in setting a framework, it is necessary to develop a bespoke methodology. Several factors or limitations must be borne in mind:

- There is limited public consultation data on the value of spaces;
- LB Barnet do not have any information on usage (level and type of use);
- The CABE methods cannot be used due to a lack of relevant information;
- The GIS mapping, the audit of provision survey and the knowledge of the Green Spaces Services Manager are the only information sources on which to base an assessment of value; and
- The stakeholder consultation held in June 2009 agreed that some assessment of value was necessary, but that it should be a 'light touch' methodology.

Utilisation of the Bristol framework, within the guidance of PPG 17 and the confines of the available information base, was considered to be the most appropriate way forward.

**Diagram 2: Bristol Framework Diagram**



**11.1.2 Methodology**

Value, in this context, can be identified as a range of cultural and usage factors that are difficult to measure or change without community involvement and could be used as a means for assessing spaces for disposal or changes of use. As set out in the methodology, this value assessment was undertaken at a day long workshop attended by LB Barnet Officers who have an in depth knowledge of the Borough’s open spaces. In addition assessors used their knowledge of the sites, as well as analysis of the maps and site photos to assign values. The assessment was formed of the following components, as outlined in **Table 23:**

- Context – proximity to housing (especially flats), within an area of open space deficiency, backland site, setting / townscape, visibility and peripheral or central location?
- Functions/Roles – how many functions or roles it performs?

- Landscape and biodiversity – assessing its contribution to landscape character (including presence of mature trees and water), contribution to views and function as a habitat and wildlife corridor?
- Demographic – could it meet the needs of any future population and is it close to a future growth area, what is the coincidence with deprivation (an assessment and correlation of the location of the space compared to its IMD rating (both 10% and 20%)) and what is the site's/space's relationship to population density?
- Events and Education – does it currently hold events or could it in future; is it used by schools; and/or, can it act as an outdoor classroom?
- Usage – how well used is the site at the moment?

**Table 23: Value Indicators**

Component	Indicator	Description
Context	Proximity to flats	Is the space close to housing, especially flats, since it increases usage and flats represent higher density?
	Area of deficiency	Is the space located in an area of open space deficiency within the UDP?
	Not backland site	Is the space located in a backland area, which may be difficult to access and find not be visible?
	Setting/Townscape	Is its setting attractive?
	Visibility	Is the space visible from a road or public area?
	Central location	Is the space located peripherally or centrally?
Function / Role	Structural/Spatial	Is the space important in linking surrounding spaces or spatially significant in a wider area?
	Cultural/Heritage	Is the space important for cultural/heritage reasons?
	Ecological	Is the space important for ecological reasons?
	Community	Is the space important for community reasons and does it perform a community function?
	Sports	Is the space important for sports reasons and does it contain sports facilities?
Landscape and Biodiversity	Landscape character/trees	Does the space have trees and an attractive landscape character?
	Views	Is the space part of an important view or it the origin for a view?
	Water body/feature	Does the space contain a water body or feature?
	Habitat/Wildlife Corridor	Is there an important wildlife corridor or habitat within or near the space?
Demographic	Future population needs/Growth areas	Is the space within or near a proposed growth area?
	Deprivation (10%)	Is the space located in an area with an IMD rating of within the top 10%?

	Deprivation (20%)	Is the space located in an area with an IMD rating of within the top 20%?
	Population density	Is the space located in an area of high population density?
Events and Education	Current events	Does the space host any current events?
	Future events	Does the space have the potential to host any future events?
	Existing School Use	Is the space used by schools?
	Potential Outdoor Classroom	Is there any potential to use the space for outdoor classroom use?
Usage	Overall usage	LB Barnet assigned a value of 1 – 4 for each site, with sites that are known to be well used being awarded 4 and poorly used sites a score of 1.

For parks and natural/ semi-natural green spaces all of the indicators above have been used, because they are all applicable to these types of open space. For outdoor sports sites the cultural / heritage value and the potential for use as an outdoor classroom were not assessed as they are not related to the use of sites for sport.

The assessment comprised looking at a map of the site, the site photos and a high level discussion of each site. A broad brush approach was taken to this analysis and for each of the indicators a score of Yes/Good or No/poor was awarded, and these scores were compiled in a spreadsheet. This approach was intended to be pragmatic since there were a considerable number of sites to assess. It is recognised that this is an imprecise method, partly factual, but largely subjective. The subjectivity is based on those undertaking it having a satisfactory knowledge of the sites and an understanding of open space policy. It is, therefore, considered to fulfil the 'light touch' requirement and conform to the best practice framework of Bristol.

All of the scores were combined to give a total score for each site and this was then assigned a value of one of four gradations – High value, High-Medium value, Medium value and Low value. Sites which achieved over 75% of the maximum points available were classified as 'High Value', sites in the 50% - 75% bracket 'High-Medium Value', 25% - 50% were a 'Medium Value' and those sites scoring below 25% of the maximum points available were classified as 'Low Value'.

There are only six sites which were primarily classified as children's play areas and it was decided not to include these in the value assessment. The vast majority of sites with play facilities are primarily categorised as another typology and are therefore assessed separately. Many of the value questions are not applicable to play spaces which tend to be small and only serve one function.

## 11.2 Parks

The majority of parks in the Borough have been classified as Medium value, as illustrated in **Table 24**. Almost 11% of parks have been classified as High Value, 26% are High – Medium Value and 11% are Low Value. All but one of the parks classified as High Value are also Premier Park, the exception is Golders Hill Park.

In total eight parks are Low Value and half of these are located in Area 5. These parks all scored particularly poorly for information provision, natural features and sports provision. Also in Area 5, Edgwarebury Park achieved a score of excellent despite only scoring a 'fair' in terms of natural features.

All areas have at least one 'High Value Park' with the exception of Area 4 which does not have any. Area 6 generally has the highest value parks, with 30% of parks classified as 'High Value' and 30% as 'High-Medium Value'. Area 5 has the highest proportion of parks classified as 'Low value'.

In total 15 of the parks were awarded maximum points for usage, and 20 were awarded the lowest possible score. Just over a quarter of the Borough's parks are currently used by schools, in addition to those already used the following sites were identified as having potential to be used as outdoor classrooms: Hadley Cricket Outfield, King Georges Field, Childs Hill Park, Highland Gardens, Watling Park and Monken Hadley Common.

Just under a quarter of the parks are currently used for events. Eight parks currently do not have events but have potential to do so in the future, these are King Georges Field, Basing Hill Park, Monken Hadley Common, Watling Park, King George V Field A, Brook Farm / Wyatts Farm, Old Court House Recreation Ground and Swan Lane Open Space.

The parks are located all over the Borough but they also tend to be in central areas, approximately three quarters of parks scored a point for being located centrally, and approximately 65% were not located on backland sites. 25 of the 73 parks were considered to be not very visible from the surrounding area. Approximately 28% of the parks were considered to play an important cultural / heritage role, and 35% were considered to play an important community function. There is considerable variety in the landscape quality with some sites, such as Golders Hill Park and Arrandene Open Space receiving points for landscape character, views, water bodies and wildlife value, and some park, such as Princes Park and Stonegrove Park receiving no points for landscape value.

Only 12 of the parks are located in areas where considerable growth is forecast. Grahame Park is the only park located in an area in the top 10% most deprived areas, 15 parks are located in the 20% most deprived areas.

**Table 24: Value Scores Parks**

Value Score	Number of sites	Names of Sites
<b>Area 1: Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb</b>		
High	1	Golders Hill Park
High - Medium	3	Central Square, Princes Park and Hampstead Heath Extension
Medium	9	Basing Hill Park, Childs Hill Park, Clarefield Park, Claremont Open Space, Claremont Road Millennium Park, Elm Park, Meadway Gate, Willifield Green, Willifield Way Open Space
Low	0	
<b>Area 2: East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse</b>		
High	1	Cherry Tree Wood
High - Medium	2	Avenue House Grounds and Victoria Park
Medium	5	Charter Green, Coppetts Wood Exchange Land Development, Finchley Way Open Space, Oak Lane Open Space and Woodhouse Open Space/Ingleway
Low	1	Hamilton Road Playground
<b>Area 3: Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet</b>		

High	2	Friary Park and Oakhill Park
High - Medium	2	Brunswick Park & Waterfall Walk and Friern Park
Medium	7	Belmont Open Space, Church Farm Open Space, Friern Bridge Retail Park, Greenhill Gardens, Hallwick Recreation Ground, Holickwood Park, Kennard Road Open Space
Low	1	Bounds Green/Fairview Open Space
<b>Area 4: High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge</b>		
High	0	
High - Medium	7	Brooks Farm / Wyatt's Farm, Hadley Cricket Outfield, Highlands Gardens, King Georges Field, Monken Hadley Common, Old Court House Recreation Ground and Swan Lane Open Space.
Medium	7	Jubilee Gardens, King George V Field A, Meadway Open Space, Quinta Drive Open Space, Ravenscroft Gardens, Whetstone Strays and Whitings Hill Open Space
Low	1	Stanhope Road Open Space
<b>Area 5: Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill</b>		
High	1	Mill Hill Park
High - Medium	2	Arrandene Open Space and Edgwarebury Park
Medium	7	Bittacy Hill Park, Deacons Green, The Meads Open Space, Oakdene Park/Gordon Road, Stonegrove Park, Stoneyfields Park and Woodcroft Park.
Low	4	Boysland OS, Harcourt Avenue Open Space, Lyndhurst Park, West Way Open Space
<b>Area 6: Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon</b>		
High	3	Hendon Park, Sunny Hill Park and Watling Park
High - Medium	3	Grahame Park, Rushgrove Par and Silkstream Park
Medium	3	Colindale Park, Sturgess Park and York Park
Low	1	Malcolm Park

### 11.3 Outdoor sports

No sports sites in the Borough were rated as high value, as illustrated in **Table 25**. The most popular classification for sports sites was high-medium which was awarded to 43% of sites. Approximately 40% of sites are medium value, and 17% are poor. The sites assessed as poor are located in Areas 3, 5 and 6.

Area 1 generally has the highest quality sports sites with all three of the area's sites being classified as high-medium value. Conversely Area 6 has the worst quality sites with half of the areas sites classified as medium value and the other half low value. Sites scored poorly due mainly to their location, e.g. not being located within a deficiency area or growth area, and their poor landscape character.

Sports sites generally scored poorly in terms of landscape character, ten sites were awarded points for landscape character. Eight sites contain a water body/feature and 12 were considered to play a role as a wildlife corridor.

Four sites are currently used for community events – Hendon Youth Sports Centre, Copthall Playing Fields, Montrose Playing Fields and Glebelands, however an additional 12 sites were identified as having potential for future events.

Only Barnet Playing Fields / King George V Playing Fields and Copthall Playing Fields were awarded the maximum score for usage.

Very few of the sports site are located in the Borough's future growth areas, the following sites are: Clitterhouse Playing Fields, Tyrell Way Ball Park, Hendon Youth Sports Centre and Montrose Playing Fields. With the exception of Tyrell Way Ball Park which was classified as low value all of these sites were classified as High-Medium Value. None of the sports sites included in this study are in the 10% most deprived areas, but five are in the 20% most deprived area, these are Hendon Youth Sports Centre, Glebelands, West Hendon Playing Fields, Clitterhouse Playing Fields and Barnet Playing Field / King George V Playing Field.

Six of the sites (Tudor Sports Ground, Victoria Recreation Ground, Copthall Playing Fields, Glebelands and Clitterhouse Playing Fields and Hendon Youth Sports Centre) are known to currently be used by schools.

**Table 25: Value Scores – Sports Sites**

Value Score	Number of sites	Names of Sites
<b>Area 1: Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb</b>		
High	0	
High - Medium	3	Clitterhouse Playing Fields, Lyttleton Playing Fields and Hendon Youth Sports Centre*
Medium	0	
Low	0	
<b>Area 2: East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse</b>		
High	0	
High - Medium	1	Glebelands
Medium	1	Smithsfield
Low	0	
<b>Area 3: Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet</b>		
High	0	
High - Medium	3	Bethune Recreation Ground, New Southgate Recreation Ground and Victoria Recreation Ground.
Medium	1	Dame Alice Owen Ground
Low	1	Ludgrove Playing Field

<b>Area 4: High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge</b>		
High	0	
High - Medium	1	Barnet Playing Field / King George V Playing Field
Medium	4	Byng Road Rugby Fields, Grange Playing Fields, King George V Field B and Tudor Sports Ground
Low	0	
<b>Area 5: Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill</b>		
High	0	
High - Medium	2	Copthall Playing Fields and Mill Field
Medium	1	Clay Lane
Low	1	Chase Lodge Playing Field
<b>Area 6: Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon</b>		
High	0	
High - Medium	0	
Medium	2	Montrose Playing Fields and West Hendon Playing Fields
Low	2	Woodfield Park and Tyrell Way Ball Park

\*The usage score which contributes to the overall value score for Hendon Youth Sports Centre has been assumed to be fair.

#### **11.4 Natural Green Space**

The majority of sites were classified as Medium Value, 32% were classified as High-Medium value and 8% as Low value, as can be found in **Table 26** below. Only one natural green space achieved a score of High for quality, this was Windsor Open Space in Area 2. It scored highly in terms of context because it is located centrally a deficiency area which a high population density. It was considered to play an ecological and community role, and also scored highly in terms of landscape features. The site did not score so well in terms of demographics because it is not located within a deprived ward.

Areas 1 and 6 have the largest number of sites falling in the top two classifications, with five sites each.

Only one site was classified as Low value, this is Chesterfield F/P located in Area 4. This site was also classified as poor in the quality assessment. This site scored poorly in all criteria. It is located close to a high concentration of flats but was not found to play any other significant function in terms of context because it is not located in an area of deficiency, it is not in a central location and is not very visible. It also scored badly in terms of landscape character and is not currently used for events or as an outdoor classroom.

18 of the natural green spaces were identified as currently being used by schools; in addition Hadley Green, Copthall South Fields, Drivers Hill, Scratchwood and Brent Park were recognised as having potential to be used as outdoor classrooms in the future. Only 8% of the nature conservation sites are located within areas where significant growth is

planned, these are Brunswick Woods, Mill Hill Old Railway Nature Reserve, Welsh Harp marginal land SITE A and Welsh Harp marginal land SITE C. As you would expect very few of the natural green spaces are used for sports. The sites tend to be located on the outskirts of the Borough, and less than 40% of them were considered to be in central locations.

**Table 26: Value Score Natural Green Space**

Value Score	Number of sites	Names of Sites
<b>Area 1: Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb</b>		
High	0	
High - Medium	5	Big Wood Nature Reserve, Fletchers Gardens, Littlewood Nature Reserve, Northway Gardens and Northway Gardens Extension
Medium	2	Brookside Walk and The Bowls/Fallogen Way
Low	0	
<b>Area 2: East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse</b>		
High	1	Windsor Open Space
High - Medium	1	College Farm
Medium	2	Riverside Gardens and Riverside Walk South
Low	0	
<b>Area 3: Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet</b>		
High	0	
High - Medium	1	Coppetts Wood
Medium	4	Barfield Nature Park, Baring Road Castlewood Road, Brunswick Woods and Everleigh Walk
Low	0	
<b>Area 4: High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge</b>		
High	0	
High – Medium	3	Hadley Green, Totteridge Fields Nature Reserve and Totteridge Green
Medium	13	Arkley Lane and Pastures, Arkley South Fields, Barnet Countryside Centre, Barnet Gate Wood, Darlands Lake LNR, Glebe Lane Pastures, Laurel Way OS, Riverside Walk North, Riverside Walk / Ducks Island and Rowley Green Common Nature Reserve, Totteridge Common, Woodridge Nature Reserve and Woodside Park Club Entrance
Low	1	Chesterfield F/P
<b>Area 5: Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill</b>		

High	0	
High - Medium	1	Moat Mount Open Space
Medium	6	Burtonhole Lane and Pasture, Copthall Railway Walk and Copthall Common, Copthall South Fields, Dean's Brook, Mill Hill Old Railway Nature Reserve and Scratchwood
Low	3	Bruno's Field, Drivers Hill and Sulloniacis Pastures
<b>Area 6:</b> Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon		
High	0	
High - Medium	5	Brent Park, Welsh Harp marginal land SITE A, Welsh Harp marginal land SITE C, Welsh Harp marginal land SITE D and Welsh Harp marginal land SITE E
Medium	2	Brookside Walk and Welsh Harp marginal land SITE B
Low	0	

## 11.5 Key Summary and Conclusions

### 11.5.1 Summary

#### Parks

The majority of parks in the Borough have been classified as having Medium value. Almost 11% of parks have been classified as having High Value, 26% are High – Medium Value and 11% are Low Value. All but one of the parks classified as High Value are also Premier Parks, the exception is Golders Hill Park. In total eight parks are classified as Low Value. Half of those considered Low Value are located in Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill (Area 5). Only 12 of the parks audited are located in areas where considerable population and housing growth is forecast.

#### Outdoor Sports

No sports sites in Barnet were rated as having 'High' value. Most sites (43%) were classified as having High-Medium value. Approximately 40% of sites are considered to have Medium value, and 17% of, Poor value. Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb (Area 1) has the highest quality sports sites. All three of the area's sites are classified as having High-Medium value. The sites assessed as poor are concentrated in two geographical areas - Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh and East Barnet (Area 3), Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill (Area 5) and Colindale, Hendon and West Hendon (Area 6).

#### Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace

The majority of Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace sites were classified as Medium Value, 32% of the sites were classified as High-Medium value. Only one site achieved a score of High for quality - Windsor Open Space in East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley and Woodhouse (Area 2). Similarly, only one site achieved a Low value score - Chesterfield F/P located in High Barnet, Underhill and Totteridge (Area 4). This site was also classified as poor in the quality assessment.

### 11.5.2 Conclusions

#### Parks

- Most parks in Barnet have been classified as Medium value;
- Eight parks have been classified as High Value;

- All but one of the parks classified as High Value are also Premier Parks, the exception is Golders Hill Park. In total eight parks have been classified as Low Value. Half of these parks are located in Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill (Area 5);
- Only 12 of the parks audited are located in areas where considerable population and housing growth is forecast;
- Future funding and resources could therefore be concentrated on Low and Medium value sites in order to improve the sites.

#### **Outdoor sports**

- No sports sites in the Borough were rated as having a High value;
- Most sites (43%) have been classified as High-Medium value;
- All three sites within Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb (Area 1) have been classified as High-Medium value;
- Four sites (17%) have been classified as Poor. These sites assessed are located in Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh and East Barnet (Area 3), Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill (Area 5) and Colindale, Hendon and West Hendon (Area 6);
- Few of the sports sites are located in Barnet's growth areas. 12 sites were identified for having potential for holding future events.

#### **Natural green and semi natural greenspace**

- Only one site received a High score for value - Windsor Open Space;
- The majority of sites were classified as having Medium Value;
- Only one site was classified as Low value - Chesterfield F/P located in High Barnet, Underhill and Totteridge (Area 4). This site was also classified as poor in the quality assessment;
- Over a third of the sites were identified as currently being used by schools for educational use.

### **11.6 Combining quality and value**

When both quality and value assessments have been completed, assessing the quality and value of open spaces and sport and recreation facilities together is fundamental to both effective planning and Best Value reviews. If this is not done, it is impossible objectively to identify those spaces or facilities which should be given the highest level of protection by the planning system, those which require enhancement in some way and those which may no longer be needed for their present purpose. Using a simple high/low classification gives the following possible combinations of quality and value for open spaces and sport and recreation facilities:

In the following assessment only sites in the **excellent category for quality are counted as high quality, and only sites in the poor or fair categories are counted as low quality.**

In terms of value, **sites classified as high value and high-medium value are counted as high value and only sites classified as low value appear in the low value category.** This approach means that outliers can be identified, although results in only a few sites falling into the 'combination' categories.

#### **High quality/low value**

Wherever possible, the preferred policy approach to a space or facility in this category should be to enhance its value in terms of its present primary purpose. If this is not possible, the next best policy approach is to consider whether it might be of high value if converted to some other primary purpose. Only if this is also impossible will it be acceptable to consider a change of use.

**High quality/high value**

Ideally all spaces and facilities should come into this category and the planning system should then seek to protect them.

**Low quality/low value**

Wherever possible, the policy approach to these spaces or facilities should be to enhance their quality provided it is possible also to enhance their value. If this is not possible, for whatever reason, the space or facility may be 'surplus to requirements' in terms of its present primary purpose.

**Low quality/high value**

The policy approach to these spaces or facilities should always be to enhance their quality and therefore the planning system should seek to protect them.

This provides a simple means of determining the most appropriate policy approach to each existing open space or facility. It also provides a basis for linking planning, design, management and maintenance. If there is a choice of spaces or facilities of equal quality to declare surplus, and no need to use one or part of one to remedy a deficiency in some other form of open space or sport and recreation provision, it will normally be sensible to consider disposing of the one with the lowest value. Similarly, if two are of equal value, it will normally be sensible to dispose of the one of lower quality.

**11.6.1 Parks**

None of the parks were classified as both high quality and low value. No parks were classified as low quality and high value, as illustrated in **Table 27**.

Edgwarebury, Oakhill Park, Friary Park, Golders Hill Park and Victoria Park are all classified as **high quality and high value**. Edgwarebury Park is a Green Flag Park which is also a Premier Park. This park, located in Area 5, scored well in all value assessments, but particularly landscape and events/education. Oakhill Park a district Park which is also a Premier Park and has a Green Flag. The site scored well in all the assessments and clearly plays an important role for residents within its catchment area. Friary Park is classified as a Local Park in this study and is also a Premier Park and has a Green Flag award. Friary Park is very popular with local residents, it also plays an important ecological, cultural and community role. Golders Hill Park is managed by the Corporation of London. This park has a variety of function is well used and well maintained. Victoria Park is a local park in this study and is also one of Barnet's Premier Parks. It was assessed as being excellent in terms of non sports facilities, how welcoming it is and provision of information.

At the other end of the scale, Bounds Green Fairview OS, Boysland OS, Hamilton Road Playground, Harcourt Avenue Open Space, Lyndhurst Park, Malcolm Park, Stanhope Road Open Space and West Way Open Space were all classified as **low quality and low value**. These sites all have a limited function and scored poorly due to their very limited nature conservation value.

Several parks were assessed as being of **low quality but high value**, these are: Arrandene Open Space, Central Square, Friern Park, Grahame Park, Highlands Gardens, Princes Park, Rushgrove Park and Watling Park. Further discussion about these sites, as well as sites assessed as low quality and low value, is contained in Chapter 12.

No parks were assessed as being **high quality but low value**.

**Table 27: Comparison of Quality and Value Scores - Parks**

Site Name	Quality	Value	Quality – Value Combined
Arrandene Open Space	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Avenue House Grounds	Good	High-Medium	
Basing Hill Park	Fair	Medium	
Belmont Open Space	Fair	Medium	
Bittacy Hill Park	Fair	Medium	
Bounds Green Fairview OS	Poor	Low	Low/ Low
Boysland O/S	Fair	Low	Low/Low
Brook Farm/Wyatt's Farm	Good	High-Medium	
Brunswick Park & Waterfall Walk	Good	High-Medium	
Central Square	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Charter Green	Poor	Medium	
Cherry Tree Wood	Good	High	
Childs Hill Park	Good	Medium	
Church Farm OS	Poor	Medium	
Clarefield Park	Fair	Medium	
Claremont Open Space	Poor	Medium	
Claremont Road Millenium Park	Fair	Medium	
Colindale Park	Fair	Medium	
Coppetts Wood Ex Land	Poor	Medium	
Deacons Green	Fair	Medium	
Edwarebury Park	Excellent	High-Medium	High/High
Elm Park	Fair	Medium	
Finchley Way Open Space	Poor	Medium	
Friary Park	Excellent	High	High/High
Friern Park	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Friern Bridge Retail Park	Poor	Medium	
Golders Hill Park	Excellent	High	High/High
Grahame Park	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Greenhill Gardens	Fair	Medium	
Hadley Cricket Outfield	Good	High-Medium	
Hallwick Recreation Ground	Fair	Medium	
Hamilton Road Playground	Poor	Low	Low/ Low
Hampstead Heath Extension	Good	High-Medium	
Harcourt Avenue OS	Poor	Low	Low/ Low
Hendon Park	Good	High	
Highlands Gardens	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Holickwood Park	Fair	Medium	
Jubilee Gardens	Fair	Medium	
Kennard Road Open Space	Fair	Medium	
King George V Field A	Fair	Medium	
King Georges Field	Good	High-Medium	
Lyndhurst Park	Poor	Low	Low/ Low
Malcolm Park	Fair	Low	Low/ Low
Meads Open Space	Poor	Medium	
Meadway Gate	Fair	Medium	
Meadway Open Space	Poor	Medium	
Mill Hill Park	Good	High	
Monken Hadley Common	Good	High-Medium	
Oak Lane Open Space	Poor	Medium	
Oakdene Park/Gordon Road	Fair	Medium	
Oakhill Park	Excellent	High	High/ High

Old Court House Recreation Ground	Good	High-Medium	
Princes Park	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Quinta Drive OS	Fair	Medium	
Ravenscroft Gardens	Fair	Medium	
Rushgrove Park	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Silkstream Park	Good	High-Medium	
Stanhope Road OS	Fair	Low	Low/Low
Stonegrove Park	Fair	Medium	
Stoneyfields Park	Fair	Medium	
Sturgess Park	Fair	Medium	
Sunny Hill Park	Good	High	
Swan Lane Open Space	Good	High-Medium	
Victoria Park	Excellent	High-Medium	High/High
Watling Park	Fair	High	Low/High
West Way Open Space	Poor	Low	Low/ Low
Whetstone Strays	Fair	Medium	
Whitings Hill Open Space	Fair	Medium	
Willifield Green	Fair	Medium	
Willifield Way Open Space	Fair	Medium	
Woodcroft Park	Fair	Medium	
Woodhouse Open Space/Ingleway	Poor	Medium	
York Park	Fair	Medium	

### 11.6.2 Sports Sites

No sports sites were classified as high quality and low value, or high quality and high value. This is owing to the number of sites that were classified in the middle categories for both quality and value.

Ludgrove Playing Field, Tyrell Way Ball Park, and Woodfield Park were both categorised as **low quality and low value**. Ludgrove playing field was in very poor condition and is poorly used. It is however located in a deficiency area so has the potential to provide significant benefits if its quality were improved. Tyrell Way Ball Park comprises of concrete playing pitches and as such offers very limited benefits in terms of nature conservation and community value. Woodfield Park was not identified as having a clear function and is not located in an area of deprivation.

Eight sites were classified as **low quality and high value**, these are Barnet Playing Field/King George V Playing Field, Clitterhouse Playing Field, Copthall Playing Field, Glebelands, Hendon Youth Sports Centre, Mill Field, Montrose Playing Field and New Southgate Recreation Ground. All of these site are considered to be valuable facilities for the residents of Barnet, however they are all currently in poor condition.

**Table 28: Comparison of Quality and Value Scores – Sports Sites**

Site Name	Quality	Value	Quality – Value Combined
Barnet P/F/ King George V PF	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Bethune Recreation Ground	Good	High-Medium	
Byng Road Rugby Field	Fair	Medium	
Chase Lodge Playing Field	Good	Low	
Clay Lane	Poor	Medium	
Clitterhouse Playing Fields	Poor	High-Medium	Low/High

Cophthall Playing Fields	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Dame Alice Owens Ground	Fair	Medium	
Glebelands	Poor	High-Medium	Low/High
Grange Playing Fields	Poor	Medium	
Hendon Youth Sports Centre	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
King George V Field B	Poor	Medium	
Ludgrove Playing Field	Poor	Low	Low/ Low
Lyttleton Playing Fields	Good	High-Medium	
Mill Field	Poor	High-Medium	Low/High
Montrose Playing Fields	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
New Southgate Recreation Ground	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Smithsfield	Poor	Medium	
Tudor Sports Ground	Good	Medium	
Tyrell Way Ball Park	Poor	Low	Low/ Low
Victoria Recreation Ground	Good	High-Medium	
West Hendon Playing Fields	Poor	Medium	
Woodfield Park	Fair	Low	Low/Low

### 11.6.3 Natural Green Space

None of the natural green spaces were classified as high quality and high value, or low quality and high value. However nine sites were classified as low quality but high value, these are listed in **Table 29** below; all of these sites were assessed as being poor quality due to a variety of reasons such as lack of information or poor cleanliness, however despite this they are identified as playing a valuable role for the community. Chesterfield Playing Field, Drivers Hill and Sulloniacs Pastures are classified as **low quality and low value**. Further discussion about these sites can be found in **Chapter 12. Table 29: Comparison of Quality and Value Scores – Natural Green Space**

Site Name	Quality	Value	Quality – Value Combined
Arkley Lane and Pastures	Good	Medium	
Arkley South Fields	Good	Medium	
Barfield Nature Park	Good	Medium	
Baring Road Castlewood Road	Fair	Medium	
Barnet Countryside Centre	Fair	Medium	
Barnet Gate Wood	Fair	Medium	
Big Wood Nature Reserve	Good	High-Medium	
Brent Park	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Brookside Walk	Fair	Medium	
Brookside Walk	Fair	Medium	
Bruno's Field	Good	Low	
Brunswick Woods	Good	Medium	
Burtonhole Lane and Pasture	Good	Medium	
Chesterfield F/P	Poor	Low	Low/Low
Coppetts Wood	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Cophthall Railway Walk and Cophthall Common	Fair	Medium	
Cophthall South Fields	Fair	Medium	

Darlands Lake LNR	Good	Medium	
Dean's Brook	Fair	Medium	
Drivers Hill	Fair	Low	Low/Low
Everleigh Walk	Good	Medium	
Fletchers Gardens	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Glebe Lane Pastures	Good	Medium	
Hadley Green	Good	High-Medium	
Laurel Way Open Space	Fair	Medium	
Littlewood Nature Reserve	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Mill Hill Old Railway Nature Reserve	Good	Medium	
Moat Mount Open Space	Good	High-Medium	
Northway Gardens	Good	High-Medium	
Northway Gardens Extension	Good	High-Medium	
Riverside Gardens	Fair	Medium	
Riverside Walk North	Fair	Medium	
Riverside Walk South	Fair	Medium	
Riverside Walk / Ducks Island	Fair	Medium	
Rowley Green Common Nature Reserve	Good	Medium	
Scratchwood	Good	Medium	
Sulloniacis Pastures	Fair	Low	Low/Low
The Bowls/Fallogen Way	Fair	Medium	
Totteridge Common	Good	Medium	
Totteridge Fields Nature Reserve	Good	High-Medium	
Totteridge Green	Good	High-Medium	
Welsh Harp marginal land SITE A	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Welsh Harp marginal land SITE B	Good	Medium	
Welsh Harp marginal land SITE C	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Welsh Harp marginal land SITE D	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Welsh Harp marginal land SITE E	Fair	High-Medium	Low/High
Windsor Open Space	Fair	High	Low/High
Woodridge Nature Reserve	Good	Medium	
Woodside Park Club Entrance	Good	Medium	

## 11.7 Summary and conclusions

### 11.7.1 Summary

Assessing the quality and value of open spaces and sport and recreation facilities together is fundamental to both effective planning and Best Value reviews. To identify those space or facilities which should be given the highest level of protection by the planning system, or those which require enhancement in some way, we have applied a simple high/low classification to categorise sites in terms of their combined quality and value.

In our assessment, only sites in the excellent category for quality are counted as high quality, and only sites in the poor category are counted as low quality. In terms of value, only sites classified as high value (and not high-medium value) are counted as high value and only sites classified as low value appear in the low value category. This approach means that outliers can be identified, although results in only a few sites falling into the 'combination' categories.

## **11.7.2 Conclusions**

### **Parks**

- Edwarebury Park, Oakhill Park, Friary Park, Golders Hill Park and Victoria Park are all classified as high quality and high value;
- Edwarebury Park is a Premier Park and also has a green flag. The Park is fairly inaccessible but was still found to play a valuable role in the Borough;
- Oakhill Park is a district Park which is also a Premier Park and has a Green Flag. The site scored well in all the assessments and clearly plays an important role for residents within its catchment area;
- Friary Park is classified as a Local Park in this study and is also a Premier Park and has a Green Flag award and is very popular with local residents, it also plays an important ecological, cultural and community role;
- Golders Hill Park is managed by the Corporation of London. This park is well used and well maintained and has a variety of functions;
- Victoria Park is also a Premier Park; it has a particular function in terms of being a venue for community events and is used by schools;
- Bounds Green Fairview OS, Hamilton Road Playground, Boysland OS Harcourt Avenue Open Space, Lyndhurst Park, Malcolm Park, Stanhope Road Open Space and West Way Open Space were all classified as low quality and low value. These sites all have a limited function and scored poorly due to their very limited nature conservation value.

### **Sport sites**

- There were no sports sites which were classified as high quality and high value, or low quality and high value;
- There were eight sites classified as low quality and high value;
- Ludgrove Playing Field, Tyrell Way Ball Park and Woodfield Park were all categorised as low quality and low value;
- Ludgrove Playing Field was in very poor condition and is poorly used. It is however located in a deficiency area so has the potential to provide significant benefits if its quality were improved;
- Tyrell Way Ball Park comprises of concrete playing pitches and as such offers very limited benefits in terms of nature conservation and community value;
- Woodfield Park currently does not have a clear community function. It is not located in an area of deprivation, high density of an area where considerable growth is planned.

### **Natural/ semi natural green space**

- There were not any natural green spaces which were classified as high quality and high value;
- Nine sites were assessed as currently being poor quality but still having a valuable role;
- Chesterfield Playing Field, Drivers Hill and Sulloniacis Pastures are the only sites to be classified as low quality and low value.

## 12 Setting the Standards

### 12.1 What are the Barnet Open Space Standards for?

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The purpose of formulating these standards is to afford adequate levels of provision for each type of open space within the Borough based upon the existing needs and future needs of the Borough up to 2026 (the lifetime of the LDF). The standards identified will enable the formulation of planning policies to protect existing open spaces where appropriate and to identify areas where additional open space provision is required.

The assessment is undertaken in the context of the emphasis in Government policy on the need for a local approach to setting open space policies and standards (PPG17). The standards will be designed to ensure that all people in Barnet have access to a range of good quality spaces and associated facilities. The standards will be used for planning and prioritising future work for the council in meeting this aim. It is intended that the key standards will be incorporated into the LB Barnet Development Framework and provide developers and the council with clarity over the future provision of green space in planning decisions.

### 12.2 Approach to Setting Standards

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This chapter considers how the open space needs identified within the study can potentially be addressed and prioritised. *Assessing Needs and Opportunities*, the companion guide to PPG17, recommends that local authorities set local provision standards, which incorporate a quantitative, qualitative and accessibility component. Paragraph 6 states that 'the Government believes that open space standards are best set locally. National standards cannot cater for local circumstances, such as differing demographic profiles and the extent of existing built development in an area.'

The standards will supplement planning policy protection for open spaces by ensuring there will be adequate quantity, close enough to where people live. They also measure quality and give the council a target to increase quality to a good level. The standards proposed are for minimum levels of provision (i.e. provision should not drop below this standard and is likely to be above, in the same way that the minimum wage applies) and their application will take into account future population trends and growth areas across the borough, to 2026.

A series of locally based open space standards have therefore been recommended based upon the findings of the assessment of local open space requirements within Barnet for the following factors:

- Quality
- Quantity
- Accessibility

The assessment has considered the current supply, quality and value of certain types of open space provision within Barnet and assessed the overlap with future demand and need.

It is desirable, but not always possible, for each set of standards to apply throughout a local authority area. In some cases, areas with a mix of rural and urban settlements may require more than one approach. Barnet as a whole has a peri-urban settlement structure, thus there is no justification for deriving separate open space and recreational facility standards for different areas of the Borough.

Chapter 13 provides priorities, opportunities and recommendations for specific sites, which take into account local circumstances, such as issues with quality. This provides a more site-specific focus and allows an overall standard to be set for Barnet, alongside specific opportunities for improvement being highlighted where appropriate.

Whilst planning policies are an effective mechanism to deliver an appropriate level of open space provision in Barnet and to improve access to open space within the Borough, it is also

necessary to indicate opportunities and priorities in order to secure improvements to the quality and value of open spaces, hence their inclusion into the recommended standards. Recommendations will be based upon the qualitative requirements highlighted within this assessment.

### **12.2.1 Factors accounted for in Setting Standards**

In deriving a set of standards for the quality, quantity and accessibility of open space in Barnet, the following factors have been taken account of:

#### **Quality**

A quality standard has been devised for Barnet, which takes into account design, condition and maintenance, and reflects our assessment of a comprehensive range of features of parks and open spaces. As highlighted in Chapter 10, the quality standard takes into account a number of aspects that are of particular public concern such as safety and facilities. The resultant standard has been derived to:

- Set out design and management standards for different typologies;
- Provide aspirations for improving the quality of open spaces in particular locations; and
- Provide a benchmark for maintaining quality of open spaces and recreational facilities in Barnet.

#### **Quantity**

As outlined in Chapter 3, setting a quantity standard for Barnet seeks to guarantee adequate provision for users to 2026. Although there are other reasons for protecting open space, such as nature conservation and archaeology, the quantity standard serves as a supplement to policies to protect open spaces. As a result, in most areas, more open space will be protected than the minimum standard identifies. When deriving the quantity standard for Barnet, the following has been taken into account:

- Best practice guidance suggests quantity standard should be per 1,000 population;
- Quantity of land within sub-geographical areas (comprised of wards) are analysed throughout assessment, but the overall standard is set at a Borough level;
- We have used our demand assessment to shape the quantity standard and applied future population projections to help establish future demand; and
- Quantity standards should be minimums, not absolutes.

#### **Accessibility**

Accessibility standards are applied to Barnet to protect and promote an accessible network of green space. In setting the standards, we have ensured that we have undertaken an analysis of Barnet's layout to ensure the standards are credible. In deriving the standards, the following factors have been taken into account:

- The distance standards are intended to reflect the furthest a person would have to travel to get to a particular type of space – in most cases it is likely that spaces will be closer;
- The accessibility standard seeks to improve access to open space within areas identified as deficient; and
- Distance to open spaces isn't the whole story when considering accessibility – when managing provision, other aspects such as disabled access, wayfinding, visibility, visitor welcome and navigability are also important.

### **12.3 Prioritising the Standards**

There are three specific standards recommended by PPG 17 and its Companion Guide (2002), the CABI Open Space Strategies – Best Practice Guidance (2009) and used in

many other open space assessments and strategies. These standards also comprise the London Borough of Barnet (LBB) Open Space Assessment standards and are:

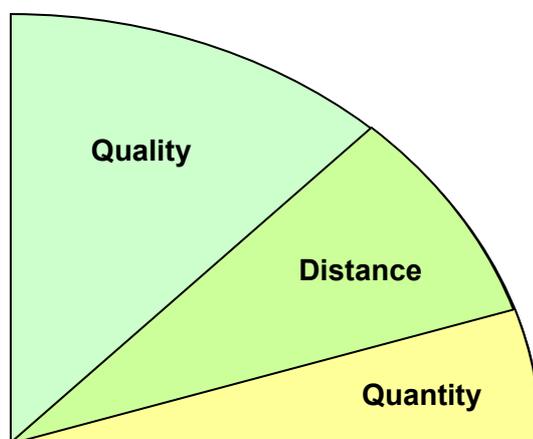
- Quantity standard – how much open space of different types there should be. Often expressed as area of open space per thousand population;
- Quality standard – a level of quality which all spaces should attain. Often a description of the required design and management standards, including inclusive design standards; and
- Accessibility (distance) standard – how far people should have to travel by different modes to reach a particular type of space. Often a distance threshold that takes into account any physical barriers to movement and the location of entrances to areas of open space. This standard often covers access for the disabled.

A number of factors have been taken into account in setting appropriate standards in LBB:

- The views of key stakeholders and Council officers including the importance attached to different types of open space;
- A comprehensive analysis of open space and testing of the potential application of the standards;
- The achievability of the standards;
- Existing national, regional and local policy and guidance and other open space studies; and
- The fact that these standards will not be the only planning protection for open space.

Clearly, a holistic approach needs to be taken when applying the standards; however, at the current time quality is the over-riding factor that affects satisfaction with quality, amount and access to open space as evidenced through the consultation events. Furthermore, it is more practical to achieve for LBB within the current economic climate than achieving substantial increases in quantity in built-up areas. Quality improvements to achieve the standard can be incremental, whereas adding a District or Local Park is significant except in proposed growth areas. Distance and the ability to access open spaces are considered to be of the next greatest significance, since adding or amending bus routes, cycleways or footpaths are practical improvements that are feasible. The order of priority of the standards is illustrated in **Diagram 3** below.

**Diagram 3: Priority of the Standards**



## 12.4 Quality Standards

The rationale and the approach to quality is set out in Sections 3.3.1 and 10 above and the detailed results of the quality analysis are set out in the Appendix Volume.

The quality standards vary from excellent (75%+ scores), good (50-75% scores), fair (25-50% scores) and poor (less than 25% scores) based on survey data relating to facilities, 'welcoming-ness', cleanliness, information provision and natural features. Following an analysis of the results set out in Tables 19, 20 and 21 and in the Appendix Volume, overall the average quality of parks, childrens' play areas and natural green space is fair. By typology the results are, as follows:

Parks – overall the average result is fair and when assessing the results for each of the six geographic areas separately, for each area the results are also fair.

Outdoor Sports – overall the average result is fair and when assessing the results for each of the six geographic areas separately, for each area the average result is:

Area 1 (Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb) – fair

Area 2 (East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse) – poor

Area 3 (Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet) – fair

Area 4 (High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge) – fair

Area 5 (Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill) – fair

Area 6 (Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon) – fair

Natural Green Space – overall the average result is fair and when assessing the results for each of the six geographic areas separately, for each area the average results are also fair, but Area 5 averaged a score of good overall.

### 12.4.1 Setting the standard

Clearly, the variations in the existing quality standard are minimal. However, beneath that overall standard of poor, it can be seen from the Appendix Volume that the quality of parks are poorer in Area 2, 3 and 4; for sports sites Area 2 and 5 are poorer quality; and, for natural/semi-natural space Areas 3 and 6 are poorer quality.

In terms of setting a future standard, it is important to strive for both overall and specific improvements to all open spaces. **It is therefore proposed to bring all open spaces up to a good standard over the period to 2026 (the next 15 years)**, helping to transform neighbourhoods throughout the London Borough of Barnet. Whilst the standard aims to bring all spaces up to good, it is also intended that the national benchmark of quality – the Green Flag – will be applied to a number of key spaces. In addition, there are a number of specific recommendations for improvement.

PPG 17's Companion Guide (2002) recommends quality standards are derived, stressing that they are reasonable aspirations and benchmarks not absolute measures and are used to monitor improvements, especially if the standards are measurable. In the CABE Open Space Strategies Best Practice Guidance (2009) it recommends that quality standards should relate to the criteria within the audit and those scores can provide a local benchmark of quality, often based on scores of sites deemed to be very good quality, such as Green Flag Award winners. We have used the **good** standard, which is based on the more detailed criteria and covers many of the Green Flag criteria and embraces standards from Sport England and NFPA, is aspirational and measurable and takes spaces towards Green Flag status – therefore we have fulfilled the requirements of national guidance and best practice.

Furthermore, the Parks and Bristol Green Spaces Strategy (2008) (an acknowledged best practice strategy) employs a similar quality standard methodology to that set out here. In

addition, similar approaches have been used in the open space assessments for the London Boroughs of Wandsworth and Haringey.

So, what does going from fair to good actually mean? Statistically, it means that spaces must improve from overall scores of 25-50% of the total possible to 50-75% overall scores (refer to Section 10.1 above). More specifically, it will mean reviewing the results in Appendix F in the Appendix Volume and identify spaces with scores of poor or fair and then reviewing each space's identified deficiencies in the 5 identified criteria. Any planned improvements, such as possibly at Grahame Park or Clitterhouse Park (as park of development proposals) should be then factored in to allow deficiencies to be targetted and priorities established.

#### **12.4.2 The results**

Key spaces that require improvements to quality, from poor or fair to good, are:

**Area 1 (Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb)** – PARKS: Basing Hill Park, Central Square, Clarefield Park, Claremont road Millennium Park, Elm Park, Meadway Gate, Princes Park, Willifield Green and Willifield Way Open Space. OUTDOOR SPORTS: Hendon Youth Sports Centre and Clitterhouse Playfields. NATURAL/SEMI NATURAL GREEN SPACE: Brookside Walk, Fletchers Gardens, Littlewood Nature Reserve and the Bowls/Faloden Way.

**Area 2 (East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse)** – PARKS: Charter Green, Coppetts Wood Ex Land, Finchley Way Open Space, Hamilton Road Playground, Oak Lane Open Space and Woodhouse Open Space/Ingleway. OUTDOOR SPORTS: Glebelands and Smithsfield. NATURAL/SEMI NATURAL GREEN SPACE: Riverside Gardens, Riverside Walk South and Windsor Open Space.

**Area 3 (Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet)** – PARKS: Belmont Open Space, Friern Park, Greenhill Gardens, Hallwick Recreation Ground, Holickwood Park, Kennard Road Open Space, Bounds Green Fairview Open Space, Church Farm Open Space and Friern Bridge Retail Park. OUTDOOR SPORTS: Dame Alice Owens Ground, New Southgate Recreation Ground and Ludgrove Playing Field. NATURAL/SEMI NATURAL GREEN SPACE: Baring Road Castlewood Road and Coppetts Wood.

**Area 4 (High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge)** – PARKS: Highlands Gardens, Jubilee Gardens, King George V Field A, Quinta Drive Open Space, Ravenscroft Gardens, Stanhope Road Open Space, Whetstone Strays, Whitings Hill Open Space and Meadway Open Space. OUTDOOR SPORTS: Barnet P/F/King George V Playing Field, Byng Road Rugby Field, Grange Playing Fields and King George V Playing Field B. NATURAL/SEMI NATURAL GREEN SPACE: Barnet Countryside Centre, Barnet Gate Wood, Laurel Way Open Space, Riverside Walk North, Riverside Walk/Ducks Island and Chesterfield F/P.

**Area 5 (Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill)** – PARKS: Arrandene Open Space, Bittacy Hill Park, Boysland Open Space, Deacons Green, Oakdene Park/Gordon Road, Stonegrove Park, Stoneyfields Park, Woodcroft Park, Harcourt Avenue Open Space, Lyndhurst Park, Meads Open Space and West Way Open Space. OUTDOOR SPORTS: Copthall Playing Fields, Clay Lane and Mill Field. NATURAL/SEMI NATURAL GREEN SPACE: Copthall South Fields, Dean's Brook, Drivers Hill and Sulloniacis Pastures.

**Area 6 (Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon, West Hendon)** – PARKS: Colindale Park, Grahame Park, Malcolm Park, Rushgrove Park, Sturgess Park, Watling Park and York Park. OUTDOOR SPORTS: Montrose Playing Fields, Woodfield Park, Tyrell Way Ball Park and West Hendon Playing Fields. NATURAL/SEMI NATURAL GREEN SPACE: Brent Park, Brookside Walk and Welsh Harp marginal land Sites A, B C and D.

In all there are a number of spaces categorised as fair: 38 parks (52%) out of a total of 73 parks, 8 outdoor sports sites and 25 natural/semi natural green spaces (51%) out of a total of 49 sites. Furthermore, there are number of spaces categorised as poor: 15 parks, 10 outdoor sports sites and only 1 natural/semi natural green spaces. Clearly improvements

need to be concentrated for maximum impact, which will mean accounting for context, deprivation, its standard, cost, opportunities for impact, constraints, possibly concentrating on a particular area, etc. These matters will be dealt with in Section 13 below.

This study has not sought to recommend qualitative standards for children's play spaces because this is a specialist area of research. Barnet is currently undertaking a more focused study of formal play provision in parks called Playbuilders which can be used to inform future qualitative standards.

## 12.5 Accessibility Standards

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This study has used existing standards to map accessibility; typically these are national standards but wherever possible London based standards have been used. The following standards have been applied in this study, further details about the source of these standards is contained in Chapter 3:

### Parks

- District Parks have a catchment of 1.2km (GLA Standard as contained in the London Plan, 2008)
- Local Parks have a catchment of 400m (GLA Standard as contained in the London Plan, 2008)

### Play Facilities

- LEAPs have a catchment of 240 m (NPFA Standard)
- NEAPs have a catchment of 600 m (NPFA Standard)

### Sports Sites

- Playing pitches have a catchment of 1.2km (Sport England Standard)

### Natural Green Space

- Everyone should be within 1km actual walking distance from an accessible Metropolitan or borough site (GLA Standard, as contained in the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, 2002)
- Everyone should be within 500m walking distance of a local nature site (GLA Standard, as contained in the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, 2002)

Applying these accessibility standards to Barnet shows that there are considerable deficiency areas for parks, play space and natural green space in Borough. It would therefore be sensible for Barnet to strive to achieve these standards in the future. They are all suitable for the local Barnet context and achieving them will present a significant challenge for the Borough.

The whole of the Borough achieves the Sport England standard that everyone should be within 1.2km of a playing pitch. However the Playing Pitch Strategy has indicated that there is a deficit of playing pitches in the Borough and it would therefore seem sensible to promote a more stringent standard for accessibility to playing pitches in the Borough, however, people are prepared to travel a distance to reach these facilities.

The following accessibility standards are therefore proposed:

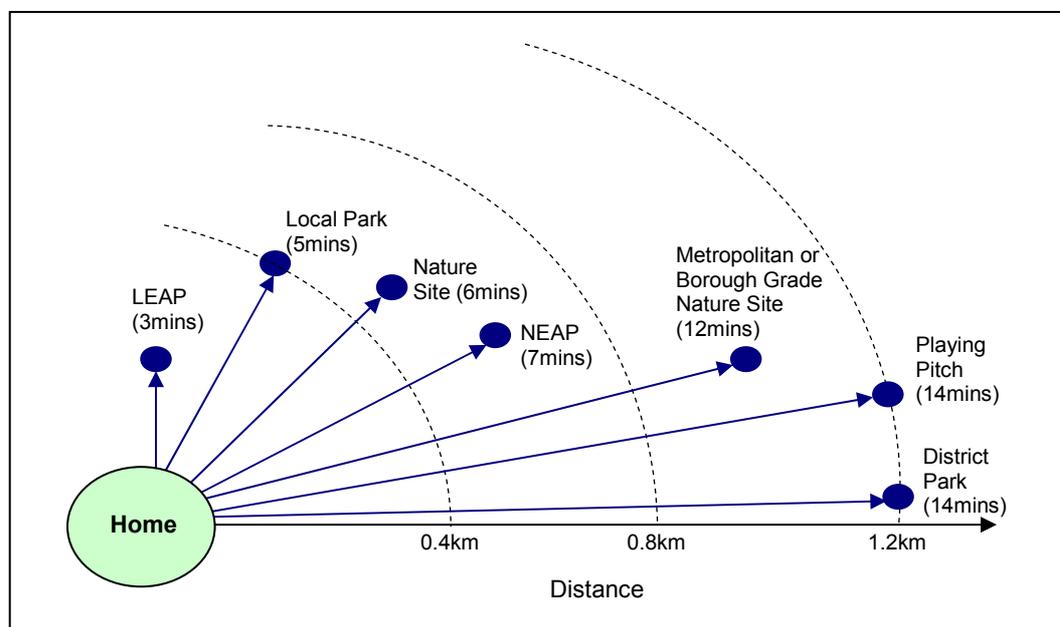
- All residents within the Borough should have access to a **District Park** within 1.2km from home;
- All residents within the Borough should have access to a **Local Park** within 400m from home;
- All residents within the Borough should have access to areas of formal play provision in the form of a **LEAP** within 240m from home or in the form of a **NEAP** within 600m from home;

- All residents within the Borough should have access to a **playing pitch** within 1.2km from home;
- All residents within the Borough should have access to a **Metropolitan or Borough Grade site of Nature Conservation Importance** within 1km from home; and
- All residents within the Borough should have access to a **Local Site of Nature Conservation Importance** within 500m from home.

In addition to increasing the quantity of provision, accessibility to all open spaces can be improved by adding and improving bus routes, footpaths and cycle paths, careful consideration of the locations of bus stops and pedestrian crossing points and improved signage.

These accessibility standards are illustrated on **Diagram 4** below. The walking times assume an average walking speed of 5km per hour.

**Diagram 4: Suggested Walking Catchments to Open Space**



## 12.6 Quantity Standards

### 12.6.1 Parks

There is currently 138 hectares of park area in the borough; which equates to 1.55ha of public parks per 1,000 population in the Borough. This assessment has revealed that a significant proportion of the Borough is not within the catchment of a District Park and Local Park, moreover some parts of the Borough are not within the catchment of either a Local or District Park. The provision of parks in Barnet therefore needs to be increased. This analysis has shown that in order for the entire borough to be within a suitable catchment area of both and district and a local park, an extra 4 District Parks and 29 Local Parks need to be provided. If these were to be provided (and assuming a District Park is 20ha and a Local Park is 2ha) this would result in a total area of 625.89ha. The Borough is forecast to significantly increase in population to 2026, and this must be taken into account when setting quantity standards. Providing these additional parks, and taking into account the forecast increase in population, would result in there being 1.63 ha per 1,000 population.

This parks standard is considerably higher than what is proposed for general open space provision at the major development sites in the Borough. These sites, although all lower than the current and proposed standards, exhibit a considerable variety of provision. The

Mill Hill development has the highest forecast provision at 1.1 ha per 1,000 people. The Colindale development is proposing the lowest amount of open space at just 0.2ha per 1,000 population. These standards relate to total open space, as opposed to only parks. Only a proportion of the open space provided at these developments will take the form of formal park provision meaning the difference between what the developments are proposing and this quantity standard is even greater. The proposed quantity standard for parks is therefore **1.63ha of public parks per 1,000 residents**.

### **12.6.2 Play Space**

Currently a significant proportion of the Borough is not within the catchment of a LEAP or a NEAP. In order to ensure all residents of the Borough have access either a LEAP or a NEAP an extra 3.8ha of formal play space is required. Currently there 3.2ha of formal play space, this equates to 0.05ha per 1,000 children. The 2008 GLA population projections forecast that there will be considerable increase in the number of children living in the Borough. In 2026 it is forecast that there will be 78,273 children aged 0-15 living in the Borough.

In order for the entire Borough to be within the catchment of either a LEAP or a NEAP there needs 3.8ha of play space which will equate to 0.089ha of formal play provision per 1,000 children. The provision of formal play provision should be considered along providing more informal areas for children to play. The proposed quantity standard for formal play provision is therefore **0.09ha per 1,000 children**.

### **12.6.3 Sports Provision**

Currently there is 0.51ha of actual playing pitch area per 1,000 people in Barnet. Although the entire Borough is within 1.2km of a playing pitch, anecdotal evidence from the consultation events, in addition to the Draft Playing Pitch Strategy, indicates that there is a deficit of pitches in the Borough. The lack of pitches is partly to do with the poor quality of many pitches and as such provision should be increased through the proposed quality standards.

It is proposed that in order to accommodate the future population and provide for the current deficit in future there should be an interim standard of **0.75 ha of playing pitch per 1,000 population**, based on the deficit indicated in the Draft Playing Pitch Strategy and demand for playing pitches highlighted at our consultation event. To meet this standard an additional 129ha of playing pitches will need to be provided.

### **12.6.4 Natural Green Space**

Currently there is 2.36ha of natural greenspace per 1,000 population in the Borough. The Borough is currently very well provided for in terms of natural green space; the majority of the Borough is currently within 1km of a Metropolitan or Borough Grade site and 500m of any nature conservation site. Only 20% of the Borough is not within 500m of a nature conservation site. It is difficult to accurately assess the amount of natural greenspace that would need to be provided in order to ensure complete coverage partly because nature conservation sites do not have specified minimum size thresholds. In addition it is very difficult to provide new sites of nature conservation since they typically contain mature tree and planting, water bodies and a range of habitats which are difficult to recreate.

On average the 500m catchments around each nature conservation site cover a total area of 170ha each. If the 20% of the Borough which currently does not have access is divided by the average catchment of each nature conservation site, an extra 10 nature conservation sites would be needed in order to ensure complete coverage. On average nature conservation sites in this study are 4.8ha, and as such approximately 48ha of nature conservation space would need to be provided. This would equate to 2.05ha per 1,000 population in 2026. This actually represents a decrease in provision per 1,000 population due to the large forecast increase in population.

An alternative to this approach would be to apply a population based standard. The premise of this would be to maintain the current standard of provision despite the forecast increase

in population. Currently there is 743ha of natural green space equating to 2.36ha per 1,000 population. In order to maintain the standard of 2.36 ha per 1,000 population a total of 906 ha of natural green spaces would be needed given the forecast increase in population to 2026. Meeting this standard would require an extra 163ha. It is unrealistic to provide this quantum of natural green space within the Borough. Furthermore, Barnet is generally considered to be well provided for in terms of nature conservation sites; in addition to the sites identified in this study the Borough is home to large area of Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land.

It is therefore proposed that **2.05ha of natural greenspace is provided per 1,000 population.**

## **12.7 General Guidelines in Applying the Standards**

In order to implement the open space and recreational standards identified within this Study, a number of guidelines are outlined below. These guidelines relate to the application of quality, accessibility and quantity standards as well as more general principles.

- Defining the primary typology of each open space is important as many spaces perform more than one function. Classification will enable a clearer understanding of the requirements needed for each open space and standards to apply.

Quality:

- Developments proposed in areas deficient in quality open space will require contributions towards enhancement and improvement initiatives.
- Quality standards are incremental and do not involve land take.

Accessibility:

- Radial distances are calculated from the perimeter of the park and transcend potential physical barriers such as railway lines and main roads.
- Areas where accessibility standards to one type of open space are not met could be addressed through diversifying and reclassifying existing sites.

Quantity:

- Developments proposed in areas deficient in open spaces will require contributions towards additional provision. These new open space proposals can be either on-site or off-site.
- For sports pitches the standards only relate to the marked out pitch area and do not refer to ancillary facilities associated with the pitch.
- For play, standards only apply to the areas bounded by the LEAP and NEAP.
- Consideration needs to be given to how the standards might be applied in combination as spaces are often multi-functional;
- Standards are based on best available population projections – in this case the GLA Population Projections (March 2009) plus the Growth Area proposals.

## **12.8 Summary of Applied Standards against Existing Standards**

**Table 30** below contains a series of locally based open space standards based upon the findings of the assessment of open space needs within the Borough, as contained in Chapters 6 to 11. The purpose of these standards is to afford adequate levels of provision for each type of open space within the Borough based upon the existing needs and future needs of the Borough up to 2026. The standards will enable the formulation of planning policies to protect existing open spaces where appropriate and to identify areas where additional open space provision is required.

**Table 30: Summary of Quality, Quantity and Accessibility Standards**

Open Space Typology	Current Provision	Quantity Standard	Additional area required to meet needs to 2026	Accessibility standard	Quality Standard
Parks	1.55ha per 1,000 population	1.63 ha per 1,000 population	138 Ha (as 4 District Parks and 29 Local Parks)	All residents within the Borough should have access to a District Park within 1.2km from home; and All residents within the Borough should have access to a Local Park within 400m from home	Parks within Barnet should strive to meet the 'good' standard of the Arup quality criteria for parks. These standards reflect the quality required by the Green Flag criteria.
Children's Play	0.05ha per 1,000 children	0.09ha per 1,000 children	3.8ha (as 35 LEAPs and 24 NEAPs)	All residents in the Borough should be within 240m of a LEAP or 600m of a NEAP	Children's play provision (LEAPs and NEAPs) within the Borough should be of adequate quality and provide the range of facilities associated with the size of the facility. Guidelines set out within the NPFA 6 Acre Standard (2001) should be used to assess levels of adequacy in terms of the range and quality of provision.
Playing Pitches and Outdoor Sports	0.51ha per 1,000 population	0.75ha per 1,000 population	129ha	All residents should be within 1.2km of a playing pitch	Playing pitches within Barnet should strive to meet the 'good' standard of the Arup quality criteria.
Natural Green Space	2.36 ha per 1,000 population	2.05 ha per 1,000 population	48Ha	All residents within the Borough should have access to a Metropolitan or Borough Grade site of Nature Conservation Importance within 1km from home; and All residents within the Borough should have access to a Local Site of Nature Conservation Importance within 500m from home.	Natural Green Space within Barnet should strive to meet the 'good' standard of the Arup quality criteria for parks.

We do not recommend that a quantitative, qualitative or accessibility standards are adopted for the provision of amenity green spaces. This assessment has not comprehensively assessed all amenity green spaces in the Borough. As a range of other spaces included in this study perform an amenity function, it is not considered appropriate to develop standards

for amenity green spaces. Furthermore, as the assessment excludes sites of less than 0.25 ha it is not considered to accurately reflect the overall provision of amenity green space in Barnet.

However, amenity green spaces clearly play an important role for local residents, and as such it is expected that a design led approach would be used to identify the level of provision appropriate to the context and the scale and type of the individual development.

## 13 Priorities, Opportunities and Recommendations

### 13.1 Introduction

This chapter identifies specific areas within Barnet that are deficient in open space and recreational facilities and provide recommendations to enable enhancement of facilities. The chapter seeks to identify opportunities for re-dressing the balance of deficiencies in Barnet as well as solutions for tackling poor quality spaces. This chapter seeks to identify aspirations for improvement and recommendations to enhance and protect open space and recreational facilities in Barnet.

### 13.2 Developing Specific Priorities

#### 13.2.1 Prioritising sites

Using both the qualitative and quantitative research undertaken, the following sections seek to unpick deficiencies of open space in Barnet in terms of their accessibility, quantity, quality and value and provide a 'cross section' of results.

For each typology, an overview of quantitative deficiencies is provided, followed by a comprehensive schedule of deficiencies associated with quality, value and accessibility. This serves to highlight particular sites that have a combined Quality/ Value score of Low/ Low or Low/High. We then explore

- Why a site scored particularly poorly in the quality assessment e.g. sports facilities, information;
- Why a site scored particularly high or low in the value assessment and commentary on key elements of value e.g. a site scored well for landscape, function and context but is not located in an area of high deprivation;
- Whether a site has been identified as a site with poor accessibility;
- We also explore whether it is in an area of below average provision.

#### Parks

There are areas of deficiency in district park provision in North and East Finchley (Area 2), Brent Cross/Cricklewood (Areas 1 and 6), Totteridge (Area 4) and Edgware (Area 5). There are areas of deficiency in local park provision in the following areas within our study areas:  
Area 1: Hampstead Garden Suburb and Golders Green

Area 2: North Finchley

Area 3: Oakleigh Park New Barnet

Area 4: None

Area 5: Mill Hill

Area 6: Hendon

A number of these areas have access to other forms of open space and are therefore not a priority for additional provision. Totteridge already has significant areas of open land, and rather than consider providing new open spaces it would be more fruitful to improve footpaths across the existing Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land and provide links into other parts of the open space network. Hampstead Garden Suburb and Golders Green have a network of small incidental amenity spaces which perform an important local amenity function and residents have relatively easy access to Hampstead Heath, so apparent deficiencies may be deceptive. Similarly to Totteridge these areas should not be a priority for new open spaces.

Brent Cross Cricklewood is subject to major development and existing parks are likely to be subject to additional use, as such this should be a priority to improve provision. There are already a number of parks in this area which have potential to be improved, Sturgess Park, Clarefield Park and Claremont Open Space all scored 'fair' in the quality assessment.

North and East Finchley are dense built up areas, with no known significant opportunities for new open spaces. The priority here should therefore be to improve access to existing parks. There are not any sites in these areas which were identified as scoring poorly in all accessibility assessments, however Coppetts Wood Exchange Land Development is not on or adjacent to the public rights of way network and has a below average number of London cycling routes within 100m. Cherry Tree Wood also has poor accessibility by bike and has a below average number of bus routes within 640m.

There are 16 parks which have been assessed as being low quality and high value or low quality and low value, these can all be found in **Table 31** which also contains further commentary about each site.

**Table 31: Quality and Value Scores for Parks**

Area	Site	Combined quality/value	Quality score	Scored particularly poorly in the following Quality assessment areas:	Value Score	Commentary on key elements of value	Within area of low provision per 000? (Area 1, 2 and 6)	Identified as a site with poor accessibility?
1	Central Square	Low/High	Fair	Sport Facilities Information Quality and variety of natural features	High-Medium	Scored well in terms of context, function and events/education. The site is not located in an area of high deprivation, high density or future population growth.	Yes	
1	Princes Park	Low/High	Fair	Variety of natural features	High-Medium	Scored well in terms of context, function and events, but is not located in an area of high deprivation, high density or future population growth.	Yes	Yes
2	Hamilton Road Playground	Low/ Low	Poor	Sport Facilities Information Quality and variety of natural features	Low	Scored poorly in terms of function, landscape value and events/education. The site is not located in an area of high deprivation, high density or future population growth.	Yes	Yes
3	Bounds Green Fairview OS	Low/ Low	Poor	Sport Facilities Information Quality of natural features	Low	Scored poorly in terms of function, context, landscape, and events/education. It is located in an area of high population density and the 20% most deprived area of the Borough.		Yes
3	Friern Park	Low/High	Fair	Sport Facilities Quality and variety of natural features	High-Medium	Scored well in terms of context, function and events/education. The site is not located in an area of deprivation or future population growth.		
4	Highlands Gardens	Low/High	Fair	Sport Facilities Information Quality of natural	High-Medium	Scored well in terms of function, landscape and events/education. The site is not located in an area of high deprivation, high density or future population growth.		

Area	Site	Combined quality/value	Quality score	Scored particularly poorly in the following Quality assessment areas:	Value Score	Commentary on key elements of value	Within area of low provision per 000? (Area 1, 2 and 6)	Identified as a site with poor accessibility?
				features				
4	Stanhope Road OS	Low/Low	Fair	Sport Facilities Information Quality and variety of natural features	Low	Scored well in terms of context, but poorly in all other value assessments.		
5	Arrandene Open Space	Low/High	Fair	Sport Facilities Information	High-Medium	Scored well for landscape, function and context but is not located in an area of high deprivation.		
5	Boysland O/S	Low/Low	Fair	Sport Facilities Information Quality and variety of natural features	Low	Scored poorly in all sections of the value assessment.		Yes
5	Harcourt Avenue OS	Low/ Low	Poor	Sport Facilities Information Quality and variety of natural features	Low	The site scored poorly in all value assessments except context.		
5	Lyndhurst Park	Low/ Low	Poor	Sport Facilities Information Quality and variety of natural features	Low	The site scored poorly in all value assessments.		
5	West Way OS	Low/ Low	Poor	Sport Facilities Information Quality and variety of natural features	Low	Score poorly in all value assessments. The site is not located in an area of high deprivation, high density or future population growth.		

Area	Site	Combined quality/value	Quality score	Scored particularly poorly in the following Quality assessment areas:	Value Score	Commentary on key elements of value	Within area of low provision per 000? (Area 1, 2 and 6)	Identified as a site with poor accessibility?
6	Grahame Park	Low/High	Fair	Information	High-Medium	Scored well in terms of context and education events. The site is located in an area of high deprivation, high density and future population growth.	Yes	
6	Malcolm Park	Low/ Low	Fair	Quality of natural features	Low	The site scored poorly in all value assessments.	Yes	
6	Rushgrove Park	Low/High	Fair	Quality and variety of natural features	High-Medium	Scored well in terms of context, function and landscape. Is not located in an area of deprivation, but is located in an area of future population growth and high density.	Yes	Yes
6	Watling Park	Low/High	Fair	Information Quality of natural features	High	Score well in all value assessments.	Yes	

### **Children's Play Space**

This study has identified a shortage of 3.8ha of formal children's play provision. Some parts of the Borough do not have a deficiency in access, however there are a number of areas within our study areas that are not within a reasonable catchment area of either a LEAP or a NEAP, as listed below:

Area 1: Golders Green

Area 2: Church End, West Finchley and Woodhouse

Area 3: Barnet Vale, Southgate and Colney Hatch

Area 4: Totteridge, High Barnet

Area 5: North of Edgware

Area 6: West Hendon

A number of these areas have open spaces where it may be possible to provide play equipment in the future as listed below:

- Totteridge – King George V Field B and Totteridge Green
- Barnet Vale – Greenhill Gardens and Highlands Gardens
- High Barnet – Byng Road Rugby Field
- Southgate – Brunswick Park & Waterfall Walk and Lincoln Avenue Open Space
- Colney Hatch – Coppetts Wood, Woodhouse Open Space and Friern Park
- West Hendon - Welsh Harp Reservoir and West Hendon Playing Fields
- Church End, West Finchley and Woodhouse – Glebelands and Victoria Park

The parts of the Borough with poor access to play facilities should be a priority for the provision of new facilities and improvement of existing. Additionally parks in Areas 3 and 6 should be particular priorities because these areas have a high number of children living in them.

As noted previously this study has not undertaken a specific assessment of the quality and value of formal play facilities. However the Playbuilders study has secured funding to provide 11 new play facilities. The results of this assessment can be used to inform the choice of location for these new sites.

### **Outdoor Sports**

Currently the whole Borough is within a suitable catchment distance of a playing pitch, nevertheless this study has recommended a higher quantity standard because there is a perceived deficiency of pitches in the Borough.

Improving the quality of playing pitches should be a key priority for the Borough. This will also have the effect of improving quantity because at the moment some of the Borough's pitches are of such poor quality that they are unusable.

This study has not specifically assessed the quality of the playing pitch and its ancillary facilities; instead it has assessed the quality of the whole site in which the pitch is located. Eight sites have been assessed as being low quality but high value, and a further three sites are low quality and low value. These sites are described in more detail in **Table 32** below.

**Table 32: Quality and Value Scores for Sports Sites**

Area	Site	Combined quality/value	Quality score	Scored particularly poorly in the following areas:	Value Score	Commentary on key elements of value	Within area of low provision per1,000? 1,2,3	Identified as a site with poor accessibility?
1	Clitterhouse Playing Fields	Low/High	Poor	All aspects of value, but particularly provision of information	High-Medium	Scored well in terms of context and function. Is located in an area of high deprivation, future population growth and high density	Yes	
1	Hendon Youth Sports Centre	Low/High	Fair	Variety of sports provision	High-Medium	Scored well for context and function. Is located in an area of high deprivation, high density and future population growth.	Yes	
2	Glebelands	Low/High	Poor	Variety of sports provision and information	High-Medium	Scored well for context, function and landscape. Is located in one of the Borough's most deprived areas and an area of high population density.	Yes	
3	Ludgrove Playing Field	Low/ Low	Poor	Variety of sports provision, non sport facilities and provision of information	Low	Scored poorly in all values assessments.	Yes	
3	New Southgate Recreation Ground	Low/High	Fair	Provision of information	High-Medium	Scored well for context and function. Located in an area of high population density.	Yes	
4	Barnet P/F/ King	Low/High	Fair	Variety of sports	High-	Scored well in terms of		

Area	Site	Combined quality/value	Quality score	Scored particularly poorly in the following areas:	Value Score	Commentary on key elements of value	Within area of low provision per 1,000? 1,2,3	Identified as a site with poor accessibility?
	George PF			provision, how welcoming it is, cleanliness and provision of information.	Medium	context, function and landscape. Is not located in an area of future population growth or high density.		
5	Copthall Playing Fields	Low/High	Fair	Variety of sports provision and information	High-Medium	Scored well for context and events/education. Is not located in an area of growth or high deprivation.		
5	Mill Field	Low/High	Poor	Variety of sports provision and information	High-Medium	Scored well for context, function and landscape. Not located in an area of deprivation.		Yes
6	Montrose Playing Fields	Low/High	Fair	Sports and non sports facilities.	High-Medium	Scored well for context, function and events/education. Is located in an area of high density and future population growth.		
6	Tyrell Way Ball Park	Low/ Low	Poor	Variety of sports provision and information	Low	Scored poorly in all value assessments but is located in an area of future population growth.		
6	Woodfield Park	Low/Low	Fair	Variety of sports provision	Low	Scored poorly in all value assessments.		

**Natural and Semi Natural Green Space**

The majority of the Borough is within 1km of a Metropolitan or Borough Grade Nature Conservation Site and within 500m of any nature conservation site. It will be very difficult to ensure complete coverage by providing new nature conservation sites, because the areas not within the catchment are scattered across the Borough and tend to be in built up urban areas. Additionally when Green Belt is added to the natural greens space in the Borough it is considered that the Borough has a reasonably high overall quantity of natural green space compared to other Boroughs, as set out in Section 5.2. There are however a number of nature conservation sites which have been identified as low quality. The key reasons for sites scoring poorly are a poor variety of natural features and not being very welcoming. Sites which are low quality / low value, and low quality / high value are listed in the **Table 33** overleaf.

**Table 33: Quality and Value Scores for Natural Green Space**

Area	Site	Combined quality/value	Quality score	Scored particularly poorly in the following areas:	Value Score	Commentary on key elements of value	Within area of low provision per 1,000? 1, 2,6	Identified as a site with poor accessibility?
1	Fletchers Gardens	Low/High	Fair	Variety and quality of natural features	High-Medium	Scored well in terms of context, function and landscape. Is not located in an area of high deprivation, high population density or future population growth.	Yes	
1	Littlewood Nature Reserve	Low/High	Fair	How welcoming it is and variety of natural features	High-Medium	Scored well in terms of context, function and events/education.	Yes	
2	Windsor Open Space	Low/High	Fair	Variety of natural features and how welcoming it is	High	Scored well in all value assessments except demographics because it is not located in an area of high deprivation or future population growth.	Yes	
3	Coppetts Wood	Low/High	Fair	How welcoming it is	High-Medium	Score well in terms of context, function and events/education. Is located in an area of high population density.		Yes
4	Chesterfield F/P	Low/Low	Poor	Variety and quality of natural features	Low	Scored poorly in all value assessments.		Yes
5	Drivers Hill	Low/Low	Fair	How welcoming it is and variety of natural features	Low	Scored poorly in all value assessments except landscape.		Yes
5	Sulloniacs Pastures	Low/Low	Fair	How welcoming it is	Low	Scored poorly in all value assessments.		Yes
6	Brent Park	Low/High	Fair	How welcoming it is	High-Medium	Scored well in terms of context, function and landscape. Is located in an area of high population density.	Yes	
6	Welsh Harp marginal land SITE A	Low/High	Fair	How welcoming it is	High-Medium	Scored particularly well in terms of context, landscape and education.	Yes	

6	Welsh Harp marginal land SITE C	Low/High	Fair	Variety of natural features	High-Medium	Scored particularly well in terms of context, landscape and education.	Yes	
Area	Site	Combined quality/value	Quality score	Scored particularly poorly in the following areas:	Value Score	Commentary on key elements of value	Within area of low provision per 1,000? 1, 2,6	Identified as a site with poor accessibility?
6	Welsh Harp marginal land SITE D	Low/High	Fair	Variety of natural features	High-Medium	Scored particularly well in terms of context, landscape and education.	Yes	
6	Welsh Harp marginal land SITE E	Low/High	Fair	Variety of natural features	High-Medium	Scored particularly well in terms of context, landscape and education.	Yes	

### **13.3 Opportunities**

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This section outlines opportunities for improvements across the six geographical areas, so that any recommendations can be considered in the context of neighbouring open spaces.

#### **13.3.1 General opportunities:**

##### **Quality**

- Increase the functionality of green spaces by introducing new uses, for example providing sports pitches in parks which currently do not have any sports provision;
- Improve the safety and how welcoming sites are through improved lighting, management and information provision;
- Improved children's play space in line with the recommendations of the Playbuilders Study;
- Improved the quality of existing provision of facilities in growth areas;
- Improved management and maintenance regime accompanied by a clear management strategy, for example some natural green spaces are considered to be over managed, whereas some more formal parks are considered to be under managed.

##### **Accessibility**

- Improve accessibility to sites, through providing new bus, cycling and walking routes;
- Improve accessibility within sites through improved signage and information;
- Improve marketing to raise the profile of green spaces and raise awareness of their locations.

##### **Quantity**

- Provision of additional parks, natural green spaces, pitches or outdoor sports facilities;
- Ensure adequate provision of a range of open spaces in growth areas;
- Increase the provision of nature conservation areas;
- Enhance the green network, for example by creating new links between sites, improving access and plugging gaps;
- Improvements to specifically identified deficiencies.

##### **Other**

- Increase the number of events held in parks and the ranges of sites where events are held;
- Increase the involvement from community groups and schools in the management of green spaces and the provision of events.

### **13.4 Issues and Opportunities by Area**

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This section sets out the main issues, characteristics and problems by area, as well as possible improvements and site specific observations and recommendations.

#### **13.4.1 Area 1: Golders Green, Childs Hill, Garden Suburb**

##### **Key Issues/Problems**

- The area has a relatively high population density – particularly Golders Green and Childs Hill. Golders Green has the second highest child population density in the Borough.
- Golders Green and Garden Suburb have a high proportion of houses to flats; Childs Hill has a much higher proportion of flats.

- The area contains part of Cricklewood / Brent Cross Growth area.
- The area is well connected with LUL and rail stations and numerous bus routes.
- There is only 1 District Park and 12 local parks in this area. Although this is a fairly high number of local parks, park provision per 1,000 population is below average (1.26ha)
- However, the whole area is within a catchment of either a District or a Local park.
- Children's play provision is plentiful – the area has the highest provision per child in Barnet (0.7 m<sup>2</sup>) per 1,000 children.
- The area has below average provision of playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities, with a notable lack of sports clubs in the area.
- There is below average provision of natural and semi-natural green space in the borough. (1.61ha per 1,000)
- Parts of Childs Hill and Cricklewood are not within 1km of a Metropolitan or Borough Grade importance, or within 500m of a nature conservation site.

### **Possible Improvements**

The area is already densely populated and the population is set to increase significantly (by approximately 18,000) with planned growth in Brent Cross Cricklewood (which spans Areas 1 and 6). It is therefore considered that this part of the borough should be considered a priority for improvements to open space and recreational facilities as spaces in this area will be much more intensively used in the future

- Improved linkages with nearby open spaces outside of Borough boundary e.g. Highgate Wood, Hampstead Heath
- Improved way-finding and signposting to open spaces.
- Garden Suburb contains pockets of small private and semi-private open spaces that have not been audited as part of this assessment. An assessment of the potential for improving access to these spaces could be undertaken to increase open space provision in the area.
- Additional nature conservation provision and enhancement of existing provision such as Fletchers Gardens and Littlewood Nature Reserve.
- As Area 1 is particularly urbanized, there may be limited space for increased park provision; therefore, focus should be on improving the quality of those parks that scored 'fair' or 'poor' in the quality assessment.
- Physical linkages with the open space improvements to come forward as part of the Brent Cross/ Cricklewood growth area proposals should be maximised and considered catalytic for kick starting other improvements in the area.

### **Site Specific Opportunities**

- Central Square scores poorly in quality, owing to poor sports facilities and information, but is considered highly valuable, owing to its excellent education and events function. This space is therefore a potential priority for improvement and enhancement of its community and education role, perhaps by increasing the marketing of events at the park and promoting partnerships with nearby schools
- Princes Park also scores low in the quality score, owing to the lack of natural features. However, it is considered highly valuable, owing to its context and setting. There is potential to improve the natural features, and subsequently increase natural and semi-natural green space provision in this area.

- Clitterhouse Playing Field scored poorly in the quality assessment and is close to an area of deprivation and high population density, but is due to be improved as part of the Cricklewood/ Brent Cross growth proposals.
- The variety of sports provision offered at the Hendon Youth Sports Centre could be improved – it is an area of deprivation and high population density as well as in an area already poorly provided for with regards to sports facilities.
- Littlewood Nature Reserve and Fletchers Gardens scored poorly in terms of quality but were considered to be valuable. Consideration should be given to the future role of these spaces (particularly given their location alongside the Capital Green Ring) before developing specific proposals for improvements.

### **13.4.2 Area 2: East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse**

#### **Key Issues/ Problems:**

- Most of area is urban, with a high housing density with a high proportion of flats to houses. West Finchley and Woodhouse have particularly high population densities.
- The area has a higher than average child population, particularly in East, West and North Finchley.
- The area does not contain any growth area proposals.
- The area is particularly well provided for in terms of public transport with three LUL stations and plentiful bus routes.
- There are no District Parks in this area, and nine local parks. Area 2 is the only area in Barnet that doesn't have a district park. Consequently most of the area is not within walking distance of a district park. Overall park provision per 1,000 is very low at just 0.39ha per 1,000 people.
- This area also has the lowest provision per 1,000 for natural green space.
- Large part of Area 2 is not within 500m of a nature conservation site, and this same area is also not within 1km of a Metropolitan or Borough graded site.
- There is a deficiency of children's play spaces in Church End, West Finchley and Woodhouse. However all of these areas are near to spaces that could provide play spaces in the future i.e. Glebelands and Victoria Park.

#### **Possible Improvements**

- Improved linkages with nearby open spaces outside of Borough boundary e.g. Highgate Wood, Hampstead Heath.
- The area is particularly well provided for in terms of public transport with three LUL stations and plentiful bus routes, access to these could be improved through better signposting and wayfinding.
- The area currently has many short sections of public Rights of Way which are unconnected, there is an opportunity to connect these to create a comprehensive rights of way network.
- There is potential to better co-ordinate Capital Ring and Dollis Valley Walk through Area 2.
- Additional nature conservation provision should be explored within the parks in area 2.
- The linkages between Glebelands, Summers Lane and Coppetts Wood could be improved; if these sites were connected and planned in a coherent way, they may provide a function similar to that of a district park which is currently lacking in the area. These proposals should be subject to further feasibility work.
- Improve the quality and provision of children's play areas.

**Site Specific Opportunities**

- Hamilton Road Playground scores poorly in quality and value. As a relatively substantial piece of open space in an area of deficiency this site could be improved by providing more information at the site, and improving the quality and variety of natural features.
- Glebelands has low quality but high value. It is located in one of the most deprived areas of the borough which also has a high population density and as such should be a priority for investment. The range of sports provision at the site is currently poor and could be improved; similarly there is scope to improve information provision at the site.
- Windsor Open Space has deficiencies in quality connected with the variety of natural features and its welcoming quality but is considered to be of high value so is a priority for improvement (particularly as part of the Dollis Valley Walk).
- The consultation event highlighted Victoria Park as a potential site for further provision for older children and teenagers and provision of sports facilities (tennis courts, basketball and netball courts).
- Summers Lane rugby pitches are in need of improvement, particularly drainage.
- Explore improvements to linkages between Glebelands, Summers Lane and Coppetts Wood.

**13.4.3 Area 3: Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh, East Barnet****Key Issues/Problems**

- The highest population densities are situated in the south, particularly within the Friern Barnet area, which also has a higher proportion of flats than average for Barnet;
- The area has a higher than average child population density, particularly in the Friern Barnet area;
- Area 3 is generally well served by cycle routes or public rights of way, except the Brunswick Park and Oakleigh Park areas.
- Park provision in Area 3 is average for Barnet, though the southern part of the area is better served by local parks than the north,
- There are large areas of Oakleigh Park and New Barnet which are not within the catchment of a local park, though these areas are accessible to a district park (Oakhill Park). The south of area 3 (Friern Barnet/Colney Hatch Lane area) is outside the catchment served by the only District Park in the area.
- All of Area 3 is within the catchment of either a local park or district park.
- The majority of parks in Area 3 score either fair or poor for quality, particularly in Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh and East Barnet.
- Only the two Premier Parks score excellent for quality, these are Friary Park and Oakhill Park.
- Area 3 scores poorly in terms of children's play provision, with deficient areas identified Southgate and Colney Hatch.
- Area 3 has below average provision for natural green space provision across Barnet with pockets of deficiency in New Barnet, Oakleigh Park, New Southgate and Colney Hatch.

**Possible Improvements**

- Explore feasibility of expansion of Brunswick Park by 0.5ha to be classified as a District Park and subsequently serving the needs of the southern part of Area 3. Corresponding improvements to facilities are also needed.

- Explore potential for additional local parks within Oakleigh Park and New Barnet areas.
- More playing pitches are needed to serve East Barnet and Colney Hatch.
- Potential new cycle and public rights of way routes to Brunswick Park & Waterfall Walk and Oakleigh Park areas.
- Potential for additional children's play facilities in Brunswick Park & Waterfall Walk, Lincoln Avenue Open Space, Coppetts Wood, Woodhouse Open Space and Friern Park
- Improvements to the quality of parks within Coppetts, Brunswick Park, Oakleigh and East Barnet areas.

#### **Site Specific Opportunities**

- Bounds Green/Fairview Open Space scores poorly in terms of quality, value and accessibility. It was identified as serving a limited function and scored poorly due to very limited nature conservation value. Potential to improve this space should be explored, though due to its location adjacent to the North Circular, its potential may be limited.
- Improvements to facilities and landscaping at Friern Park which scored poorly in terms of quality but is considered to be of high value.
- Improve linkages between Brunswick Park and Oakhill Park via Everleigh Walk to develop a green corridor
- Ludgrove Playing Field scored poorly for quality and value due to its poor condition and poor usage. It is however located in a deficiency area so has the potential to provide significant benefits if its quality were improved
- Coppetts Wood was identified in the consultation event as a key nature site for the area. The site is considered to be of high value but low quality and should therefore be considered a priority for investment. It could also be linked to other spaces in Area 2 such as Glebelands and Summers Lane.

### **13.4.4 Area 4: High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge**

#### **Key Issues/Problems**

- Area 4 has a low population density, particularly in High Barnet, and in some areas contains a scattered population. The area has a rural feel and is home to a large tract of Green Belt.
- The area contains a low proportion of flats, suggesting that the majority of residents have access to a private garden.
- The area has a lower than average child population, particularly in High Barnet and Totteridge.
- The area has a limited bus service and several of the areas parks, sports sites and natural green spaces were highlighted as having particularly poor accessibility.
- Area 4 contains three of the Borough's seven District Parks, however these are all located towards the east meaning an area to the west is outside the catchment area.
- Despite containing 12 local parks, there are small sections of Area 4 that are outside the catchment area, including Woodside Park, Totteridge, Barnet Gate, Bowley Green and High Barnet, however these areas generally have a low population and there are large areas of Green Belt which, although private, have footpaths providing some degree of public access. Overall park provision per 1,000 population is very high.
- The area is poorly provided for in terms of children's play facilities, with the majority of the area not being within the catchment of a LEAP or a NEAP.
- Area 4 is very well provided for in terms of sports pitches and these are well distributed across the Borough.

- Area 4 is extremely well provided for in terms of nature conservation. Chipping Barnet is the only area not within 500m of a nature conservation site; however it is within 1km of a Metropolitan or Borough Grade site.
- Chipping Barnet town centre and Dollis Valley have both been identified as areas for future population growth.

#### **Possible Improvements**

- The area is not densely populated and already has a very rural and green feel. This area should not be a priority for new open spaces; however the functionality of some of the existing open spaces could be improved.
- Improve accessibility by public right of way and cycling along Barnet Road to improve accessibility to the cluster of sites with poor accessibility – including Arkley South Fields, Glebe Lane Pastures, HDSA Sports Ground and Old Elizabethans Sports Club.
- Explore the potential for a new public right of way from Highwood Hill to the Dollis Valley via Darlands Lake Local Nature Reserve.

#### **Site Specific Opportunities**

- Explore the potential to provide children's play facilities at Byng Road Rugby Field, King George V Field B and Totteridge Green (having established the level of demand, given the relatively low numbers of children living in this part of the borough).
- Improve footpath network in the Totteridge area, especially between Totteridge Fields Nature Reserve and Darlands Lake LNR by increasing signage provision and wayfinding.
- The consultation event highlighted the need to improve signposting of the Dollis Valley Walk through Whetstone (Whetstone Strays)
- Consider increasing the value and usage of Highlands Gardens and Stanhope Road Open Space (which were identified as poor quality but high value) by increasing the number of functions the sites fulfill, for example by creating a more formal space through planting or increasing the landscape/ecology value.
- Chesterfield Footpath was assessed as being of low quality, however given its location at the back of housing and its size, it is not considered that there is much potential for improvement beyond improved maintenance.
- Improve quality of Grange Playing Fields (which was identified as being of poor quality but medium value) by increasing the variety of sports provision and increase non sports facilities and information.
- Improve the range and quality of facilities at King George V Playing Fields and Barnet Playing Fields (which were identified as poor quality but high value).
- Improve the quality of Meadway Open Space by providing information at the site and improving the natural features (which was identified as poor quality but medium value).

### **13.4.5 Area 5: Edgware, Hale, Mill Hill**

#### **Key Issues/Problems**

- Area 5 has a mixed character with the southern parts in and around Edgware being more built up and high density, and the northern most parts having a more rural feel and a large area of Green Belt.
- The area has a relatively low residential density, particularly at Mill Hill which has the lowest residential density in the borough.
- The area has a very low proportion of flats, suggesting that the majority of residents have access to private gardens.

- The area is set to experience population growth associated with Mill Hill Opportunity Area which is to deliver 2,000 new homes. Population growth is also likely to be concentrated in Edgware and south of Spur Road.
- The M1 Motorway runs through the middle of Area 5 which has a major severance effect, restricting the range of parks, open spaces and recreational facilities which are easily accessible to residents, particularly by walking and cycling.
- Area 5 has generally poor accessibility, largely owing to its location on the edge of the built up area. It is reasonably well transected by public rights of way and cycle paths but there is a lack of facilities running east/west in the northern most part of the area.
- Area 5 only contains one District Park (Arrandene Open Space) and the majority of the area is not within the catchment of a District Park.
- The north eastern edge of Area 5 is not within the catchment of a local park, although most of the area not within a catchment is Green Belt and has a low population.
- There are significant sections of the built up parts of Area 5 which are not within the catchment of a LEAP or a NEAP and there are not any obvious spaces where play facilities could be located to increase accessibility.
- Area 5 is well provided for in terms of sports pitches, and is home to the largest sports site in the Borough: Barnet Cophall Leisure Centre.
- Area 5 also has a lot of nature conservation sites. One of the Area's Metropolitan Grade Nature Conservation Sites, Scratchwood, is located on the northern most edge of the Borough and as such is very inaccessible by walking, cycling and public transport.
- The area has a considerable number of parks which are poor quality, these tend to be small sites located in residential areas; examples include West way Open Space, Boysland Open Space and Harcourt Avenue Open Space.

#### **Possible Improvements**

- There are a large number of sites in Area 5 which have been highlighted as having poor accessibility. These are located across the whole area but there is a particular cluster of sports sites in the eastern half. These could be improved by extending existing nearby public rights of way and cycle paths.
- An additional 5.5ha of public open space is planned in the Mill Hill East growth – consideration should be given to how this will fit into the wider network of public open space and how to link the new open space to existing provision in the area to provide an integrated network, for example Bittacy Hill Park, Burtonhole Lane and Pastures and the Dollis Valley. Additionally the function of the new open spaces should be considered in the context of existing deficiencies in the area; currently the Mill Hill area largely falls outside the catchment of a local park and play provision.

#### **Site Specific Opportunities**

- Explore the potential to expand Edgwarebury Park (by approximately 4ha) so that could perform the function of a District Park in a part of the borough currently without access to a larger park of this type, the increase in size should be accompanied by improvements in provision of facilities at the site.
- Improving the habitat quality of Edgwarebury Park so that it became a Borough Grade Nature Conservation Site would ensure that the whole of Area 5 is within 1km of a Metropolitan or Borough Grade site. The consultation event highlighted that residents consider that it is over-managed and parts should be left wild.
- Arrandene Open Space is identified as being low quality but high value so further consideration should be given to how the range and quality of facilities/landscape could be improved, especially as this is the only District Park in the area.

- Increase the amenity value of the smaller sites located in housing areas, namely West Way Open Space, Boysland Open Space and Harcourt Avenue Open Space. Currently these are underused and have a very limited function. It would not be sensible to provide extensive facilities at these sites; however they could be made more welcoming with improved landscaping and maintenance.
- Improve accessibility to Scratchwood and Moat Mount Open Space.

### **13.4.6 Area 6: Burnt Oak, Colindale, Hendon and West Hendon**

#### **Key Issues/Problems**

- The area has a relatively high population density; Burnt Oak in particular has the highest population density in the borough.
- There are also a high proportion of families with young children in the area - Colindale and Burnt Oak in particular have high child population densities.
- The area is relatively urban in character with higher than average residential density and a high proportion of flats and maisonettes, particularly in Colindale and West Hendon, suggesting that more residents in Area 6 may not have access to a private garden.
- Area 6 contains some of the more deprived areas of Barnet – deprivation in Barnet being concentrated on the western side of the Borough. In particular, Colindale, Burnt Oak and West Hendon all contain areas within the 10 per cent most deprived in the country.
- Area 6 includes part of the Brent Cross Cricklewood growth area and Colindale which is the second largest Opportunity Area in the borough. Population growth is consequently forecast to be high in this part of the borough, concentrated particularly in Colindale and West Hendon wards.
- The M1 Motorway runs through the middle of Area 6 which has a major severance effect, restricting the range of parks, open spaces and recreational facilities which are easily accessible to residents, particularly by walking and cycling.
- There is a lack of public rights of way and cycling routes through Colindale.
- There is one district park within area 6 (Sunny Hill Park). This is located in the eastern part of the area, meaning that the western part is not within a catchment of a District Park.
- The area has 9 local parks which are distributed so that most of the area is within 400 metres of a local park. Most of the area which is outside the catchment of a local park is accessible to Sunny Hill Park. The exception to this is an area immediately to the west of the M1 between Grahame Park Way and Aerodrome Road centred on Beaufort Park, which is currently being developed to provide 2,000 new homes.
- Area 6 has the second lowest level of park provision per 1,000 people in the Borough (with area 2 having the lowest).
- The area is relatively well served with play provision, with most of the area with the catchment of a LEAP or NEAP. The exception being an area on the western edge of the borough in West Hendon. This area has good access to West Hendon Playing Fields and Welsh Harp Reservoir.

#### **Possible Improvements**

The area is already densely populated and the population is set to increase significantly with planned growth in Colindale and Brent Cross Cricklewood (this spans Areas 1 and 6). It is therefore considered that this part of the borough should be considered a priority for improvements to open space and recreational facilities as spaces in this area will be much more intensively used in the future. In particular:

- Explore potential to improve links between existing local parks to the west of the M1 to compensate for the lack of access to a district park in this area; there is also potential to improve range of facilities in these parks so that in combination they fulfill the function of a district park.
- Additional provision of natural green space through new planned provision and re-assessing the purpose and function of existing spaces.
- Consider ways to improve accessibility to the planned and improved open spaces such as Clitterhouse Playing Fields as part of the Brent Cross/Cricklewood proposals.
- A new park is planned at Aerodrome Road in Colindale – consideration should be given to how this will fit into the wider network of public open space and how to link the new open space to existing provision in the Colindale area to provide an integrated network, looking in particular at Grahame Park, Watling Park, Silkstream Park and Montrose Playing fields.
- Improvements to the public rights of way and cycle network in and around Colindale, consideration should be given to how development opportunities identified in the Area Action Plan can contribute to this.
- Provision of high quality open spaces to accompany growth in the Colindale area.

#### **Site Specific Opportunities**

- Explore potential to provide children’s play facilities at Montrose Playing Fields to increase provision in the Burnt Oak Colindale area where there is a high child population and high forecast population growth.
- There are a number of parks which are identified as being of low quality but high value which should therefore be a priority for improvement. These are Grahame Park, Malcolm Park, Rushgrove Park and Watling Park. Improvements to Grahame Park are planned as part of the regeneration of Grahame Park Estate. Malcolm Park, Watling Park and Rushgrove Park scored poorly in terms of the quality and variety of their landscape. There is therefore a clear opportunity to improve the quality of the landscape in these parks.
- Watling Park, Silkstream Park and Montrose Playing fields are in close proximity to one another; it may therefore be feasible to improve linkages between these spaces and plan for provision of a wider range of facilities/types of landscape in these open spaces to compensate for the lack of a larger District Park in this part of the borough.
- Brent Park scored poorly in terms of how welcoming it is but was considered to have a high value because of its context, its role in relation to events and education and the fact that it is located in close proximity to growth areas. Brent Park should therefore be viewed as a priority for improvements, particularly in view of its function as part of the Capital Ring.
- Explore ways to improve access to Rushgrove Park (which scores poorly in terms of accessibility) by walking and cycling.
- Improvements to sports provision at Woodfield Park (which scored poorly in terms of the quality and variety of its facilities).
- The Welsh Harp (which is partly within the London Borough of Brent) is a facility of regional importance, though parts of it scored poorly in the assessment of quality undertaken as part of this study. The consultation event highlighted the need for further investment in Welsh Harp. It is understood that the Management Plan is currently under review, presenting the opportunity to address these issues. It is understood that the Welsh Harp Joint Consultative Committee has been working with local schools to organise exhibitions and displays to raise the profile of the facility. This could be used as an example for improved marketing/promotion of other open spaces in the borough.

### 13.4.7 Constraints

There will be a series of constraints to meeting the opportunities for enhancement of open space and recreational facilities in Barnet. These include:

- Finding sufficient space to provide new recreational facilities and open spaces where there is clearly a range of competing land use demands.
- Securing the necessary funding to provide new open space and facilities and to improve existing spaces and facilities, including securing the funding to ensure that on-going management and maintenance of spaces and facilities is sufficient and appropriate.
- Improving accessibility to open space by foot, cycle and bus requires co-ordination of open space and transport planning in the borough and there are likely to be competing demands on funding available for transport improvements, identified through the local implementation plan.
- Although new development presents the opportunity to create new open space, there are always competing demands for the use of the space such as the need to ensure that the scheme is financially viable, the need to achieve sufficient densities to make efficient use of land, the need to provide the other facilities and services needed to support new development such as schools and community facilities. Open space performs a range of functions and there is likely to be conflicting views within the community as to how these spaces should be managed and which functions should be enhanced and encouraged. For example, improving the range of sports facilities in a park may change the character of the space and reduce the value of the park as a natural green space and habitat.

## 13.5 Recommendations

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This study provides a comprehensive assessment of open space provision within the London Borough of Barnet, which will inform both the generation of open space policies and development control decisions. Whilst it is outside the scope of this study to define these policies, this section outlines how the open space standards proposed within the study could be used to formulate planning policies as the various elements of the Local Development Framework are developed.

Since the completion of this assessment, the Core Strategy 'Direction of Travel', which sets out the proposed Core Strategy policies, has been published for public consultation. The findings of this Assessment have informed the development of the policies relating to open space (in particular Policy CS5), though the final report was not available prior to the publication of the Direction of Travel document. This assessment will therefore inform the development of open space and recreation policies as the Core Strategy is developed into the submission version.

### 13.5.1 London Boroughs' Open Space and Recreational Policies

In order to recommend how open space policies are to be drafted and incorporated within Barnet's Local Development Framework, it is useful to consider how other London Boroughs' have developed open space policies within their LDFs. Across London, four Boroughs have an adopted Core Strategy (Havering, Redbridge, Richmond-upon-Thames and Sutton) and three Boroughs have submitted Core Strategies to Government (Barking and Dagenham, Brent and Wandsworth). **Table 34** outlines how open space policies across these Core Strategies have been formulated, distilling the policies into 12 key themes.

As shown in **Table 34**, all seven Boroughs have incorporated policies safeguarding and protecting their existing open spaces from development. Other open space policies themes that have been adopted by the majority of the Core Strategies include:

- Creation/improvement of open spaces in areas of deficiency;
- Enhancement/ management of open space;

- On/Off-site developer contributions.

All four of these policy themes have a direct relevance to the issues identified within this study. Other policies are also relevant and have been incorporated wherever possible.

All of the Core Strategies made reference to importance of increasing access to recreation and leisure opportunities, in the context of improving and enhancing the open space network. However, a number of boroughs, most notably Havering, have a specific policy on protecting and improving recreation and sports facilities, including built leisure facilities, as distinct from general policies on protection and enhancement of the open space network.

Havering and Sutton have both conducted similar Open Space Assessments as part of their LDF evidence base and outline specific quantity standards for open space provision, at 1.84 and 2.88 of open space per thousand respectively. Other policies objectives, relating to improving accessibility through application of the GLA walking standards and supporting other complementary green network initiatives, are also particularly applicable to Barnet.

**Table 34: Open Space and Recreation Policy Themes within London Boroughs' Core Strategies**

London Borough	Policy Themes												
	Quantity standard of provision	Improving accessibility	De-designations	Safeguarding/ protecting open space	Creation/ improvement of open spaces in areas of deficiency	Prioritising allotments/ sports pitches	Enhancement/ management of open space	Implement the London Biodiversity Action Plan	Permitting alternative possible uses for surplus open space	On/Off-site development contributions	Dual use of facilities	Support to other green networks initiatives	Protection and improvement of recreation sport and leisure facilities
Barking & Dagenham				x	x					x		x	x
Brent				x	x		x						x
Havering	x	x		x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x
Redbridge				x			x	x					x
Richmond				x	x		x			x			x
Sutton	x		x	x			x	x		x			x
Wandsworth				x	x		x	x	x	x			x



This report therefore recommends that the LB Barnet's open space policies are drafted in the view of the above relevant policy themes. However, to be in accordance with the analysis and standards provided within this study, it is recommended that policies constructed under the three overarching issues of quality, accessibility and quantity. General and specific recommendations for Barnet are outlined in the sub-sections below.

### **13.5.2 Barnet's Open Space Policies**

#### **Quality**

Section 12.4 sets out the proposed standards for all spaces in the borough; this is to bring all open spaces up to a 'good' standard over the period to 2026. In developing policies in relation to quality, the Council will need to consider the level of detail that would be appropriate for Core Strategy policies.

One approach is for the Core Strategy policies to set out the Council's intention to enhance and improve the quality of existing open spaces, particularly in areas of growth, regeneration and existing deficiency. The application of this policy could be supported by a strategy for bringing all spaces up to a good standard based on the recommendations in Section 12.4, the site specific opportunities identified in Chapter 13 and in particular the priority sites highlighted in the next section.

LB Barnet may wish to seek financial contributions from proposed developments for improvements to the quality of existing open space. LB Barnet will need to decide upon the threshold of new developments that will make these financial contributions. Planning Policy Guidance 17 provides guidance on the use of planning obligations to secure new additional provision of open space and recreational facilities as well as enhancement to existing facilities. The guidance also states that planning obligations can be used as a means to remedy local deficiencies in the quality and quantity where existing provision is inadequate or where new development increases local needs (Paragraphs 23 and 33).

#### **Quantity**

The Core Strategy policies should seek to protect the existing network of open spaces, though Barnet may wish to consider whether there are any circumstances where the loss of open space may be acceptable, for example where the loss is compensated with equivalent or better provision within the area or in an area of greater open space deficiency.

The policy should also make reference to importance of maintaining a coherent network of open space and its importance to the spatial structure of the borough, including public and private areas of Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land as well as the open spaces assessed in this study, giving particular reference to strategic links which fall within Barnet, such as the Dollis Valley Green Walk and the Capital Ring. To this end, It is considered that the policy should make reference to acceptable catchment areas/walking distances to different types of space (as set out in Section 12.5) to seek to ensure that all households have access to a range of types of open spaces.

The policy should refer to identified areas of deficiency and the need to prioritise improvements to existing open space and provision require higher standards of provision in these areas.

Barnet will need to consider how to set standards for future provision of open space associated with new developments. This study recommends standards for parks (1.63 ha per 1,000), children's play (0.09 ha per 1,000), sports pitches (0.75 ha per 1,000) and natural green space provision (2.05 ha per 1,000). Policies could therefore require new developments to incorporate proposals to improve open space provision to meet these standards. Barnet may wish to consider on-site or off-site provision of open space, guided by the maps identifying areas of open space deficiency, produced as part of this study. Barnet will need to decide upon the threshold of new development to deliver these standards whilst ensuring viable development.

Barnet will also need to consider whether policies will impose a cumulative standard of provision on each new development, which will incorporate all typology standards outlined in this study, or prioritise particular typologies, bearing in mind that open space can be multi-functional and the typologies are not mutually exclusive. If the latter, LB Barnet will need to decide which typology should be prioritised for provision in different areas.

### **Accessibility**

Section 12.5 sets out recommended accessibility standards for parks, outdoor sports, play provision and natural green space. It is recommended that these are set out in a Core Strategy policy, as highlighted above.

Core strategy policies should also set out the Council's intention to improve accessibility to open spaces, particularly in areas of deficiency, by improving pedestrian and cycle routes as well as bus routes where practicable.

#### **13.5.3 General Priorities for Improvement**

- Promote linkages between open spaces to develop a more integrated and coherent network of open space
- Improved linkages with nearby open spaces outside of Borough boundary and new open spaces proposed as part of the growth areas proposals.
- Better co-ordinate Capital Ring and Dollis Valley Walk through Area 2
- Explore potential for additional local parks within Oakleigh Park and New Barnet areas.
- Create more playing pitches to serve East Barnet and Colney Hatch areas.
- Provide new cycle and public rights of way routes to Brunswick Park & Waterfall Walk and Oakleigh Park areas.
- Improve accessibility to the cluster of sports sites in the eastern half of Area 5 by extending existing nearby public rights of way and cycle paths.
- Explore potential to improve links between existing local parks to the west of the M1 to compensate for the lack of access to a district park in this area; there is also potential to improve range of facilities in these parks so that in combination they fulfill the function of a district park.

#### **13.5.4 Site Specific Priorities for Improvement**

This section sets out some of the key priorities for a selection of sites in each area. The aim of this section is to provide a manageable list of priorities for specific sites as a starting point for improving the quality and accessibility of network of open space and recreational facilities in the borough. These have been selected from the previous section on the basis that improvements to these sites will provide wider benefits due to their size, location or potential to link into a wider network of open spaces and contribute to the overall objective of creating an integrated network of spaces. The location of all of these sites is illustrated on **Figure 30**. Further detail about sites contained in the lists below can be found in Section 13.4.

##### **Area 1 – Golders Green; Childs Hill; Garden Suburb**

- Central Square – improvements to sports facilities and information
- Princes Park – improved landscaping to provide greater natural green space
- Hendon Youth Sports Centre – improve range of sports provision.
- Littlewood Nature Reserve and Fletchers Gardens - improvements to landscaping and increase in nature conservation provision

**Area 2 – East Finchley, Finchley Church End, West Finchley, Woodhouse**

- Hamilton Road Playground – improvements to variety and quality of the landscape as well as provision of information
- Glebelands – improve range of sports provision
- Windsor Open Space – landscape improvements
- Victoria Park – provision of sports facilities and in particular provision for older children
- Summers Lane – improved maintenance of sports pitches
- Glebelands/ Summers Lane/ Coppetts Wood – explore potential linkages to create a strategic linked open space

**Area 3 – Coppetts; Brunswick Park; Oakleigh; East Barnet**

- Friern Park - improve facilities and landscaping
- Ludgrove Playing Fields – improve quality of the pitches and maintenance
- Coppetts Wood – improved landscape and maintenance regime to maximise nature conservation value
- Brunswick Park/Oakhill Park – improved linkages via Everleigh Walk to provide an improved local network
- Brunswick Park - explore feasibility of expansion of by 0.5ha
- Brunswick Park & Waterfall Walk, Lincoln Avenue Open Space, Coppetts Wood, Woodhouse Open Space and Friern Park - provide additional children's play facilities

**Area 4 – High Barnet, Underhill, Totteridge**

- Explore potential for improved cycle and pedestrian links along Barnet Road to improve access to Arkley South Fields, Glebe Lane Pastures, HDSA Sports Ground and Old Elizabethans Sports Club
- Totteridge Green - explore demand for additional play provision
- Improve rights of way network around Totteridge, including new PROW from Highwood Hill to Dollis Valley via Darlands Local Nature Reserve
- Arkley Fields South – review current use and management and explore potential as a common
- King George V and Barnet Playing Fields - improvements to pitches

**Area 5 – Edgware; Hale; Mill Hill**

- Edgwarebury Park – explore potential for expansion, improvements to maintenance regime and improvements to nature conservation value
- Arrandene Open Space – landscaping to improve the range and quality of features
- West way Open Space, Boysland Open Space and Harcourt Avenue Open Space – improved landscaping and maintenance to increase amenity value of these smaller open spaces

**Area 6 – Burnt Oak; Colindale; Hendon and West Hendon**

- Montrose Playing Fields – explore potential for children's play provision
- Malcolm Park, Watling Park, Grahame Park and Rushgrove Park - landscaping to improve the range and quality of features and improvements in the linkages between these sites.
- Brent Park – improvements to make the park more welcoming and secure

- Woodfield Park - Improvements to sports provision
- Rushgrove Park – explore potential to improve access by walking, cycling and bus

### 13.6 Further work

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This assessment has provided an assessment of the provision of existing open spaces within the Borough of Barnet. In order to maximise the value of this study it is recommended that a number of additional pieces of research are undertaken in order to ensure a robust evidence base for future policy making.

This assessment has not included a comprehensive assessment of **open space usage**. It is recommended that further survey work is undertaken to provide an accurate picture of the variation in usage in order to target future funding. In parallel with this it is recommended that further **evaluation of demand** for different types of open space is undertaken.

It was beyond the scope of this study to assess the demand for playing pitches. The existing Draft Playing Pitch Strategy in the Borough is now considerably out of date. In order to develop a **comprehensive playing pitch strategy**, a full assessment consistent with the eight stage Playing Pitch Model set out in Sport England's Towards a Level Playing Field is recommended. It is noted that Sport England often provides support to boroughs to undertake these assessments. Any playing pitch strategy to be produced should be consistent with the **Leisure Facilities Strategy** that the Council is currently producing which focuses on the facilities managed by the Council.

It would also be useful to undertake a number of **specific feasibility studies** into recommendations in this study, for example the recommendation to link Glebelands and Summers Lane. Furthermore, although **amenity greenspace** is a category within this study, this assessment has not sought to comprehensively assess all the amenity greenspace in the Borough. In order to recognise the true function, role and extent of this type of open space, a separate study would need to be undertaken. Similarly, a further study into smaller **incidental spaces**, particularly in Hampstead Garden Suburb, would be useful to identify the extent of these spaces and the potential role they can play in increasing open space provision in specific areas.

The LB Barnet is currently undertaking a separate study into play provision in the Borough with a view to increasing provision. **Synergy between the Playbuilders scheme** and the results of this assessment should be ensured.

It is considered that **further consultation** with the public and ward councilors would be beneficial in suggesting specific proposals to improve quality and facilities, and provide the open spaces people need in their local areas.

Additionally the LB Barnet does not currently have a clear **marketing / information strategy** for open spaces in the Borough. A significant amount of marketing material in the form of fold out leaflets is produced by various interest groups, such as the London Wildlife Trust, as well as the Council itself. These would benefit from more consistent branding and updating. Additionally the potential for web based marketing of open spaces should be explored.

Finally, it is suggested that a **Monitoring and Review Framework** is put in place to ensure that standards are maintained. Headline performance indicators could be identified and reported annually.