

BOROUGH OF TELFORD AND WREKIN

**OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION
FACILITIES STUDY**



A

FINAL REPORT

BY

PMP

MARCH 2008

CONTENTS

	Page	
Section 1	Introduction & background	1
Section 2	Undertaking the study	6
Section 3	Strategic context	18
Section 4	Parks and gardens	38
Section 5	Natural and semi natural open space	59
Section 6	Amenity green space	80
Section 7	Provision for children and young people	100
Section 8	Outdoor sports facilities	139
Section 9	Indoor sports facilities	157
Section 10	Allotments	173
Section 11	Cemeteries and churchyards	186
Section 12	Civic spaces	192
Section 13	Green corridors	197
Section 14	Planning overview	202

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Benefits of open space
Appendix B	Household survey cover letter
Appendix C	Site assessment scores
Appendix D	Site assessment matrix
Appendix E	Quantity standard worksheet
Appendix F	Telford quantity standards
Appendix G	Telford quality standards
Appendix H	Telford accessibility standards

SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

Introduction and background

The study

- 1.1 During April 2007 Telford and Wrekin Council (the Council) appointed PMP to undertake a PPG17 assessment. This report sets out the findings of this study and includes an assessment of local needs and existing open space, sport and recreation provision.
- 1.2 The study will form part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework (LDF) and will help to shape the strategic direction of the Telford and Wrekin Core Strategy and Development Control Policies Development Plan (DPDs). This PPG17 study is intended to directly inform the Greenspaces Strategy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will also include:
- a biodiversity assessment
 - landscape character assessment
 - synthesis and development of a green space strategy using the evidence base that has been collated.
- 1.3 The other key objectives of the study include:
- to provide an assessment of existing green space across Telford and Wrekin
 - to identify local needs and aspirations through consultation, a strategic review and a review of existing provision standards
 - to recommend standards of provision (quantity, quality and accessibility) in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note17 (PPG17) Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation (2002)
 - to inform the future enhancement and management of green spaces.
- 1.4 The findings of this work will enable the Council to adopt a clear vision, priorities for the future (based on local need) and establish a direction for the allocation of resources.
- 1.5 This study is undertaken in accordance with the requirements of PPG17, and its Companion Guide published in September 2002. Further details of these documents are set out later in this section.

Why public open space?

- 1.6 Open space and recreation provision in Telford and Wrekin has an important role to play in supporting the implementation of both national objectives and more locally in the achievement of key Council priorities.
- 1.7 The provision of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities is becoming increasingly important on the national stage and the contributions it can bring to both national and local priorities are recognised. The benefit to local communities is reflected in the recently published Park Life Report (Greenspace, June 2007), which indicates that 92% of all those questioned had visited a park within the last month.



SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.8 PPG17 states that well designed and implemented planning policies for open space, sport and recreation are fundamental to delivering broader Government objectives, which include:

- supporting an urban renaissance
- supporting a rural renewal
- promotion of social inclusion and community cohesion
- health and well being
- promoting more sustainable development.

1.9 The recent planning white paper (May 2007) highlights minimising climate change and the protection of the environment as some of the key challenges to be addressed through the planning system in future years. The provision of green space will be instrumental in the achievement of these objectives.

Function and benefits of open space

1.10 Open spaces can provide a number of functions within the urban fabric of towns and villages, for example, the provision for play and informal recreation, a landscaping buffer within and between the built environment and/or a habitat for the promotion of biodiversity.

1.11 Each type of open space has various benefits related to its functions. For example allotments for the growing of own produce, play areas for children's play and playing pitches for formal sports events.

1.12 While each open space site has a primary purpose, many open spaces perform secondary functions, for example outdoor sports facilities have an amenity value in addition to facilitating sport and recreation.

1.13 There is a need to provide a balance between different types of open space in order to meet local aspirations. Local aspirations may vary from place to place and change over time.

1.14 Changing social and economic circumstances, changed work and leisure practices, more sophisticated consumer tastes and higher public expectations have placed new demands on open spaces. They have to serve more diverse communities and face competition from various developers. While the provision of open spaces can be challenging, open spaces can also promote community cohesion, encourage community development and stimulate partnerships between the public and private sector.

1.15 Parks and open spaces are more accessible to a wider range of people than some sport and leisure facilities and are better able to realise the aims of social inclusion and equality of opportunity. The provision of open spaces and recreation provision is key to an ideal, sustainable and thriving community. The recently completed Park Life Report (Green Space June 2007) highlighted that 83% of those surveyed feel that parks are the focal point of a community.

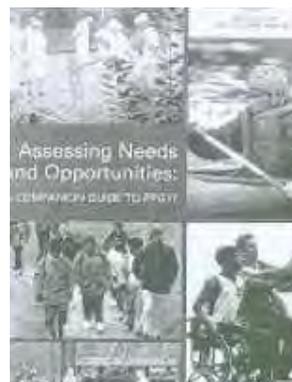
1.16 It is widely recognised that the provision of high quality parks and open spaces can assist in the promotion of an area as an attractive place to live, and can result in a number of wider benefits. These are highlighted in Appendix A.

The role of green space in Telford and Wrekin

- 1.17 Telford and Wrekin can be said to be different from many other towns due to its development from a former new town, as such, the intention of Telford New Town was to begin with an idea of a perfect town and fit it into the space available whilst incorporating existing landscape features and existing settlements. The aim was to create a Forest City by lining roads and defining discrete parcels of land use, to segregate residential, industrial and commercial uses, with plantations of tree saplings. The initial infrastructure was constructed quickly to establish the town and many new estates were built to low densities with green open space taking up approximately 40% of Telford's surface area.
- 1.18 As a result of this, Telford and Wrekin has an extensive green network and open space is integral to the character of the town. The network of open space provides landscape benefits, breaking up the urban nature of the town and plays a key role in linking different estates of the town together. The vast array of open spaces also provides a range of recreational opportunities for residents. The green network within Telford Town also facilitates linkages with settlements in the more rural areas of the Borough.

National Policy Context: Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation & Assessing Needs and Opportunities - PPG17 Companion Guide

- 1.19 PPG17 states that local authorities should undertake robust assessments of the existing and future needs of their communities for open space, sports and recreational facilities (paragraph 1). It encourages local authorities to effectively plan for the future delivery of appropriate open space, sport and leisure facilities.
- 1.20 The document suggests local authorities should undertake audits of existing open space, sports and recreational facilities, the use of existing facilities, access in terms of location and costs and opportunities for new open space and facilities (paragraph 2).
- 1.21 Paragraph 7 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”. PPG17 sets out the Government's belief that national standards are inappropriate, as they do not take into account the demographics of an area, the specific needs of residents and the extent of built development. PPG17 therefore places significant emphasis on meeting local needs and expectations.
- 1.22 The policy guidance sets out priorities for local authorities in terms of:
- assessing needs and opportunities
 - undertaking audits of open space, sport and recreational facilities
 - setting local standards
 - maintaining an adequate supply of open space
 - planning for new open space.
- 1.23 The Companion Guide details a suggested process for undertaking local assessments of needs and audits of provision and outlines the key objectives of an open space, sport and recreation needs assessment.



SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.24 This PPG17 study has been undertaken following the process set out in the PPG17 Companion Guide and strives to facilitate the effective provision of open spaces across Telford and Wrekin Borough.
- 1.25 This report provides justification for the local standards recommended, detailing current provision and setting out local community need. The application of the recommended local standards highlights key areas of deficiency and priorities for enhancement.

Local features and demographics

- 1.26 The Borough of Telford and Wrekin lies in the east of the *ceremonial* county of Shropshire, bordering Staffordshire and covering an area of 180 square miles. The Borough is divided into 28 parishes, which are grouped into three areas: Telford, Newport and Rural.
- 1.27 The urban areas of the Borough are predominantly located in the south and central areas. Telford is the major settlement with a population of approximately 140,000. The next largest settlement, Newport, is located in the rural area of the Borough and has a population of 10,814 people. These population statistics highlights that the majority of residents of the Borough live within the urban areas. Demand for localised facilities will therefore be greater in this area.
- 1.28 According to the 2006 Annual Monitoring Report, Telford and Wrekin has a population of 171,730. Population estimates based on the PopGroup model suggest that this figure is likely to increase to 182,100 by 2016, should the annual housing requirements be satisfied. This increase raises the pressure on existing open spaces, sport and recreation facilities and will also create demand for further provision.
- 1.29 Children under the age of 15 account for around 21% of the population, which is above the national average, highlighting the importance of open space provision for the young people of Telford and Wrekin. Equally important is meeting the needs of older people, particularly given that 22% of the population are over the retirement age.
- 1.30 Within Telford there is a noticeable rural and urban divide, with the most affluent wards (in monetary terms) located in Wrockwardine, Lilleshall and Edgmond. The appropriate provision and enhancement of open space has the potential to reduce this rural/urban divide and also ensure that all residents have good access to local provision.
- 1.31 The outlying rural areas present a different challenge for the Council in terms of open space, sport and recreation provision, with much of the provision in the ownership and management of parish councils.
- 1.32 Telford was created from the combination of other independent smaller towns and as a result, there are much clearer divisions than can be found in older towns. Several severely deprived wards are located towards the town centre, including such areas as Donnington, Woodside and Malinslee, however on the borders of these wards are relatively affluent areas, such as Lawley and Priorslee. The enhancement of open space could lead to the improvement of quality of life within these wards by encouraging community involvement and creating stronger links within the wider community.

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.33 The new town of Telford was designated in 1963 as Dawley New Town and initially covered just 23 square miles. Development started in 1967 when people started moving into the new Sutton Hill estate and in 1968 the town was expanded, taking in the historic area of Ironbridge Gorge. The Dawley Town Amendment Order passed in November 1968 which further extended the town and led to the renaming of the new town to Telford. Most of the infrastructure was completed during the late 1960's and early 70's and major housing and commercial development occurred up until the early 1990's.
- 1.34 Green space is a key feature of the design of Telford and remains an important characteristic of the town today. The interconnected green spaces which shape the town are a unique and highly valuable asset in terms of both biodiversity and recreation. For many residents, the sense of the environment within the town is the main attraction of living in Telford and the surrounding area.

Structure of the report

- 1.35 This report is split into 14 sections. Section 2 summarises the methodology used to undertake the study and Section 3 provides the strategic context to the study.
- 1.36 Sections 4-13 relate to each of the typologies identified within the scope of the report. Each typology chapter sets out the strategic context to that particular typology, the recommended quantity, quality and accessibility standards, the application of these standards and the resulting priorities.
- 1.37 An overview of negotiating developer contributions in light of the locally derived provision standards is contained within section 14. This section includes examples of good practice in other local authorities as well as making recommendations for the future delivery of open space, sport and recreation facilities across Telford and Wrekin.
- 1.38 There are also a number of appendices that support the report, providing further background detail and statistical calculations. These are referenced throughout the report.

SECTION 2
UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

Undertaking the study

Introduction

- 2.1 As detailed in Section 1, this study was undertaken in accordance with PPG17 and its Companion Guide. The key emphasis of PPG17 is the importance of undertaking a local needs assessment, as opposed to following national trends and guidelines.
- 2.2 The Companion Guide indicates that the four guiding principles in undertaking a local assessment are:
- (i) understanding that local needs will vary even within local authority areas according to socio-demographic and cultural characteristics
 - (ii) recognising that the provision of good quality and effective open space relies on effective planning but also on creative design, landscape management and maintenance
 - (iii) considering that delivering high quality and sustainable open spaces may depend much more on improving and enhancing existing open space rather than new provision
 - (iv) taking into account that the value of open space will be greater when local needs are met. It is essential to consider the wider benefits that sites generate for people, wildlife and the environment.
- 2.3 PPG17 recognises that individual approaches appropriate to each local authority will need to be adopted as each area has different structures and characteristics. The process set out in PPG17 has therefore been adopted to ensure that the needs and expectations of residents in Telford and Wrekin are adequately addressed.

Types of open space

- 2.4 The overall definition of open space within the government planning guidance is:
“all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity”.
- 2.5 PPG17 identifies ten typologies including nine types of green space and one category of urban open space. It states that local authorities when preparing assessments of needs and audits of existing open space and recreation facilities should use these typologies, or variations of it.
- 2.6 Table 2.1 overleaf sets out the types of open space included within this study in Telford and Wrekin. It is important to note that only those sites within settlement boundaries have been included in the audit, in line with guidelines set out in PPG17. The significance of sites outside of these boundaries, alongside areas of nearby natural countryside will be considered throughout this report.

Table 2.1 – Typologies of Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities within Telford and Wrekin Borough

Type	Definition	Primary Purpose
Parks and gardens	Includes urban parks, formal gardens and country parks. Parks usually contain a variety of facilities, and may have one of more of the other types of open space within them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> informal recreation community events.
Natural and semi-natural green spaces	Includes publicly accessible woodlands, urban forestry, scrub, grasslands (eg downlands, commons, meadows), wetlands and wastelands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> wildlife conservation, biodiversity environmental education and awareness.
Amenity green space	Most commonly but not exclusively found in housing areas. Includes informal recreation green spaces and village greens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> informal activities close to home or work children's play enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.
Provision for children	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children below aged 12. While it is recognised that a wide variety of opportunities for children exist (including play schemes and open spaces not specifically designed for this purpose), as per PPG17, this typology considers only those spaces specifically designed as equipped play facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> children's play.
Provision for young people	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving young people aged 12 and above. While it is recognised that a wide variety of opportunities for young people exist (including youth clubs and open spaces not specifically designed for this purpose, as per PPG17, this typology considers only those spaces specifically designed for use by young people eg: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> teenage shelters skateboard parks BMX tracks Multi Use Games Areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> activities or meeting places for young people.
Outdoor sports facilities	Natural or artificial surfaces either publicly or privately owned used for sport and recreation. Includes school playing fields. These include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> outdoor sports pitches tennis courts and bowls greens golf courses athletics tracks playing fields (including school playing fields). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> facilities for formal sports participation.

SECTION 2 – UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

Allotments	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion. May also include urban farms. This typology does not include private gardens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> growing vegetable, fruit and flowers.
Cemeteries & churchyards	Cemeteries and churchyards including disused churchyards and other burial grounds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> burial of the dead quiet contemplation.
Green corridors	Includes towpaths along canals and riverbanks, cycleways, rights of way and disused railway lines.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> walking, cycling or horse riding leisure purposes or travel opportunities for wildlife migration.
Civic spaces	Hard surfaced areas located usually located within town or city centres.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> community events setting for civic buildings

The geographical area

- 2.7 Analysis of the open space, sport and recreation facilities across the Borough has been undertaken by looking at the supply and demand in six different areas across the local authority area (referred to as analysis areas in this report). These areas were discussed and agreed with the Council at the outset.
- 2.8 The use of analysis areas allows examination of data at a more detailed local level, enabling an understanding of the geographical distribution of open spaces and ensuring that differences in perception and opinion of open spaces across the Borough are understood.
- 2.9 Although these analysis areas have been used to ensure that consultation was undertaken proportionately across the Borough, the application of local standards will enable the identification of priorities at neighbourhood level.
- 2.10 Table 2.2 overleaf details the geographical areas that have been used throughout this study.
- 2.11 Since the draft of this study, the 2007 Annual Monitoring Report has been released. This contains revised population figures based upon birth and death rates as well as inward and outward migration. Calculations in this report have been undertaken using the most up to date information available at the time - population estimates contained within the 2006 AMR. The 2007 population of the borough has therefore been estimated at 171,730.
- 2.12 Future populations have been projected up to 2016 and are based on calculations contained within the 2007 AMR.

Table 2.2 – The geographical areas of Telford and Wrekin

Area name	Population	Wards included
Telford North West	42,379	Shawbirch, Apley Castle, Dothill, Park, College, Haygate, Ercall, Arleston, Hadley and Leegomery, Ketley and Oakengates
Telford North East	30,982	Donnington, Wrockwardine Wood and Trench, St Georges, Muxton, Priorslee
Telford Central	39,758	Lawley and Overdale, Horsehay and Lightmoor, Dawley Magna, Malinslee, The Nedge, Brookside
Telford South	20,405	Woodside, Madeley, Cuckoo Oak, Ironbridge Gorge
Newport	11,000	Newport
Rural	13,787	Rural wards

PPG 17 – Five step process

2.13 The PPG17 Companion Guide sets out a five step logical process for undertaking a local assessment of open space. This process was used in undertaking this study to meet the requirements of the Council to plan, monitor and manage their existing and future provision of open space within the Borough. Although presented as a linear process below, in reality, steps 1 and 2 were undertaken simultaneously.

2.14 The five step process is as follows:

- Step 1 – identifying local needs
- Step 2 – auditing local provision
- Step 3 – setting provision standards
- Step 4 – applying provision standards
- Step 5 – drafting policies – recommendations and strategic priorities.

Our process

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

Step 1 - Identifying local needs

2.16 PPG17 states that community consultations are essential to identify local attitudes to existing provision and local expectations for additional or improved provision.

2.17 The PPG17 guidance relies less on the implementation of national standards and places increased emphasis on local needs. The assessment of needs should result in qualitative visions and quantity and accessibility standards that reflect the type and amount of facilities that local communities want to see. It is essential that the local standards set are directly reflective of local needs and expectations.

Step 1 - Identifying local needs

2.18 In order to identify local needs, a series of consultations were carried out including:

- household questionnaires
- neighbourhood 'drop in' sessions
- Internet survey for children and young people
- consultation with external agencies
- parish council consultations
- one-to-one consultations with Council officers.

2.19 Background is provided on each of the key elements of the consultation in the paragraphs that follow.

Household survey

2.20 The household survey provides an opportunity for randomly selected households to comment on the quality, quantity and accessibility of existing open space provision as well as identifying their aspirations for future provision.

2.21 5000 questionnaires were distributed to households across the Borough to capture the views of both users and non-users of open spaces. Residents were randomly selected using the electoral register.

2.22 Random distribution of questionnaires to a geographically representative sample (based on the populations living each of the identified analysis areas) of households ensures that representatives from all age groups, ethnic groups and gender were given the opportunity to participate. In order to promote an even response rate across ages and gender, residents with the next birthday in each household were asked to complete the questionnaire. A copy of the household survey and accompanying covering letter can be found in Appendix B.

2.23 572 postal surveys were returned, providing a statistically sound sample that can be used to assume responses for the remaining population across the Borough. Obtaining more than 400 responses means that the results are accurate to +/- 5% at the 95% confidence interval.

2.24 The household survey provides residents with an important opportunity to give their views on open spaces. It must be noted however that while examples are provided, in some instances, perception of different types of open space may affect comments made and specific comments made regarding types of open space may overlap. For example, some children may call a play area a park. This will be returned to in the typology specific sections where appropriate.

Neighbourhood 'drop in' sessions

2.25 Neighbourhood 'drop in' sessions were held in two locations within Telford and Wrekin:

- The Telford shopping centre, Telford
- Waitrose supermarket, Audley Road, Newport.

SECTION 2 – UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

- 2.26 These sessions were advertised to the public via the local press and intended to provide an informal opportunity for residents to give their views on open space, sport and recreation issues. Local interest groups were also formally invited to the sessions. The drop in sessions were well attended and the key issues arising from discussions have fed directly into the recommended local standards.

Internet survey for children and young people

- 2.27 Consultation with young people and children is traditionally difficult, however it is important to understand the views of this large sector of the community. Children are important users of open space, sport and recreation facilities.
- 2.28 Two questionnaires were therefore posted on the internet: one for pupils of a primary school age and one for young people. All schools within the Council boundaries were notified of the website address and asked to encourage their pupils to complete the questionnaires.
- 2.29 The level of response to the surveys was good with 227 responses received in total.
- 2.30 The information obtained through the distribution of these questionnaires has been instrumental in the development of the local standards.

External agencies questionnaire

- 2.31 Questionnaires were distributed to key regional and local agencies with the aim of obtaining their views and ensuring that local standards dovetail with local and regional priorities.

Internal officers

- 2.32 Internal consultations with Council officers were undertaken in order to understand the work, focus and key priorities of the Council and to provide a detailed strategic and practical overview. An internet survey was also distributed to Council officers, examining their views on open space, sport and recreation facilities from their perspective as residents and people who work within the Borough. 59 responses were received to this survey.

Parish/Town Council survey

- 2.33 A questionnaire was distributed to all Parish/Town Councils to gain their views on the quantity, quality and accessibility of open spaces within their settlements. With a number of open space sites owned/managed by local Councils this was an important element of the consultation, in particular in getting comments on site specific issues.

Step 2 - Auditing local provision

- 2.34 PPG17 states that audits of provision should encompass all existing open space, sport and recreation irrespective of ownership and the extent of public access. The logic for this is that all forms of provision can contribute to meeting local needs. Audits should also include all primary and secondary schools and other educational institutions. Only those sites located within settlement boundaries have been included.

SECTION 2 – UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

- 2.35 Audits should consider both the quantitative and the qualitative elements of open space, sports and recreation facilities. Audits of quality are particularly important as they allow local authorities to identify potential for increased use through better design, management and maintenance.
- 2.36 The multi functionality of some types of open space presents a challenge in the audit. In order to address these issues, all spaces have been classified by their primary purpose. This ensures that all spaces are counted only once, but does not negate the need to consider the relationships between different types of open space as part of the study.
- 2.37 Additionally, some types of open space are located within a larger space. Where this occurs and the primary purpose is clearly defined, these sites are considered to be two separate sites and have been subdivided. A good example is the location of a children's play area within a park. It is important that these sites are considered separately as they have different roles and fall into different typologies.
- 2.38 The Council compiled a detailed audit of provision of open space across the Borough. This audit was then checked and refined by PMP in order to ensure that only those sites falling within the PPG17 typologies were identified. Grass verges and farmland were excluded from consideration, as well as sites located outside of settlement boundaries.
- 2.39 649 sites were identified during the audit. Each site was classified into a relevant typology and site assessments were then carried out at each site.
- 2.40 Site assessments were undertaken using a matrix developed with Council Officers enabling comparisons between sites in the same typology and across typologies. For consistency purposes, all sites were assessed by the same person. Sites were rated against the following categories:
- accessibility
 - quality
 - wider benefits (such as health and educational).
- 2.41 The site assessment process resulted in an overall quality and accessibility score for each site in addition to ratings for each individual factor. A full list of sites and their scores can be found in Appendix C. The site assessment matrix can be found in Appendix D.

Steps 3 and 4 - Setting and applying provision standards

- 2.42 PPG17 states that open space standards should be set locally and recommends that national standards should not be used to assess local circumstances.
- 2.43 PPG17 recommends that local authorities use information gained from the assessment of needs and opportunities (stage 1) to set locally derived standards for the provision of open space, sport and recreational facilities. These local standards should include:
- quantitative elements (how much new provision may be needed)
 - a qualitative component (against which to measure the need for enhancement of existing facilities)

SECTION 2 – UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

- accessibility (including distance thresholds and consideration of the cost of using a facility).
- 2.44 The local standards for quality, quantity and accessibility of open space, sport and recreation facilities should relate directly to the local consultation undertaken and should therefore be reflective of local needs. PMP has produced locally based standards using the findings of the household survey and other consultations undertaken where appropriate.
- 2.45 Table 2.3 overleaf briefly summarises the process adopted for setting each of the local standards.

Table 2.3 – The Setting Standards Process

Process Stage	Methodology
National standards	Analysis of any existing national standards for each typology. These are usually provided by national organisations eg National Playing Fields Association for playing pitches. It is important to ensure that national standards are taken into account as part of determination of local standards.
Existing local standards	Consideration of existing local standards for each typology that are currently applied by the Council. These include standards set out in the Local Plan and in other strategies and documents.
Current provision (quantity standards only)	Assessment of the current quantity of provision within the local authority area as a whole and within each of the four analysis areas.
Benchmarking	Figures detailing local standards set by PMP for other open space projects to provide a benchmark when setting local standards.
Consultation (household survey)	Consideration of the findings of the household survey with regards the quantity of provision for each type of open space. This analysis provides a robust indication (at the Borough wide 95% confidence level) of public perception of the existing level of provision of all different types of open spaces.
Consultation comments	<p>PPG 17 indicates that where local provision is regarded as inadequate it is important to establish why this is the case. A feeling of deficiency can sometimes be due to qualitative issues of existing open space sites rather than actual quantity issues.</p> <p>It is therefore important to assess findings of the household survey, the drop in sessions and other qualitative consultation to gain a thorough understanding of local community need. Comments emerging through qualitative consultation are particularly important to test the themes emerging from the household survey.</p>
PMP recommendation	<p>PMP recommendation of a local standard. The standard is based on an assessment of the local community need and will be in the form of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quantity – x hectares per 1000 population • accessibility – a distance threshold in metres • quality – a list of essential and desirable features.
PMP justification	Full justifications for the recommended local standard based on qualitative and quantitative consultations are provided for each typology.

Quantity

- 2.46 The open space audit enables an understanding of the quantity of provision for each type of open space in each area of the Borough. This level of detail enables the calculation of the provision of each type of open space per 1,000 population. This information is provided within typology specific Sections 4-13.
- 2.47 The overall aim of the quantity assessment is to:
- provide an understanding of the adequacy of existing provision for each type of open space in the Borough
 - establish areas of the Borough suffering from deficiency of provision of each type of open space
 - provide a guide to developers as to the amount of open space expected in conjunction with new development.
- 2.48 This assessment measures the quantity of provision against the current population of (171,730 taken from the Annual Monitoring Report 2006).
- 2.49 Consideration is also given to the likely implications of future population growth up to 2021. Population projections used have been based on the potential levels of growth set out in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Issues and Options Paper.
- 2.50 In order to ensure that any standards set are reflective of local community needs and opinions, key themes emerging from consultations in each analysis area relating to the quantity of each type are analysed. The key issues for each type of open space are assessed within Sections 4 – 13. Local standards are subsequently set taking into account the current level of provision compared to the perceived community need.

Accessibility

- 2.51 Accessibility is a key criterion for open space sites. Without good accessibility, the provision of good quality or sufficient quantity of open space would be of limited value. The overall aim of accessibility standards should be to identify:
- how accessible sites are
 - how far people are willing to travel to reach open space
 - areas of the Borough that are deficient in provision (identified through the application of local standards).
- 2.52 Similar to quantity standards, accessibility standards should be derived from an understanding of the community views, particularly with regards to the maximum distance that members of the public are willing to travel.
- 2.53 Distance thresholds (ie the maximum distance that typical users can reasonably be expected to travel to each type of provision using different modes of transport) are a very useful planning tool especially when used in association with a Geographic Information System (GIS). PPG17 encourages any new open space sites or enhancement of existing sites to be accessible by environmentally friendly forms of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport.

SECTION 2 – UNDERTAKING THE STUDY

2.54 Accessibility standards are set in the form of a distance in metres where walking is the most popular mode of travel, and a drive time where driving to the open space site is the most popular mode.

Quality

2.55 The quality and value of open space are fundamentally different and can sometimes be completely unrelated. Two examples of this are:

- a high quality open space is provided but is completely inaccessible. Its usage is therefore restricted and its value to the public limited
- a low quality open space may be used every day by the public or have some significant wider benefit such as biodiversity or educational use and therefore has a relatively high value to the public.

2.56 The overall aim of a quality assessment should be to identify deficiencies in quality and key quality factors that need to be improved within:

- the geographical areas of the Borough
- specific types of open space.

2.57 The quality standards set as part of the study are intended to provide information on the key features of open space that are important to local residents. Sites are then assessed and given a score for a range of factors including:

- cleanliness and maintenance
- security and safety
- vegetation
- ancillary accommodation.

2.58 Each element of quality is rated on a scale of very good (5 points) to poor (1 point) and a total percentage score is then calculated. Where an element of provision (such as toilets) is considered to be not applicable, this will not be taken into account in the calculation of the percentage score.

2.59 These scores are then weighted (multiplied either by 3, 2 or 1) to reflect the importance of the factors for each type of open space. These weightings are derived from the findings of the consultation. Factors that are given higher weightings are perceived to be the most important and to have the largest impact on the quality of the site according to local residents. Factors with a higher weighting will therefore influence the total score more than factors with lower weightings.

2.60 Full details of the linkages between the quality assessments and the site visits undertaken can be found in Appendix G.

2.61 Scores achieved during site visits are translated into percentages and can then be benchmarked against each other. The application of the process for each typology can be found in typology specific Sections 4 – 13.

Step 5 – Drafting policies - recommendations and strategic priorities

2.62 The application of the local standards enables the identification of deficiencies in terms of accessibility, quality and quantity and also enables spatial distribution of unmet need.

2.63 Based on this analysis, strategic options can be devised based on existing provision to be protected, existing provision to be enhanced, existing provision to be relocated and proposals for new provision.

2.64 The recommendations contained within the report are based on the findings of the application of the local standards for each typology. An example is provided below:

P&G1	Given the low number of sites within the Borough, all park and garden sites should be afforded protection.
-----------------	--

SECTION 3
STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Strategic context

- 3.1 This section reviews the strategic context and provides background on the national/regional picture relevant to open space, sport and recreation facilities. The Council has provided all documents reviewed within this section of the report. Whilst this review is not exhaustive it provides details on the context considered important within this study.
- 3.2 For the purposes of this study, Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 and the Companion Guide are the key overarching documents. All documents reviewed within this report influence the provision of facilities in Telford and Wrekin and the strategic priorities of the Council.
- 3.3 Local strategic documents have been reviewed within the individual typology sections, highlighting specific strategic objectives that link into this study. These documents are also summarised later in this section.

Regional Policy Documents

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

- 3.4 The Regional Spatial Strategy guides the preparation of local authority development plans and local transport plans to deliver a coherent framework for regional development.
- 3.5 The overall vision for the West Midlands is to be:
- ‘an economically successful, outward looking and adaptable region, which is rich in culture and environment, where all people, working together are able to meet their aspirations and needs without prejudicing the quality of life for future generations’*
- 3.6 The key challenges and outcomes for the region are highlighted as:
- providing opportunities for all to progress and improve their quality of life
 - an advanced, thriving and diverse economy occupying a competitive position
 - successful urban and rural renaissance
 - diverse and distinctive cities, towns, sub-regions and communities
 - recognition for its distinctive, high quality natural and built environment
 - an efficient network of integrated sustainable transport facilities and services
 - partnership working for a commonly agreed sustainable future.
- 3.7 Policies contained within the Regional Spatial Strategy of specific relevance to this open space, sport and recreation study include:
- **Policy QE1** - Environmental improvement is a key component of the Spatial Strategy in order to underpin the overall quality of life of all areas and support wider economic and social objectives

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

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

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

- 3.8 When the Secretary of State published the Regional Spatial Strategy in 2004, he recognised that, in some instances, more work was required to develop the strategy further. Phase 2 revisions to the 2004 Regional Spatial Strategy relate to housing, employment, transport and waste.
- 3.9 The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (formerly Regional Planning Guidance - RPG 11) suggested that Telford should achieve 1330 dwellings a year up until 2011 and up to 700 dwellings a year for the next 10 years after that up to 2021. The phase 2 revision extends up to 2026 and the following three scenarios were suggested for Telford within the recently published spatial options consultation document:
- reference point A - rolling forward current RSS growth levels to 2026 which in Telford would require a total of 24,000 new dwellings between 2001 and 2026 (an increase of 3,500 beyond 2021)

- reference point B - this is a continuation of the current RSS allocation plus an additional 25% growth. This would require a total of just under 30,000 new dwellings between 2001 and 2026
 - reference point C - a higher range based upon the anticipated newly released regional growth forecast which is a continuation of the current RSS plus an additional 51% growth. This would require around 36,000 new dwellings, between 2001 and 2026
 - whichever of these assumptions is accurate, the high level of house-building which will take place over the next 15 years will at the very least re-distribute concentrations within and around the Borough and therefore have a major effect on the demand for open space. It is recognised that the Borough requires a stronger and more consistent level of growth than that allocated in the existing RSS to ensure a thriving and sustainable community that can meet local housing needs. The higher levels of housing growth would generate significant economic and employment growth which would help to maintain the current balance between population and employment and inward and outward commuting
 - while the RSS consultation document highlights that there is public opposition to proposals to develop on green-field sites, it can be seen that while development on brownfield sites is preferred, some degree of development on Greenfield sites may be required.
- 3.10 Once finalised, the scale and location of house building across Telford and Wrekin up to 2021 will have a significant impact on open space, sport and recreation requirements in the Borough. One of the greatest challenges the Council faces is ensuring that the quality of life for existing and new communities in the area is improved. Fundamental to achieving this is the need to enhance existing infrastructure, including open space, sport and recreation infrastructure to support the scale of growth proposed.
- 3.11 The implications of population growth on the open space, sport and recreation network in Telford and Wrekin are highlighted throughout this report.

The Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands – Phase 3 Revision

- 3.12 Phase 3 revisions look at critical rural services, recreational provision, regionally significant environmental issues and the development of a framework for provision of Gypsy and Traveller sites. The Council should use the findings of this study to influence their involvement in the phase 3 revisions regarding recreation provision.

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

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

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

3.15 The aim of the plan is:

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

3.16 The plan has seven main outcomes:

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

Local strategic documents

3.17 Local strategic documents have been reviewed within the individual typology sections, highlighting specific strategic objectives that link into this study. However the key principles of each document have been set out below alongside the relevance of this study to the assessment of local needs.

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Table 3.1 – Strategic Context – Implications for this assessment of open space, sport and recreation facilities

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Wrekin Local Plan 1995 – 2006/7</p>	<p>The Wrekin Local Plan is the council's expression of its land use policies and how it will manage and control development in the district. Building, growth and sustainability are at the forefront of the plans objectives and are the key vision of the plan.</p> <p>The Wrekin Local Plan has an end date of 2006, however, the Plan will be saved at least until September 2007 and as such will still form part of the Development Plan for the Borough, together with the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS).</p> <p>The plan is a fundamental element of the council's drive to create a sustainable future for the Borough, incorporating the principles of sustainable development and providing a clear framework to guide the location and form of new development.</p> <p>Several policies relate specifically to open space, sport and recreation within the plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy LR4 considers the provision of the NPFA minimum target of 2.43 ha per 1000 population of outdoor recreational open space • Policy LR7 considers the provision of 1.5 ha of open space or a contribution of equivalent value per 1000 employees on new employment developments • Policies OL2 to OL6 and OL11 and OL12 consider the protection and enhancement of open land, green networks, woodland and trees, playing fields, recreational areas and sites of national importance. 	<p>The study will contribute to the creation of a sustainable future for the Borough, providing support and guidance on the requirements (in terms of new provision and the protection of existing open space) relating to new developments.</p> <p>By identifying areas in the Borough where there is insufficient provision, new development of sport and recreation facilities and open space will be encouraged.</p> <p>The study will look to protect and enhance urban green spaces and green corridors by assessing their quality, quantity and accessibility.</p> <p>Areas of natural importance will be identified and protected in the open space study.</p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Telford and Wrekin Community Strategy 2006 - 2011</p>	<p>The Telford and Wrekin Community Strategy outlines how the quality of life can be improved across the Borough covering a wide range of economic, social and environmental issues.</p> <p>The strategy identifies six shared community priorities that will be focused on over the next five years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • transforming Telford and Wrekin – putting in place key elements of the infrastructure to accommodate sustainable population and employment growth, attract additional investment and bring about the sustainable regeneration of the area’s most deprived residential and industrial areas • children and young people – focusing on the five key outcomes for children and young people (Children Act 2004) which brings together the educational, social and welfare needs of all children and young people • a sustainable and quality environment – managing the growing pressures on the local environment, providing viable alternative transport solutions to the car, creating quality public space, and conserving and enhancing the Borough’s unique environment • safe, strong and cohesive community – focusing on reducing key crimes, strengthening communities and recognising diversity • healthier communities and vulnerable people – reducing inequalities and improving peoples health • local economy and skills – focusing on the promotion and support of new and existing businesses. 	<p>The open space, sport and recreation study will set standards that take into consideration current and future population levels.</p> <p>The application of quantity, quality and accessibility standards will highlight areas within the Borough that currently have an undersupply of quality open space, the subsequent recommendations will support the councils ongoing regeneration plan.</p> <p>The key aims of the study will be to protect and enhance existing open spaces, highlight the importance of the green network, and where possible recommend new provision is located within walking distance.</p> <p>The study can contribute to priorities related to health and inequalities by providing high quality, local and accessible open spaces for people to participate in physical activity and recreation.</p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Telford and Wrekin Children and Young People's Plan 2005 – 2010</p>	<p>The strategy outlines a range of actions required to achieve each of the priorities below. Those of particular relevance to this open space, sport and recreation study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhancing cultural, leisure and recreational facilities • maximising children's and young people's achievement and enjoyment of play, sport, leisure and cultural activities • enhancing the natural environment • improving accessibility within the Borough • promoting healthy lifestyles. <p>The vision for children and young people is to:</p> <p><i>"...work together with children, young people, families and their communities to build a safe, prosperous and bright future for all the children and young people in Telford & Wrekin".</i></p> <p>The plan focuses on five aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting health and early years • staying safe • enjoying and achieving • making a positive contribution • achieving economic wellbeing. 	<p>The study will assess the quality, quantity and accessibility of children's play and teenage facilities in Telford and Wrekin and identify shortfalls in provision. Recommendations for improvements can then be made.</p> <p>The study will contribute to creating a criterion for the new development and enhancement of children and young peoples facilities.</p> <p>The consultation process will drive all standards and recommendations.</p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Local Play Strategy 2007 - 2017</p>	<p>The Council recognises the importance of providing stimulating play opportunities for children and young people (0-18 years) and is committed to enhancing the quality and quantity of current and future free play provision and equipped play and youth facilities across the Borough. These include equipped play facilities and play and activities provision. This plan builds on the Play Policy Statements agreed in the Play Strategy and outlines the Council's commitment to improving and developing play opportunities for all children and young people through the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • upgrade existing play and youth facilities where required • create new play and youth facilities where appropriate • increase the amount of accessible play equipment within play and youth facilities • actively encourage the right of children's informal play particularly in the landscape of open green spaces • dependent on its size, new developments will provide the following on site provision; 75 – 200 child bed spaces = LEAP, 200+ child bed spaces = NEAP. 	<p>The open space, sport and recreation study will consult with children and young people in order to understand their requirements.</p> <p>Existing facilities will be protected and enhanced where appropriate. The setting of an accessibility standard will take into account barriers to movements.</p> <p>The requirement for developers to provide both on and off site provision will be set out in the report.</p>
<p>Playing Pitch Strategy 2003 - 2011</p>	<p>The Playing Pitch Strategy considers the pressures that Telford and Wrekin is facing in terms of population growth and housing developments, and proposes a number of policies that will guide the future provision and protection of pitches.</p> <p>The following policies are proposed to guide the general provision of playing pitches within Telford and Wrekin over the period up to 2011 and relate specifically to this study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where there are insufficient facilities to meet the expanding population and the anticipated growth in the sports, new facilities should be provided • where there are sufficient facilities already, but their quality is poor, the primary objective should be to improve the sites and pitches, particularly on those with an important local or more strategic role • there should be a network of facilities spread across the authority area, particularly for junior and mini football, and in the more rural areas • wherever possible new playing fields should be developed alongside and as part of wider community facilities, such as community centres, or linked to school sites 	<p>The study will set and apply outdoor sports facilities standards, this will highlight any issues relating to quantity, quality and accessibility. Recommendations will then look to address these issues across the Borough.</p> <p>The use of GIS mapping will show all current facilities, the recommendations regarding new provision will take this into account and look to provide facilities across the Borough - avoiding any overlap.</p> <p>The study will discuss the importance school sites in the context of providing all residents with access to outdoor and indoor sports facilities.</p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> playing fields should generally be protected from development, particularly in the rural area and the larger multi-pitch sites within Telford. Any losses will usually need to be minimised by new equivalent or better provision or improvements in other local playing field sites. 	
<p>Sports and Recreation Strategy 2002 - 2011</p>	<p>The Telford and Wrekin Partnership's Community Strategy sets the overall context for this document. As such, the Council has set six sport and recreation ambitions to reflect the overall community strategy vision and its key ambitions. They are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> participation and inclusion – to promote opportunities for the whole community to participate, with particular emphasis on children and young people healthy lifestyle – improving the health of local people by the services and activities available through sports and physical recreation facilities and services – encouraging the provision and development of sport and recreation facilities and services in line with locally determined need quality and sustainability – promoting the effective, efficient and sustainable use of sport and recreation facilities personal development – providing opportunities for residents to achieve their desired level of potential physical and learning development through sport and recreation marketing – to increase awareness of both the benefits of participation and the awareness of the local opportunities available. <p>In order to achieve these visions, the following recommendations have been produced in line with National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) guidelines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> minimum standard of 1.6ha per 1000 people for outdoor sport with 1.2ha of the above standard allocated specifically for pitch sport a minimum standard of 0.8ha per 1000 people of outdoor recreation space for children's play. 	<p>The links between the study and the Telford and Wrekin Community Strategy have been discussed on page 22.</p> <p>Within the report, quantity standards will be set for outdoor sports facilities (including pitches), amenity green space and facilities for children. All of the standards will be driven by public consultation and guidelines such as those provided by NPFA.</p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Telford Town Park Strategic Framework 2006</p>	<p>The strategic framework provides direction and guidance for the future management and development of the Town Park until 2021. The aims of the strategic framework that have particular relevance to open space, sport and recreation are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop Telford Town Park to provide a public green space and recreational resource of Regional significance • achieve sufficient quality of provision to promote the park as a national example of Best Practice in park design and management • develop a sustainable approach to the evolution of the park to secure its long term role at the heart of Telford Town Centre for future generation • fully integrate the park with any future redevelopment of Telford town centre to improve the spatial and visual relationship between the two and maximise benefit for the park from this relationship • provide a flexible management tool for Telford Town Park which the Borough of Telford and Wrekin can use to guide future changes within and adjacent the park. 	<p>Within the open space, sport and recreation study Telford Town Park will be discussed as a strategic site of great importance within the Borough. The quantity, quality and accessibility standards will help with both the future plans to make the park a site of regional significance and the special and visual relationship between the town centre and Telford Town Park.</p>
<p>Local Development Framework</p>	<p>The Telford & Wrekin Local Development Framework (LDF) will provide a long-term development vision for the Borough through to 2021.</p> <p>Unlike the current and previous local plans it will not be a single document. Instead, it will be a compendium made up of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local development scheme • development plan documents • statement of community involvement • sustainability appraisals • annual monitoring report • all proposed SPD's (notably the Green Spaces Strategy SPD and Developer Contributions SPD • evidence documents 	<p>This study provides a robust and credible evidence base, and represents an up-to-date local audit and needs assessment of open space, sport and recreation facilities on which to base associated planning policies in the LDF.</p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Growing Towards the 2021 Vision – A Tree & Woodland Strategy for The Borough</p>	<p>The strategy acknowledges the value of trees and woodland and their contribution to the character and environment of the Borough and commits to maintain and enhance these areas.</p> <p>The vision of the strategy is: “A landscape rich in trees and woodland, diverse in age range and species, managed sustainably to provide an accessible, safe, attractive and high quality environment for the people and wildlife of the Borough”.</p> <p>The four key themes of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protection and development • maintenance and enhancement • trees and the public • risk management. 	<p>The study will discuss the protection of Telford and Wrekin’s unique environment and the contribution trees and woodland make to this.</p>
<p>The Safer and Stronger Communities Strategy 2005 – 2008</p>	<p>The strategy is produced by the Community Safety Partnership in Telford and Wrekin and provides a strategy to tackle crime and disorder in the community.</p> <p>Some of the key issues that this strategy focuses on have a direct correlation to the use of open space and the facilities associated within them. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reducing crime and anti social behaviour within in the community which can affect the number of people using open spaces due to safety fears • discouraging children and young people from becoming involved in crime, anti social behaviour and drug use by providing the correct provision and enhanced quality of open spaces to keep younger people occupied and steer them away from such behaviour. 	<p>The open space, sport and recreation study can help reduce crime and anti social behaviour by providing the correct provision of high quality open space. Facilities for children and teenagers will be improved as part of the study and this can contribute to creating a safe Borough.</p>
<p>Telford and Wrekin Urban Capacity Study August 2005</p>	<p>The basis of the study was to update the previous estimate of capacity (in 2001) and aimed to identify all potential sources of housing in the Borough’s urban areas, to assess their yields and apply discounts to reflect realistic development capacity.</p> <p>The study concluded that Telford & Newport urban areas could yield approximately 8,800 dwellings through to 2021, based on a strong market demand, mid level discounting scenario.</p>	<p>The local standards contained within this study should be used to ensure a plan led approach to the provision of open space, sport and recreation in the Borough. This will ensure that future review of the urban capacity study take the right amount and type of open space provision into account in assessing realistic residential capacity.</p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Joint Structure Plan 1996 – 2007</p>	<p>The structure plan provides a strategy for development and use of land within the context of sustainable development objectives. The plan provides a strategic framework for the policies in local plans and is built upon the principles of sustainable development.</p> <p>The objectives of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conserving resources • improving the quality of life • achieving sustainable development patterns • fostering a prosperous economy within a sustainable framework. <p>P20, an open space policy within the strategy, states that local plans shall ensure that open spaces located in built up areas are assessed against the need for development. Furthermore, where Local Planning Authorities identify a shortage of open space, local plans shall contain policies to protect these areas and new provision of open space should link to other areas to provide a network of open space.</p>	<p>The joint structure plan will compliment the findings of the open space study, with policies centred around the protection of existing sites and reference made to the importance of a green network.</p> <p>All policies and recommendations will look to compliment the Borough's sustainable development.</p>
<p>Heart and Soul – Telford and Wrekin Cultural Strategy 2001 – 2006</p>	<p>The Local Cultural Strategy's vision is to 'build a community that develops and maximises its potential through culture'.</p> <p>The objectives of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • five year framework • needs and priorities • quality of life • pride in the area • regeneration • well-being • access • creativity • cultural quarter. <p>The two strategic objectives particularly relevant to this study are well-being and access, with the aim of well-being to, '<i>Promote active citizenship and improve the health and well-being of the people living within the Borough</i>' and the aim of access to, '<i>Establish a wider range of accessible cultural, recreational and leisure activities in the community</i>'.</p>	<p>The study will identify needs and shortfalls in open space, sport and recreation provision both now and in the future.</p> <p>The outcome of the study will result in the regeneration of open space across Telford and Wrekin.</p> <p>Public opinion is key to the study and thorough consultation residents will help shape the key priorities.</p> <p>Open space significantly contributes to the cultural activity across the Borough. The study will increase opportunities to access open space and therefore play a role in key council strategies.</p> <p>All typologies play a key role within Telford and Wrekin, as such, the emphasis on future quantity, quality and accessibility will</p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
	The benefits of cultural activities, outlined in the strategy, provide reference to open space emphasising that urban parks, free and open to everyone, for example, can contribute to increased social interaction by providing a sense of place and helping to define local communities.	be integral to help facilitate key council objectives.

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Woodside Green Space Strategy</p>	<p>The green space strategy will provide a clear strategy for intervention and help to provide well-designed and well-managed parks and open spaces. The objectives of the strategy relevant to this study are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan and design green space to improve the connectivity and integration of spaces that are currently disconnected and dysfunctional • clearly define entrances, routes and spaces to provide strong connections between existing and proposed housing areas, the Woodside local centre and the green spaces beyond the estate • define means of integrating green space with adjacent housing and spaces, thereby improving how the estate works in terms of community safety. Consider how the external spaces can be better connected to their surrounding buildings with clear, welcoming and easily supervised routes and access points together with overlooking from active uses. • green spaces should be safe and welcoming to the entire community, so significant emphasis should be given to designing out the opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour • protect, enhance and create opportunities for biodiversity and ecological habitats through the provision of landscape corridors connecting the hierarchy of green spaces. 	<p>Across all typologies, reference will be made to the importance of accessibility, both in terms of entrances and how the linkages help to form the green network.</p> <p>The study will reflect on the importance of all typologies, and how in particular certain areas can contribute to improving biodiversity within the Borough.</p>
<p>Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report</p>	<p>The report outlines the social, environmental and economic sustainability objectives. Those of particular relevance to this study are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • S1 – improve and maintain the quality of life and community well being • S2 - accessibility to a range of services and facilities to meet people’s basic needs and promote social inclusion • S4 – improve the health of the population • En1 – make optimum use of land and resources • En2 – reduce the demand for travel and promote modes of travel other than the car • En3 – enhance and protect the quality of the natural environment • En4 – enhance and protect the quality of the built environment • En7 – Maximise the efficient use of natural resources. 	<p>The open space, sport and recreation study will be essential in the delivery of several of the key objectives and actions within this report.</p> <p>This study will provide detailed baseline information regarding open spaces which should be prioritised for quality improvement and will also analyse the adequacy of the existing provision of sport and recreation facilities as well as informal recreation opportunities, identifying areas for improvement in terms of quantity and accessibility.</p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Parks Strategy 2003 – 2008</p>	<p>The objectives of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ensure parks and recreational grounds are an integral part of strategic planning and policy • to identify ways in which local people may become involved in the management and protection of their parks and recreation grounds, through the greater involvement of the voluntary sector and local community groups • to propose processes of working within partnerships to ensure adequate resources are available to implement the strategy and provide a quality service for local people • to establish a qualitative assessment and benchmarking systems which will improve the overall quality of parks and recreation grounds • to establish the importance of providing accessible information and interpretation to promote the importance of parks and recreation grounds to local people and visitors • to propose a phased action plan to achieve the aim of the strategy and a framework for the day to day management and improvement of parks and recreational grounds. <p>Key findings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there are key areas of deficiency in terms of formal provision in Telford • the service should aim to achieve Green Flag Awards for all its park and recreation grounds by 2008 • the Telford Town Park should be developed as a flagship for Parks Management and be a key element to the Town Centre Development. 	<p>The open space, sport and recreation study will provide key recommendations in order to achieve the key priorities set out in this strategy, specifically relating to quantity, quality and accessibility.</p> <p>In terms of accessible information, consultation and detailed site visits will contribute to recommended standards, incorporating the provision of information and signage.</p>
<p>Telford and Wrekin Sports and Leisure Facilities Framework 2007/2027</p>	<p>The vision for the strategy is:</p> <p>“To create a network of inclusive high quality community and specialist sport and physical activity facilities within Telford and Wrekin that will encourage an increase in its communities physical activity levels, and enhance the quality of life of existing and future communities”.</p>	<p>The open space, sport and recreation study will set recommendations in order to provide quality indoor facilities that are strategically located across the Borough in order to help increase physical activity levels.</p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
	One of the key aims of the strategy is to extend upon and develop the 'Sports Village' concept that has already been proposed for the Borough. Whilst initial proposals focused upon one particular area of the Borough for development, the facility strategy aims to extend this across the Borough as a whole, ensuring that the future network of provision is strategically located and accessible to all.	

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Core Strategy Development Plan Document – Adopted 2007</p>	<p>Paragraph 9.13 of the strategic development policies states that in relation to jobs;</p> <p><i>“to maintain self-sufficiency in terms of employment, and to balance housing and population growth, the need to create sufficient jobs will require between 153 and 236 hectares of land.”</i></p> <p>Within the context of development needs, policy CS11 seeks to protect and enhance both formal and informal areas of open space. As such, development on open space will only be permitted if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there will be significant community and environmental benefits delivered by the proposal and; • the land does not contribute to the open space standards set to meet the requirements of the local population 	<p>The findings of this PPG17 assessment will support the policies set out within the core strategy and also the subsequent development of Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents.</p>
<p>Development Control Policies DPD Preferred Options Report</p>	<p>Key issues and options relating to this study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • environment – need to protect and conserve Telford and Wrekin’s varied and distinctive high quality environment • accessibility – the need to improve accessibility to jobs, goods, services and facilities <p>Key policies relating to the study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy DP2 – Developer Contributions – in accordance with the relevant policies, planning obligations will be used to secure for example the provision on site of essential infrastructure: recreational open space and affordable housing • Policy DP4 – Protection of Habitats and Species – the council will not permit development that will adversely affect protected species. Where possible opportunities should be taken to enhance the environment for these habitats and species. • Policy DP6 – Provision of New Open Space within Developments – seek to ensure that all developments incorporate areas of formal and informal open space to meet local standards • Policy DP9 – Landscape Protection – ensures that where new development occurs it is of an appropriate scale and design for the landscape within which it sits 	<p>The findings and key issues emerging from this PPG17 assessment will inform and provide an evidence base for the preferred options and the subsequent development of the DPD.</p>

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy EN2 – Green Space – sets out how valuable and functional green spaces can be protected. The aim is to protect green space, enhance the quality and improve accessibility within and to the green network • Policy EN3 – Telford Town Park – focuses on the protection and enhancement of Telford Town Park, informed by the Town Park Strategic Framework • Policy EN4 – Major New Recreational Facilities – priority should be given to locating new major recreational facilities in accessible areas within Telford urban area. If this is not possible, sites immediately adjoining or in Newport will be considered • Policy EN5 – Sites of Biodiversity and Geological Conservation Value and Ancient Woodlands – seeks to protect and enhance these sites located within the Borough • Policy EN14 – Parks and Gardens – addresses the protection of parks and gardens identified as being of national and local interest. 	

SECTION 3 – STRATEGIC CONTEXT

Document reviewed	Summary	Links to open space, sport and recreation study
<p>Land Allocations DPD Preferred Options Report</p>	<p>Specific objectives to be considered when identifying proposals for future development in the Borough of particular relevance to this study include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimise the use of greenfield land by concentrating development on brownfield land • support the regeneration of Newport to become a vital, vibrant market town • focus the majority of housing development in Telford as the main service centre • outside Telford and Newport to focus development on key settlements that have a range of services and facilities • maintain an adequate supply of open space to meet the needs of a growing population and where shortfalls are identified (Newport) identify land to meet future requirements. 	<p>The findings of this report will inform the allocations DPD and enable decisions to be taken regarding new allocations and development on greenfield land. This report can also be used to determine the quantities of green space required as part of new developments.</p>
<p>Planning Policy Statement 9 (PPS9)</p>	<p>The National Planning Policy for biodiversity and geological conservation has been revised with a greater emphasis on conserving, enhancing and restoring biodiversity through the planning system. Public bodies must <i>now “have regard to biodiversity in carrying out their functions.”</i></p>	<p>Although this study primarily considers the provision of recreational open space, balancing recreation with biodiversity is of key importance. The study provides the evidence base to protect sites with an important biodiversity / ecological function.</p>
<p>Shropshire Biodiversity Action Plan (SBAP)</p>	<p>The SBAP now includes the Borough of Telford and Wrekin and provides a detailed outline outline of the work necessary for the conservation of 55 species and 22 habitats, covered in 50 plans. 10 key challenges are set out in the SBAP, with the following challenges having particular relevance to this study:</p> <p>Challenge 5 – local authorities to have policies within their LDF relating to species habitat and site protection, and habitat network provision (particularly in urban areas).</p> <p>Challenge 9 – help to shape landscape scale biodiversity initiatives across the region, for example biodiversity enhancement areas and landscapes for living.</p>	<p>The Biodiversity Action Plan provides a detailed insight into the opportunities for wildlife and habitat protection. A key outcome of this document is the need to balance recreation and biodiversity.</p>

Summary and conclusions

- 3.18 The provision of open spaces, sport and recreation facilities contributes to the achievement of wider governmental objectives such as social and community cohesion, urban renaissance and promoting a healthy and enjoyable life. Any development of open spaces (ie provision of either new or enhancement of existing spaces) should take into account bio-diversity and nature conservation opportunities and develop an increasing environmental awareness, as well as facilitating the increase needed in participation in sport and active recreation.
- 3.19 Many organisations are willing to work in partnership together to manage and develop existing open spaces and share similar aims and objectives eg protecting, enhancing and maximising usage and nature conservation value of open spaces. The importance of enhancing biodiversity across the region as well as maintaining and improving the green network is a key feature of many regional strategies.
- 3.20 Points emerging from the strategic review that are integral to the development of this open space, sport and recreation assessment in Telford and Wrekin include:
- improvements and continuing enhancement of the local environment are an important feature of the region, providing a tool to achieve many wide-ranging issues impacting on health levels as well as increasing the well-being of residents, workers and visitors
 - housing developments and geographical allocations driven by national planning policies, and employment land allocations will have a direct impact on open space, sport and recreation provision and sustainability. High population growth will place increasing demands on existing open spaces as well as generating higher needs for recreational open space provision.
- 3.21 In summary, this review of strategic documents highlights the local importance of maintaining and improving open space sites within Telford and Wrekin. This local needs study and resulting strategy will contribute to achieving the wider aims of a number of local and national agencies.

SECTION 4

PARKS AND GARDENS

Parks and gardens

Introduction and definition

- 4.1 This type of open space (as defined by PPG17) includes urban parks, formal gardens and country parks that provide opportunities for various informal recreation and community events, within settlement boundaries.
- 4.2 Parks often contain a variety of facilities and amenities, including some that fall within different classifications of open space, eg children's play facilities, sport pitches and wildlife areas. For classification purposes, the different open spaces within parks have been separated according to the PPG17 typology under which they most appropriately fall. Large green areas, footpaths, lakes and less dense woodland will provide the park area (total hectares) and the other facilities will be calculated separately under their own classification. This ensures that open space sites are not counted twice within the PPG17 assessment.
- 4.3 While parks (and other open spaces where appropriate) are subdivided in order to reflect the specific facilities within the site, the multifaceted nature of these facilities should also be recognised. In many instances, it is the variety and type of facility available at the site that attracts visitors.
- 4.4 Parks provide a sense of place for the local community and help to address social inclusion issues within wider society. According to the recently published Park Life Report (June 2007), 83% of those questioned feel that parks are a focal point of community life. Parks also provide an important recreational resource, and many residents enjoy visiting parks to walk or to undertake more physical exercise. The Active People survey reveals that walking is the most popular recreational activity for people in England. Over 8 million adults aged 16 and over did a recreational walk for at least 30 minutes in the last four weeks. Provision of parks therefore represents a key opportunity to increase levels of physical activity across the local population.
- 4.5 In addition to the recreational opportunities provided by parks, these large green spaces provide structural and landscaping benefits to the surrounding local area. They also frequently offer ecological benefits, particularly in more urban areas. The provision of parks to break up urban landscapes is becoming increasingly important, particularly in light of growing fears regarding climate change and the role that provision of green space can play in reducing this impact.
- 4.6 Larger facilities tend to attract users from a wider catchment than the smaller parks and tend to have a higher local profile. The main strategic and publicly accessible park within Telford and Wrekin is Telford Town Park. Consultation highlighted the value of this site both to local residents and also to those living further afield.
- 4.7 The key issues for parks and gardens arising from a review of strategic documents are set out overleaf, including the Telford Town Park strategy, which focuses specifically on pursuing a sustainable approach to the evolution of the park to secure its long term role at the heart of Telford Town Centre.

- the **Parks Strategy 2003-2008** was commissioned to produce a scheme of management and development for parks and recreation grounds, which will provide for their better protection and future in order to improve their environmental value and recreational use for its residents
- the strategy highlights within its key findings that there are areas of deficiency in terms of formal provision in Telford. Qualitative improvements focus on the achievement of Green Flag Awards for all its park and recreation grounds by 2008
- a key objective of the strategy is to ensure parks and recreational grounds are an integral part of strategic policy and planning
- **Telford Town Park Strategic Framework 2006** provides direction and guidance for the future management and development of the Town Park until 2021. The strategic framework objectives centre around three strands:
 - strategic: including developing and upgrading the currently limited and poor quality transport links within and to the park
 - facilities: focusing on existing facilities and the opportunity to develop new and improved facilities to encourage a broader range of uses by all sections of the community
 - maintenance and management: including improving the safety and security for park users by making improvements to existing facilities and consideration of safety issues in any future design changes or provision of new facilities.
- **Telford and Wrekin Community Strategy 2006 – 2011**; a key focus is the enhancement of cultural, leisure and recreational facilities, specifically implementing the Town Park Strategic Framework to improve access and entrances to the Town Park, open up vantage points and provide youth facilities through redesigning the Northern Urban Park Zone to include quality play areas, garden areas, water features and visitor information areas; improve the connection between areas of interest within the Town Park to promote its central and southern areas, and develop strategic linkages between the Town Centre, the Park and Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site.

Consultation – Assessing Local Needs

4.8 Consultation undertaken as part of the study highlighted the following key issues:

- parks and gardens were perceived to be particularly important to local residents, both in the rural and the urban areas
- parks are one of the most frequently used types of open space within Telford and Wrekin, with 34% of respondents to the household survey indicating that they use them weekly and 11% visiting parks daily. Only 7% of respondents indicated that they never visit parks at all. Parks were also a key theme of the drop in sessions

SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

- 27% of young people and 41% of children indicated that parks were their favourite type of open space, meaning that parks were the most popular of all typologies. The range of facilities and amenities offered in parks was a particularly attractive feature. It is likely that in some instances, young children referred to parks but were also thinking about play areas. This is an example of where perceptions affect comment and there are therefore overlaps between different types of open space
- the wider benefits of parks are far reaching, and it is evident that many residents use parks for informal recreation and walks, reinforcing the health benefits that these spaces offer. Parks were also perceived to offer significant landscaping and environmental benefits, particularly within the urban area of Telford. Parks were seen as a focal point of the community, encouraging social interaction and acting as a meeting place for the old and the young.

PG1	<p>Maximise the role that parks can play in striving to increase participation in health and physical activity across the Borough by effectively promoting these opportunities.</p> <p>Consider the provision of alternative means of exercise such as organised health walks and trim trails.</p>
------------	--

Quantity of provision

- 4.9 The provision of parks and gardens across Telford and Wrekin is summarised in Table 4.1 overleaf. Telford Town Park and Chetwynd Deer Park (Newport Showground) have been excluded from the quantity calculations due to the substantial area they cover. As a consequence their inclusion would skew the findings and give a misleading picture as to the quantity of parks and gardens.

Table 4.1 – Provision of parks and gardens across Telford and Wrekin

Analysis areas	Current provision	Number of sites	Smallest site (hectares)	Largest site (Hectares)	LDF population (2016)	Provision (ha) per 1000 population (2016)
Telford north west	0.89	1	0.89	0.89	48,739	0.0183
Telford north east	0	0	0	0	35,662	0.0000
Telford central	3.05	3	0.7	1.57	45,756	0.0667
Telford south	4.56	1	4.56	4.56	23,440	0.1945
Newport	1.46	1	1.46	1.46	12,648	0.1154
Overall	9.96	6	0.7	4.56	166,245	0.0547

4.10 The key issues emerging from Table 4.1 and consultations relating to the quantity of provision of parks across the Borough include:

- 44% of respondents to the household survey stated that the quantity of parks and gardens in Telford and Wrekin is about right. However, a significant proportion of respondents (34.5%) also felt there was not enough provision. When added to the proportion of those that feel there is nearly enough provision (16%), this represents a split in the opinions of residents
- across the analysis areas, the common perception is that the provision of parks and gardens is about right, with the majority of respondents indicating this in four of the six analysis areas. The highest level of satisfaction is in Telford North East where 50% of residents felt that provision was about right. The lowest levels of satisfaction are located in Telford South and Newport, where the majority of respondents in each area felt there were not enough parks and gardens. When also considering the views of those residents who felt there was nearly enough, it can be seen that over 50% of residents in the Newport and Telford North West areas are dissatisfied with the level of park provision
- the proximity of Telford Town Park has a key impact on overall levels of satisfaction. This large strategic park serves the needs of residents within the Central, North West and North East analysis areas, thus residents in these areas have displayed a high level of satisfaction. A key example of this is Telford North East which displayed the highest level of satisfaction (50% felt the provision is about right) yet as the table above shows there is currently no provision specifically in the area

SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

- the highest level of provision can be found in Telford South that currently has 4.56ha equating to 0.19ha per 1000 population by 2016. Surprisingly, there are high levels of dissatisfaction with current levels of provision in this area.

Setting provision standards – quantity

- 4.11 The recommended local quantity standard for parks and gardens has been derived from the local needs consultation and audit of provision and is summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix F.

Quantity Standard (see Appendices E and F – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
0.06ha per 1000 population	0.07ha per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>Parks are perceived to be particularly important to local residents. Although there is some dissatisfaction, there is a greater level of satisfaction regarding the provision of parks than there is for some other types of open space.</p> <p>Variations in the level of satisfaction suggest that there may be some locational deficiencies in the distribution of parks and gardens.</p> <p>A standard set marginally above the existing level of provision enables any locational deficiencies to be met but does not create significant requirements for new park provision.</p> <p>Telford Town Park has been omitted from the quantitative calculations due to its size and tendency to skew the figures. As it is an extremely large strategic site serving the needs of residents across the Borough it is unrealistic for this level of provision to be replicated across the Borough. Consideration has been given to the role that Telford Town Park serves and the impact of this site on the demand for further provision will be considered during the application of the recommended local standards. Bearing this in mind, Chetwynd Park has also been omitted from the Rural Analysis Area due to the size of the site (66.75ha) and its potential to misrepresent the level of provision Borough wide.</p>	

SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

Current provision - quality

- 4.12 The quality of existing parks and gardens in the Borough was assessed through site visits and is set out in Table 4.2 below. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted as a snapshot in time and are therefore reflective of the quality of the site on one specific day.
- 4.13 The quality scores are weighted according to the findings of the local consultation. Those elements that were highlighted through consultation as being a particularly important determinant of the quality of a park have been weighted higher. This ensures that they have a greater influence on the overall quality score that each site achieves. The full rationale behind this approach is set out in Appendix G.
- 4.14 The Green Flag Award is a national standard for parks and greenspace. No parks have achieved this accreditation in Telford during 2007.
- 4.15 For the purposes of this study, Telford Town Park has been subdivided to reflect the varying functions of the site. As a result, there are two parkland areas within the overall site, termed Town Park North and Town Park South.

Table 4.2 – Quality of parks and gardens across Telford and Wrekin

Geographical area	Number of sites	Range of quality scores (%)	Average quality scores (%)	Lowest quality sites	Highest quality sites
Telford north west	1	64%	64%		Hartshill park – site ID 271
Telford north east	0	0	0		
Telford central	3	82%-100%	90%	Town park south – site ID 498	Town park north – site ID 459
Telford south	1	92%	92%		Dale End Riverside park – site ID 224
Newport	1	58%	58%		Water Lane Park – site ID 52
Overall	6	58%-100%	80.6%	Victoria Park – site ID 52	Town park north – site ID 459

- 4.16 The key issues emerging from Table 4.2 and the consultation relating to the quality of parks and gardens are:
- results from the household survey show a split in opinion regarding the quality of parks and gardens. 36% of respondents feel the quality of this typology is good and 34% feel the quality is average. However, more respondents state that the quality of parks is very good (14%) than poor (12%). This suggests that overall there is a positive perception of the quality of parks and gardens in Telford. This is also reflected in the views of children and young people where the majority of respondents felt that the quality of parks is average or better
 - the analysis areas results are consistent with the Borough wide findings. The highest level of satisfaction is portrayed in the rural area, where 68% of residents feel the quality of parks and gardens is good/very good
 - general comments regarding the quality of parks and gardens revolved around a lack of interesting facilities and issues with dog fouling and litter. This emphasises the importance of cleanliness and maintenance to residents, as well as the value placed on the range of different facilities within the site. These comments were supported throughout consultations, including the household survey, drop in sessions and internet survey for children and young people
 - within Telford and Wrekin the average quality score of parks is 80.6%, with scores for the six parks ranging from 56% - 100%. The lowest scoring park is Victoria Park, located in Newport. This site is currently managed as an open space, rather than a park, which may explain the lower quality score achieved.

Setting provision standards – quality

- 4.17 The recommended local quality standard for parks and gardens is summarised overleaf. Full justifications and consultation relating to the quality of provision for the local standard is provided within Appendix G.

Quality standard (see Appendix G)

Recommended standard – PARKS AND GARDENS		
Local consultation, national guidance and best practice suggest that the following features are essential and desirable to local residents:		
Essential	Desirable	
Flowers/trees	Well kept grass	
Footpaths	Clean/litter free	
Good access	Litter bins	
Detailed analysis of the local consultation suggests that with regards to parks, the relative importance of the key components is shown below. These scores have been used to weight the site assessments.		
Component of quality	Proportion of possible total responses received	Weighting
Security and safety	32%	1
Cleanliness and maintenance	43%	3
Vegetation	52%	4
Ancillary accommodation	39%	2

Setting provision standards – accessibility

- 4.18 The accessibility of sites is paramount in maximising usage as well as providing an opportunity for all people to use the site. The recommended local standard is set in the form of a distance threshold and is derived directly from the findings of the local consultations.
- 4.19 Site specific accessibility issues were also analysed as part of the site visits where information and signage, transport and general access issues were assessed.
- 4.20 Consultation and analysis has shown that the key issues with regards accessibility are:
- there is a preference for walking to local parks and gardens, both in terms of current travel patterns and expectations. While residents in the urban area expect to walk, there is an expectation that people living in the more rural areas of the Borough will drive
 - 53% of young people highlighted that the proximity of a space to their home is a key determinant of the likely level of use that a site will have. This reinforces the importance of local access for people of this age group. Residents at drop in sessions felt that there is a requirement for not only large, centrally located parks and gardens but also smaller facilities, accessible on foot to local communities. This again reinforces the importance of access to local parks

SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

- the need for improved public transport to reach parks and gardens was frequently raised
- site assessments suggested information and signage was particularly good at the majority of parks. Further scores showed the general access to the sites was deemed to be good.

PG2	Consider the location of public transport links when identifying the appropriate location for the future provision of parks and gardens across Telford. Additionally, attempts should be made to improve access to public parks.
------------	--

4.21 The recommended local accessibility standard for parks and gardens is summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

Accessibility Standard (see Appendix H)

Recommended standard
15 MINUTE WALK TIME (720 METRES) – URBAN 20 MINUTE DRIVE TIME - RURAL
Justification
<p>Consultation illustrates an emphasis in favour of walking to local parks and gardens both in terms of current travel patterns and aspirations of local residents.</p> <p>The standard for urban areas is therefore set at 15 minutes (720 metres) walking to local parks and gardens, based on the 75% threshold level Borough wide (as advocated in the PPG17 companion guide). This encompasses all areas and is representative of the viewpoint of residents of all areas (due to the number of responses this information can be said to be statistically robust). While this is 10 minutes, setting the standard at 15 minutes provides a more realistic target and is in line with the 75% threshold.</p> <p>Given that parks tend to be larger more strategic facilities offering a range of activities it would not be realistic to expect this type of facility within a shorter walking time and also within each village, therefore, a drive time of 20 minutes has been set for the rural areas, in light of the findings from the household survey. This is supported by the consultation undertaken in the rural area, where it can be seen that residents expect to travel by car, with the 75% level being 20 minutes.</p> <p>Setting separate accessibility standards is reflective of the fact that further provision should be made within the urban areas that are currently outside of the proposed accessibility catchment due to the density of population in these areas. This is not to suggest that the Council should not be pursuing improvements to the accessibility of these areas for rural residents (such as public transport networks etc), but rather offers an approach that facilitates the usage of these areas and increases their value locally.</p> <p>Setting a standard at this level will enable the Council to strike a balance between quantitative improvements in accessibility deficient areas and also on improving the quality of existing sites.</p>

*a straight-line distance of 720m has been used rather than the pedestrian distance of 1200m. This is based on average walking distances reduced by a factor of 40% to account for the fact that people do not walk in straight lines. The 40% factoring is based on the approach set out in the NPFA Six Acre Standard.

Applying provision standards

- 4.22 The application of the recommended quantity, quality and accessibility standards is essential in understanding the existing distribution of open space sport and recreation facilities and identifying areas where provision is insufficient to meet local need.
- 4.23 The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately.
- 4.24 The application of the local standard for each area is seen in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3 – Application of quantity standard

Analysis areas	Future provision (2016) in hectares balanced against local standard (0.07 hectares per 1000 population)
Telford north west	-2.52
Telford north east	-2.50
Telford central	-0.15
Telford south	2.92
Newport	0.57
Overall	-2.79

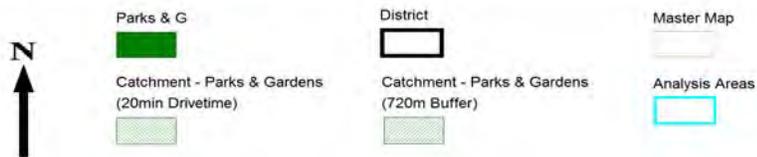
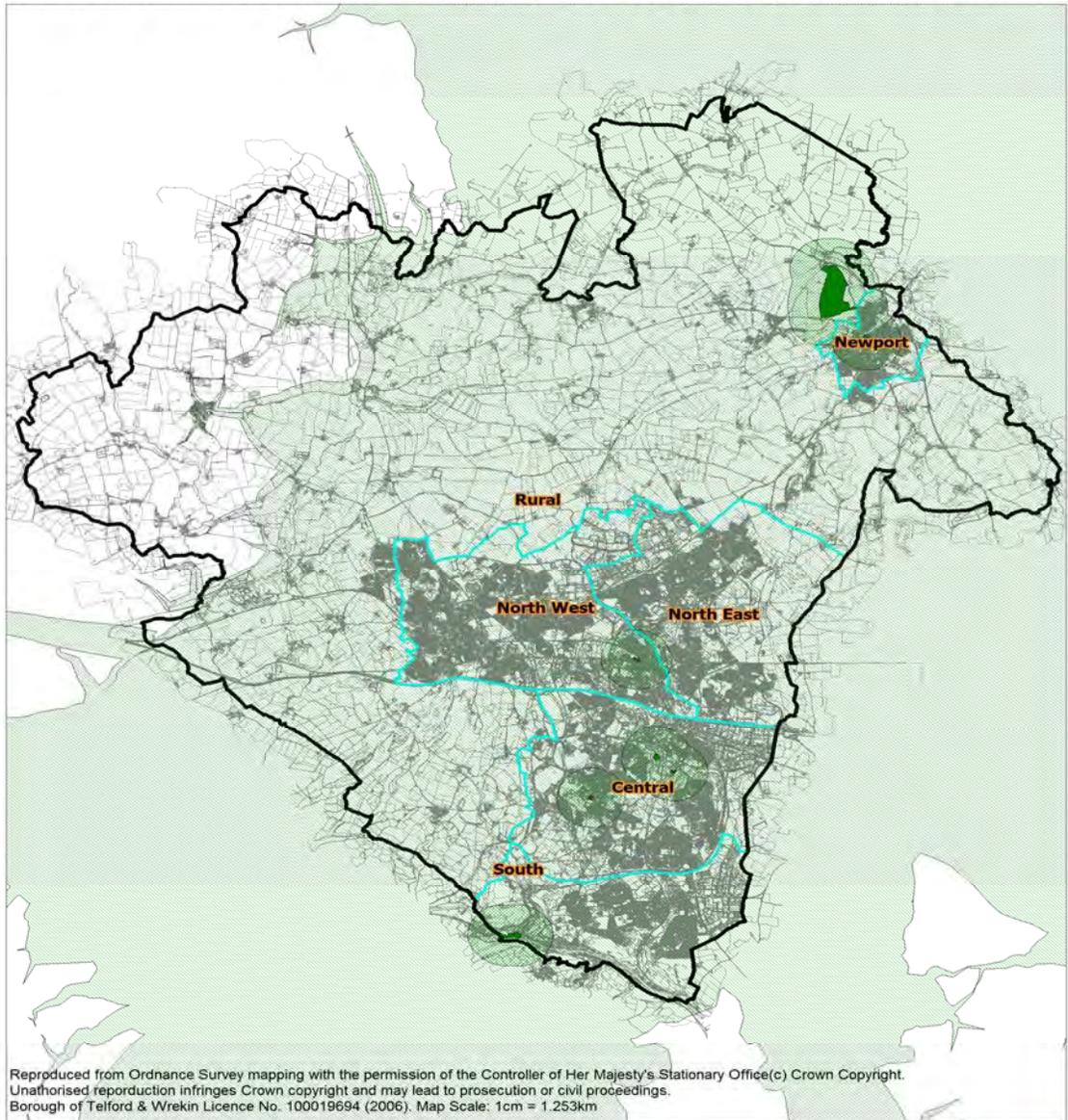
Green = above the standard, Red = below the standard.

- the local quantity standard has been set just above the current level of provision, meaning that additional park area is required to meet the recommended local standard
 - when comparing the provision per 1000 population against the local standard of 0.07, only provision in Telford south (2.92) and Newport (0.57) exceed the minimum standard. The remaining three analysis areas all show deficiencies leading to an overall deficiency of -2.79ha.
- 4.25 The application of the local accessibility standards for parks and gardens is set out overleaf in Map 4.1.

SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

Map 4.1 - Provision of parks and gardens in Telford and Wrekin

Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments, Parks & Gardens



SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

- 4.26 As can be seen in Map 4.1, application of the local accessibility standard (for the rural area) indicates that the majority of residents living outside of Telford town are within the recommended 20-minute drivetime of a park and garden. Only those residents to the far west of the Borough cannot access a park within 20 minutes.
- 4.27 In contrast, there are significantly higher expectations in the urban area of the town and there are numerous residents outside of the recommended catchment area (15 minute walk) of a park.
- 4.28 Telford Town Park is a large site comprising of a variety of different types of open space, including formal park provision, facilities for young people and children and natural and semi natural areas. It provides a wealth of opportunity in the central area of the Borough for local residents and is a strategic site, attracting visitors from a far greater distance than a 15 minute walk. Residents from other areas of the West Midlands are thought to frequently visit Telford Town Park.
- 4.29 The significance of Telford Town Park should not be underestimated as a strategic venue, which also meets a local need for many residents of the town. However the presence of the large strategic site does not negate the need for smaller, localised parks in close proximity to residents' homes.

Applying the quantity, quality and accessibility standards

- 4.30 The current supply of parks and gardens is slightly below the recommended local standard of 0.07 hectares per 1000 population (urban area), reflecting a desire from local residents for a greater number of local formalised open spaces. This is reflected in the accessibility mapping, which highlights that there are some significant accessibility deficiencies across the urban area.
- 4.31 Despite the presence of significant accessibility deficiencies, the distribution of existing parks and gardens is even, with few overlapping catchment areas.

PG3	Given the low number of sites within the Borough, all park and garden sites should be afforded protection.
------------	--

- 4.32 The quality of parks is predominantly good, with only Victoria Park and Hartshill Park achieving scores below 80%. In light of the low numbers of parks and the value placed on parks, the quality of these sites should be maintained and any sites not reaching the quality vision be improved.

PG4	Strive to achieve the recommended quality vision at all sites across the Borough and target improvements at sites where quality does not reach this level.
------------	--

- 4.33 As highlighted, Telford Town Park is a focal point for both residents of the Borough and visitors travelling into the Borough. As well as acting as a key strategic site, the park also meets the local needs of some residents living within the central Telford area. Telford Town Park, particularly the northern area, was perceived to be the highest quality site in the Borough.

SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

4.34 In light of the importance of the park to residents and the role of the park in both local community life and attracting visitors to the area, the principles set out in the Telford Town Park strategic framework should be supported, specifically:

- develop Telford Town Park to provide a public green space and recreational resource of regional significance
- achieve sufficient quality of provision to promote the park as a national example of best practice in park design and management
- develop a sustainable approach to the evolution of the park to secure its long term role at the heart of Telford Town Centre for future generations
- fully integrate the park with any future redevelopment of Telford town centre to improve the spatial and visual relationship between the two and maximise benefit for the park from this relationship
- provide a flexible management tool for Telford Town Park which the Borough of Telford and Wrekin can use to guide future changes within and adjacent the park.

PG5	Continue to develop and enhance Telford Town Park to ensure that it meets both local and regional needs. Promote the park as a resource for local people and an example of good practice regionally.
------------	--

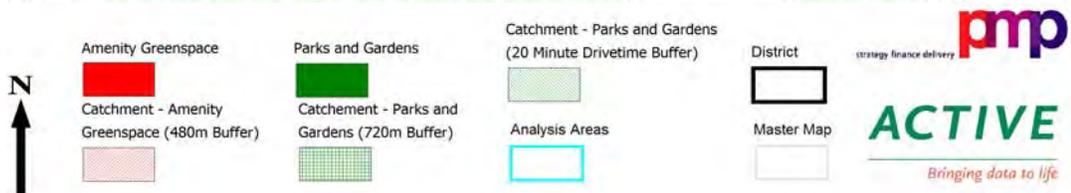
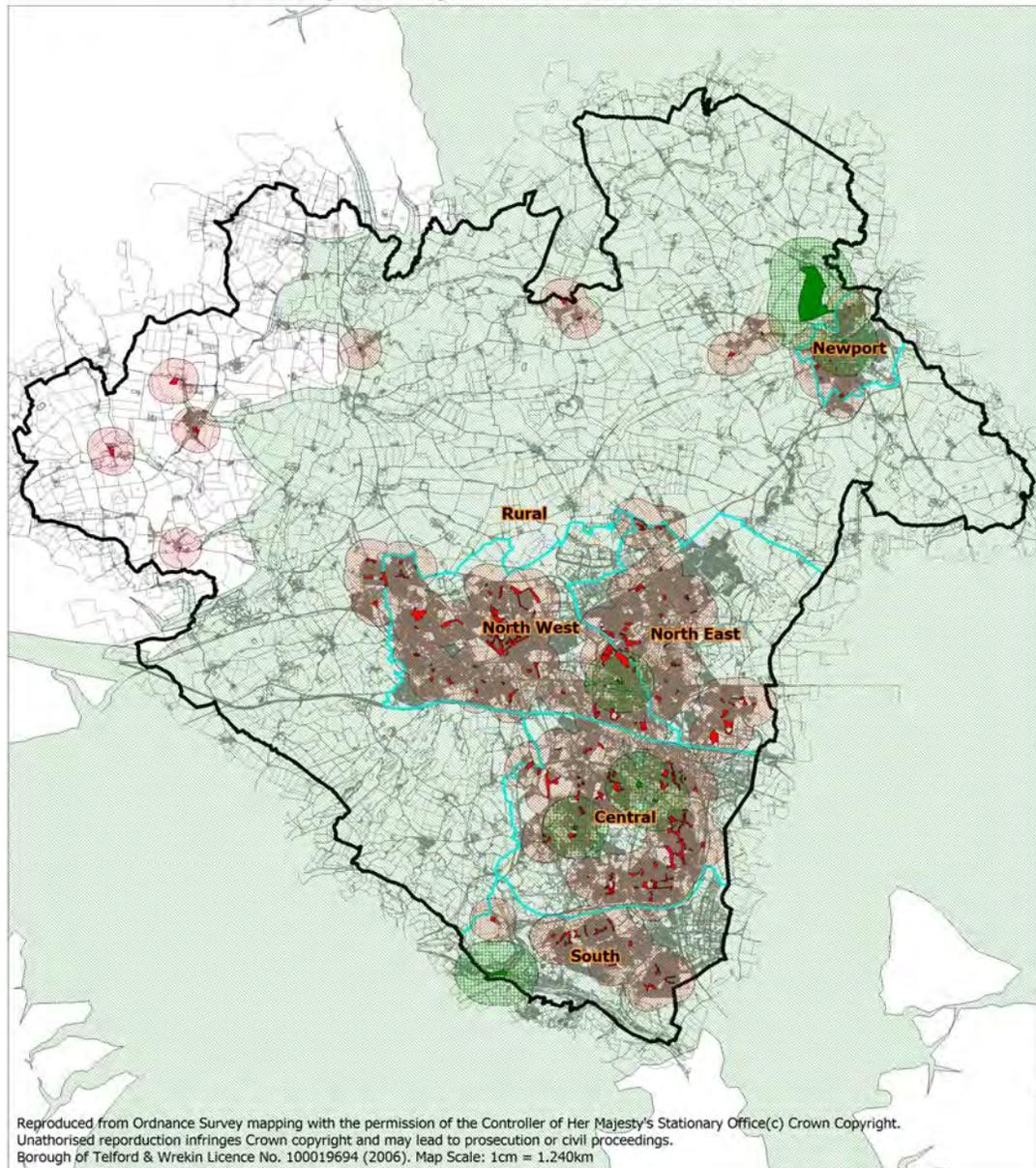
4.35 Despite the high quality of Telford Town Park, residents placed an emphasis on the need for local parks and hence a challenging accessibility standard of 15 minutes walk (720m) was set.

4.36 In order to maximise the benefit of new parks, new facilities should be targeted in locations that are currently lacking in provision. Moreover, in order to ensure that the maximum number of residents are within the accessibly catchment of parks and gardens, any new site should be located so that there is no overlap with the catchment of existing parks.

4.37 Map 4.2 overleaf illustrates the provision of parks in the context of amenity space in the area. The presence of amenity space in areas deficient of parks provide an opportunity to formalise these spaces and better meet the needs of local residents. Examples are provided overleaf. It should be noted that these are examples for consideration only and that other sites may also be appropriate (or more appropriate).

Map 4.2 - Provision of amenity space and parks and gardens

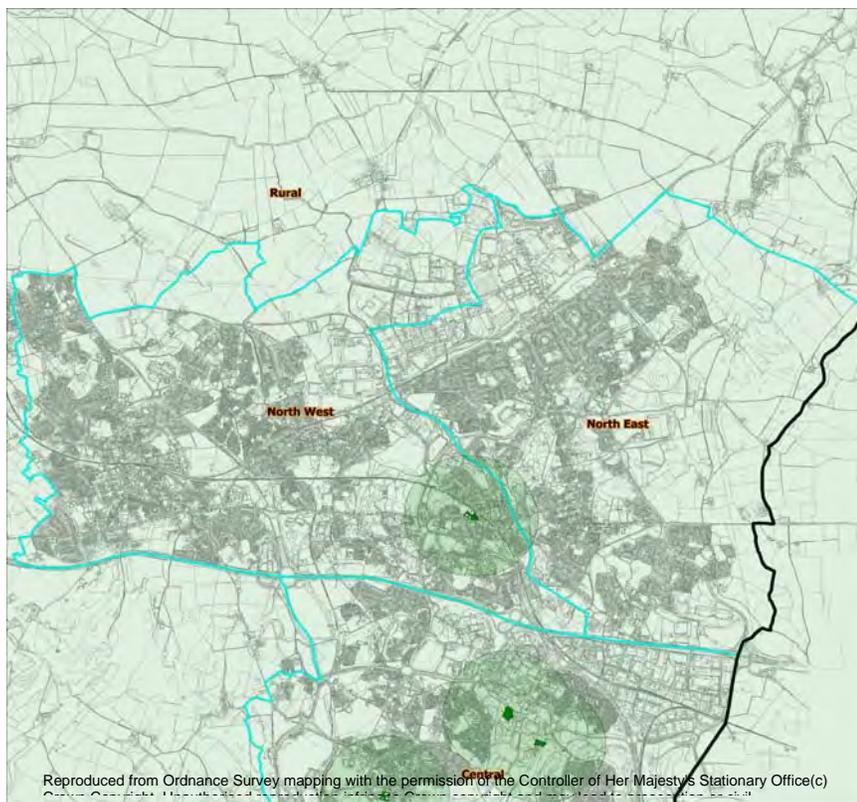
**Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments,
Amenity Greenspace and Parks & Gardens**



SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

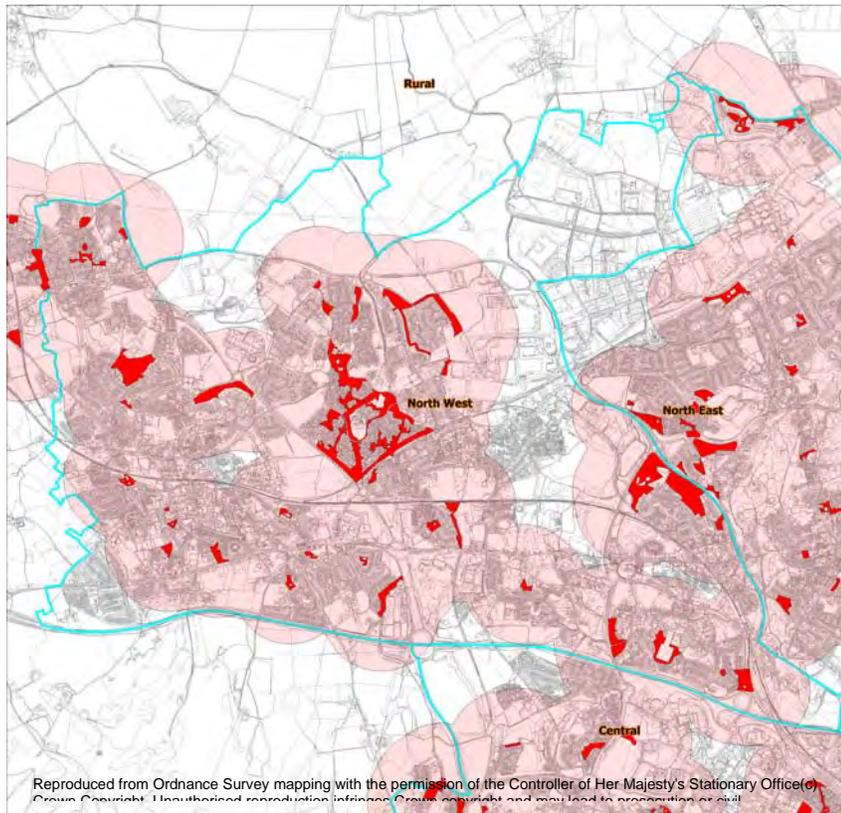
- 4.38 Amenity green space fulfils many of the same roles as parks and where parks are provided within a 10-minute catchment (the recommended distance threshold for amenity space – set in section 6) they may negate the need for further provision of amenity space (as a higher order facility they provide a greater range of facilities). This is discussed in section 6.
- 4.39 Application of the accessibility standards highlights a particular lack of parks to the north of Telford town, with only Hartshill Park (site ID 271) located within this area. As a result, the greatest quantitative deficiencies (-2.52 and -2.50 respectively) can also be found in this area. Moreover, Hartsill Park was highlighted as one of the poorer quality sites within the Borough achieving a score of 64%. The area of deficiency is highlighted below in Figure 4.1. Deficiencies in areas of higher deprivation are of particular importance.

Figure 4.1



- 4.40 Although there are deficiencies in parks in the north west of Telford, the area is particularly well served in terms of amenity green space, with 40 sites of a variety of sizes situated in the area. Opportunities to upgrade one or more of these sites into a park to offset existing deficiencies should be taken where possible. Chockleys Drive (Site ID 387), Leegomery Pools (Site ID 331), Wombridge Road (Site ID 412), Constable Drive (site ID 109) and Severn Drive (Site ID 698) are all particularly large facilities in the area (see Figure 4.2) and are therefore examples of potential sites that could be upgraded to a park.

Figure 4.2



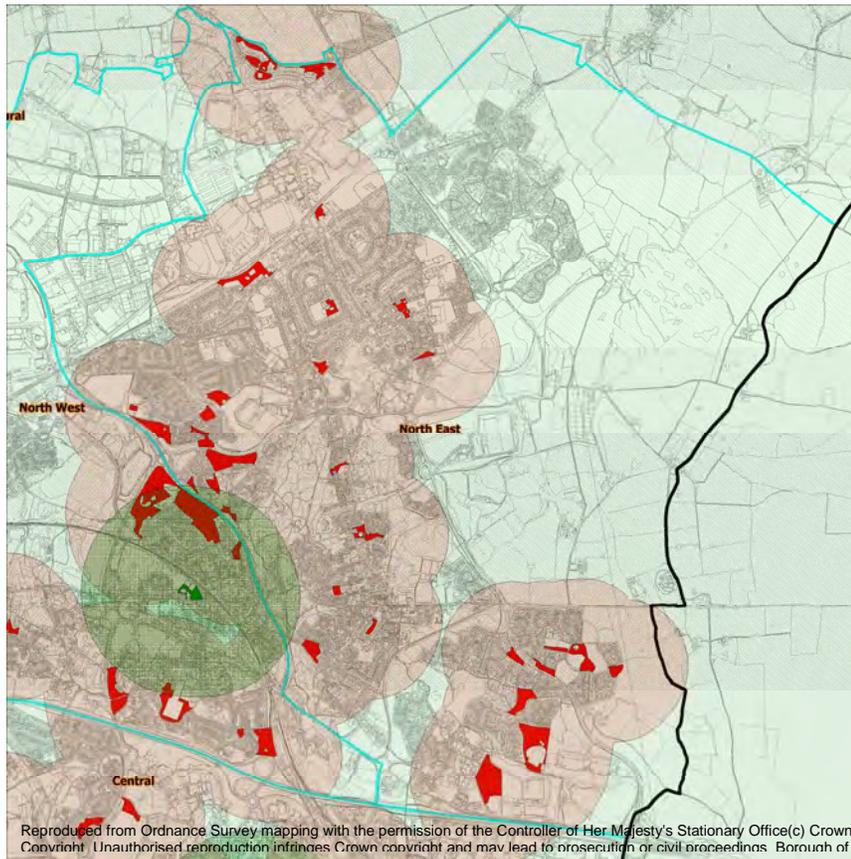
4.41 Despite shortfalls in provision, Bowring Park is located within this area and although considered to be primarily a sports facility, it also offers significant recreational opportunities.

PG6	Investigate opportunities for providing at least one additional park within the north west of Telford through the formalisation of an existing amenity green space. The new park should encompass the recommendations set out within the recommended quality standard.
------------	--

4.42 As in the north west of Telford, it has been highlighted that the north east of the town is also deficient in parks. Although it can be seen on Figure 4.3 that the provision of amenity green space is lower in this area, there remain several opportunities to formalise amenity green space. Particular priority should be given to provision in Donnington, an area of higher deprivation and therefore reduced mobility. Humber Way AGS (Site ID 122) already contains a play area and some informal sports facilities and could therefore be upgraded into a park. Other sites of similar nature should also be investigated.

4.43 Deficiencies within this area of parks, and amenity green spaces which could be upgraded into parks are illustrated overleaf.

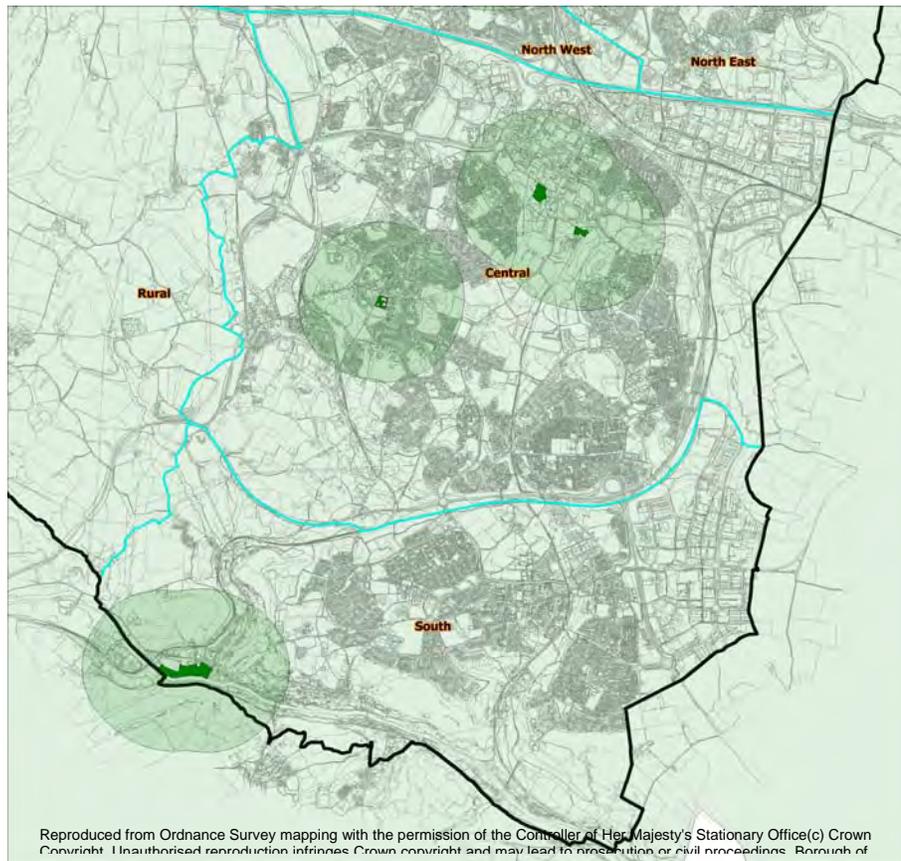
Figure 4.3



PG7	Consider the redesignation of amenity green space within the north east of Telford in order to meet identified deficiencies in the provision of parks.
------------	--

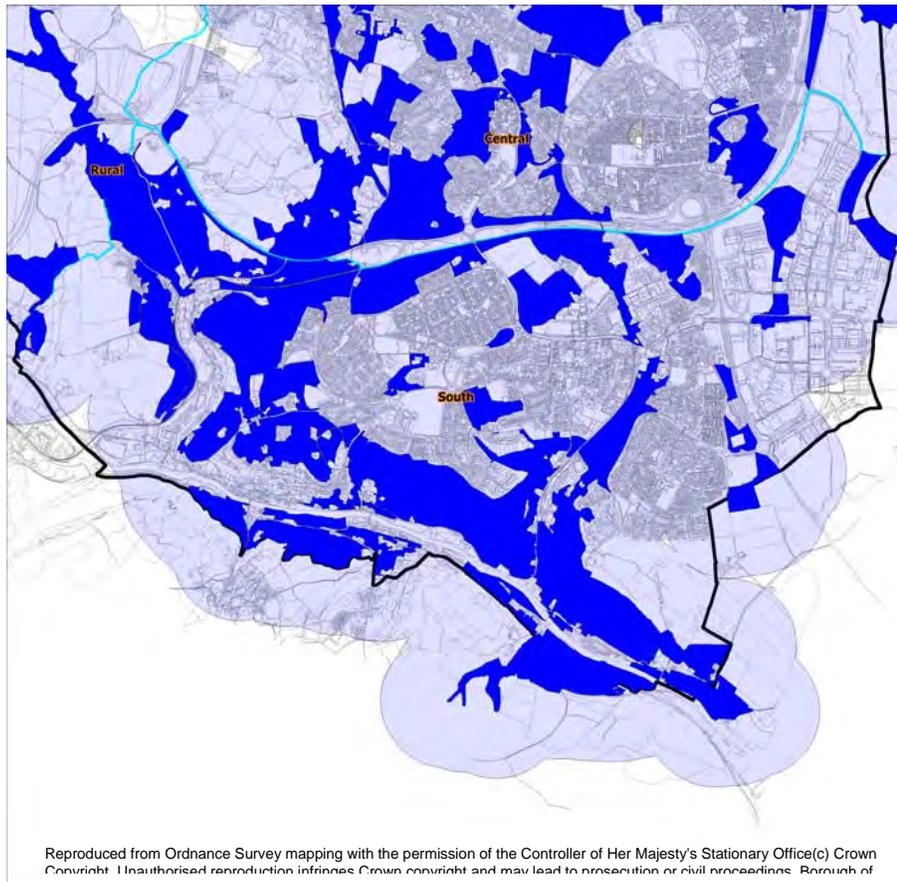
- 4.44 While there is sufficient provision in quantitative terms to meet the needs of residents living in the southern and central areas of the Borough, Figure 4.4 overleaf illustrates areas of Madeley, Woodside, Cuckoo Oak and Ironbridge Gorge that fall outside of the catchment area for a park. Access issues in Woodside are of particular importance in light of the deprivation and associated lower mobility in this area.

Figure 4.4



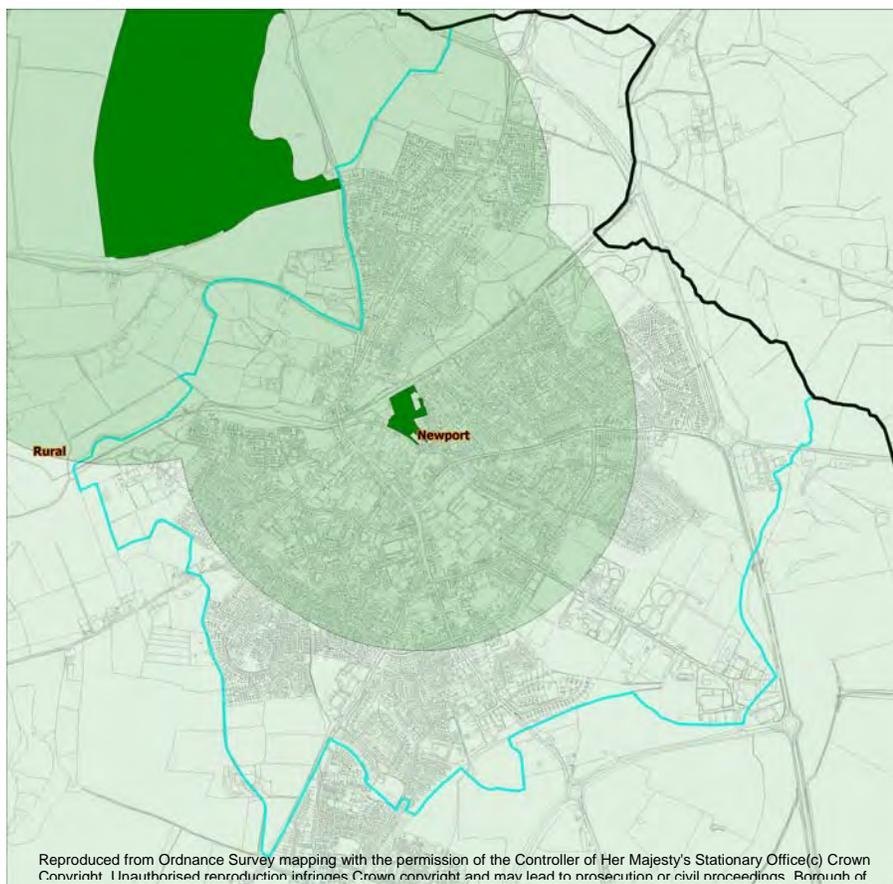
- 4.45 Given that there is only one park located within the Southern area (Dale End Riverside Park, Site ID 224, located in the more affluent Ironbridge ward), provision of at least one new park should be considered. There are large quantities of natural open space which could be adapted to fulfil the function of a park. Several sites in the area provide opportunities to meet deficiencies, these potentially could be developed into a linear park. Suggested natural and semi natural open space sites are displayed overleaf (Figure 4.5):

Figure 4.5



- 4.46 Despite having sufficient quantitative provision when measured against the local standard, the accessibility catchment highlights a small area of deficiency to the south and east of the Newport analysis area (see Figure 4.6 overleaf). Victoria Park is currently the only park meeting the needs of residents in the Newport area. Furthermore, the quality of Victoria Park was deemed to be the lowest quality of all parks in Telford and Wrekin.

Figure 4.6



PG8	Prioritise improvements to Victoria Park in Newport taking into account the recommended quality vision.
------------	---

4.47 There are limited opportunities to convert amenity spaces or natural areas to parks in the south of Newport, as there are deficiencies in the provision of both of these types of open space within the local area. Baddeleys Well natural area (Site ID 80) to the south of Newport could potentially provide an opportunity to combine the provision of natural open space with a more formalised park. The site is currently perceived to be overgrown and in need of improvement. Other sites, similar in nature, should also be considered.

PG9	Identify opportunities to provide a further formal park to meet the needs of residents living to the south of Newport. Consider the provision of a natural park to complement the facilities available at Victoria Park.
------------	--

4.48 As highlighted, while existing provision is focused within the urban areas of Telford and Wrekin, almost all residents within the rural area are within a 20-minute drive time of parks. The rural area also has access to countryside where there are opportunities for recreation.

SECTION 4 – PARKS AND GARDENS

4.49 While there is little or no provision of formal parks within the rural area, provision is not considered to be a priority in light of access to Telford and Newport urban areas. The focus for investment in rural areas will be discussed later in this report. However, in light of the reliance on rural residents to travel to access formal parks, improvements to public transport links should be prioritised where possible in order to facilitate this. This is important in both the rural and urban areas and is reinforced through recommendation PG2.

Summary

- 4.50 Parks and gardens were perceived to be particularly important to local residents, both in the rural and urban areas and were one of the most frequently used types of open space within Telford and Wrekin, with 34% of respondents to the household survey indicating that they use them weekly and 11% visiting parks daily. Only 7% of respondents indicated that they never visit parks at all. Parks were also a key theme of the drop in sessions. The wider benefits of parks were also recognised.
- 4.51 The quality of parks and gardens varies across the Borough, with quality scores ranging from 58% to 100%. Telford Town Park was highlighted as an example of good practice and the site attracts both the local community and residents from far afield.
- 4.52 Although the importance of maintaining the high quality of the existing park stock is recognised, application of the accessibility standards highlights some key deficiencies in provision particularly in South and North Telford. In light of the emphasis placed on access to local formal parks by residents, addressing these deficiencies is considered to be a priority for action.
- 4.53 It is important to note that deficiencies will escalate quickest in the areas that will see the greatest level of growth under the LDF. In almost all areas, formalising existing amenity or natural areas can address the identified shortfalls.

SECTION 5

NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

Natural and semi natural open space

Introduction and definition

- 5.1 This type of open space includes woodlands, urban forestry, scrubland, grasslands (eg downlands, commons, meadows), wetlands, nature reserves and wastelands with a primary purpose of wildlife conservation and biodiversity within the settlement boundaries. Natural and semi natural open space can frequently be found within other open space types, and in some instances there may be some sites classified as amenity green space or parks that play a similar role to natural and semi natural open space sites. This serves to highlight the overlap between typologies. In particular, natural and semi natural sites often offer important opportunities for play.
- 5.2 In line with PPG17, larger sites that sit outside of settlement boundaries have been excluded from the audit and calculations, however it is important to consider the role that these sites play in alleviating deficiencies and providing resources for both residents and wildlife. This will be returned to later in this section. This is of particular importance in Telford and Wrekin as vast areas of accessible countryside and natural areas surround the dense urban area. Settlement boundaries refer to the built up area of the village and follow the boundaries outlined in the Wrekin Plan.
- 5.3 Although natural and semi natural open space plays a key role in wildlife conservation and biodiversity the recreational opportunities provided by these spaces are also important. In this respect, natural and semi natural open spaces play a similar role and function to that of amenity green space. It is essential that a balance between recreational use and biodiversity and conservation is achieved.
- 5.4 This section outlines the strategic context and key consultation findings relating to natural and semi natural open space within Telford and Wrekin, with the conclusion of this section being the development of local standards. These local standards are then applied in the context of existing provision, with due consideration to the provision of parks and amenity green space (which fulfil similar roles).
- 5.5 The key issues for natural and semi natural open spaces arising from a review of strategic documents are:
 - various policy statements within the **Wrekin Local Plan** relate to natural and semi natural open space, specifically; OL4/6 states that the Council will protect the green network and open land from development within the Borough. OL11 states that the Council will seek to retain and enhance the contribution that trees and woodland make to the landscape character of the Borough. OL12 seeks contributions from new developments to aid the protection and appropriate enhancement of important ecological or archaeological sites and wildlife habitats that may be adversely affected by the development

- the **Telford and Wrekin Community Strategy 2006-2011** outlines how the quality of life can be improved across the Borough covering a wide range of economic, social and environmental issues. One of the six shared community priorities focuses on creating a sustainable and quality environment, managing the growing pressures on the local environment, providing viable alternative transport solutions to the car, creating quality public space and conserving and enhancing the Borough's unique environment
- a **Tree & Woodland Strategy for The Borough (Consultation Draft)** acknowledges the value of trees and woodland and their contribution to the character and environment of the Borough and commits to maintain and enhance these areas. The vision of the strategy is: "A landscape rich in trees and woodland, diverse in age range and species, managed sustainably to provide an accessible, safe, attractive and high quality environment for the people and wildlife of the Borough" and centres on four key themes; protection and development, maintenance and enhancement, trees and the public, and risk management
- **Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report** - the report outlines the social, environmental and economic sustainability objectives. Policy EN3 focuses on enhancing and protecting the quality of the natural environment
- **Shropshire Biodiversity Action Plan** - The SBAP provides a detailed outline of the work necessary for the conservation of 55 species and 22 habitats, covered in 50 plans. 10 key challenges are set out in the SBAP, with the following challenges having particular relevance to this study: The SBAP illustrates the importance of the protection and proactive development of areas of natural habitat.

Consultation – Assessing Local Needs

5.6 Consultation undertaken as part of the study highlighted the following key issues relating to natural and semi natural open space:

- natural and semi natural open spaces are the most frequently used types of open space in Telford, with 24% of residents visiting these spaces daily and a further 33% visiting them weekly. This reinforces how highly valued these spaces are to residents of the Borough
- in addition to the recreational value of natural resources, residents also frequently recognise the wider benefits of natural open spaces, particularly in terms of providing opportunities for biodiversity and habitat creation. Some local natural areas also provide an educational experience through interpretation boards and signage, and these were perceived to be of particular value by local residents
- natural and semi natural open spaces, alongside areas of countryside, were perceived to be a key part of the character of Telford and Wrekin and the value placed on these sites was clear. The need to protect these sites from development was a key theme throughout all consultations.

Quantity of existing provision

- 5.7 The provision of natural and semi natural open space in Telford and Wrekin is summarised in Table 5.1 overleaf. Eight sites have been excluded from the quantity calculations as they cover substantial areas (ranging from 50ha to 273ha). As a consequence their inclusion would skew the findings and give a misleading picture as to the amount of natural and semi natural open space.
- 5.8 The projections of likely provision by 2016 assume that the quantity of natural and semi natural open space will remain constant by 2016.
- 5.9 The eight sites excluded from the quantity calculations are:
- Castle Pools – site ID 552
 - Oil House Coppice – site ID 655
 - Loamhole Dingle – site ID 219
 - Coalport Road NSN – site ID 615
 - Lloyds Coppice – site ID 621
 - Donnington Wood NSN – site ID 247
 - Town Park NSN – site ID 458
 - Limekiln Wood – site ID 214
 - The Wrekin – site ID 217
- 5.10 However, as a recognised integral resource to the community these sites have been mapped and discussed during the application phase of the report. This reflects their role both in the design and character of the town and also as valued community resources.

Table 5.1 – Provision of Natural and semi natural open space across Telford and Wrekin

Analysis areas	Current provision	Number of sites	Smallest site (hectares)	Largest site (hectares)	LDF population (2016)	Provision (ha) per 1000 population (2016)
Telford north west	229.81	34	0.16	42.4	48,739	4.7151
Telford north east	182.31	25	0.03	37.92	35,662	5.1122
Telford central	302.19	31	0.78	44.74	45,756	6.6044
Telford south	205.02	28	0.54	21.43	23,440	8.7467
Newport	22.08	5	0.32	11.43	12,648	1.7457
Rural	229.63	20	0.5	42.57	15,855	14.4827
Overall	1071.04	143	0.03	44.74	182,100	5.8816

5.11 The key issues emerging from Table 5.1 and consultations relating to the quantity of provision of natural and semi natural open space across the Borough include:

- 49% of respondents feel the provision of natural and semi-natural open space is sufficient (about right or more than enough) and 50% feel there is nearly enough/not enough provision, highlighting a split in opinion. The most common response (44%) is that provision is about right
- looking across the individual analysis areas it is evident that the highest level of satisfaction can be found in the rural area where 60% of residents feel provision is about right/more than enough. This is reflected in the table above, with the rural analysis area containing the largest amount of provision per 1000 of the population moving towards 2016 (14.4ha)
- the lowest levels of satisfaction can be found in Telford North West and Telford Central, where 39% and 36% respectively feel provision is insufficient. As shown in the table above, Telford North West contains the second lowest amount of provision per 1000 of the population moving through to 2016
- drop in session attendees expressed a desire to protect natural and semi-natural areas, recognising them as a key part of Telford and Wrekin. Residents highlighted the importance of these spaces because of the number of possible uses and their contribution to making Telford and Wrekin a green area

SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

- there are currently 143 natural and semi natural open spaces in Telford and Wrekin. The overall level of provision is 1071.04 hectares, producing an average site of 7.48 hectares per open space. The size of sites ranges significantly – with some sites as small as 0.16 hectares whilst others are as large as 44.74 hectares. This can be explained by the broad nature of this typology
- as shown in table 5.1, there is a large variety in terms of both the number of sites and the level of provision per 1000 population. The largest number of sites is in Telford north west (34), whilst the smallest number is in Newport (5)
- Newport is also the only analysis area to contain less than 100 hectares of natural and semi natural open space, with only 22.08 hectares
- due to its substantial amount of provision and relatively small population (reinforcing the level of satisfaction felt through the consultation), the rural analysis area has been given an individual standard. The findings from this will be discussed in table 5.4 during the application phase. It is important to note that perceptions regarding the quantity of open space are likely to include those sites that have been excluded from calculation. The impact of these larger sites on perception and actual deficiencies is discussed later this section during the application of standards.

Setting provision standards – quantity

- 5.12 The recommended local quantity standard for natural and semi natural open space has been derived from the local needs consultation and audit of provision and is summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix F.

Quantity Standard (see Appendices E and F – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
6.00ha per 1000 population – Urban Standard	6.00ha per 1000 population – Urban Standard
15.30ha per 1000 population – Rural Standard	15.30ha per 1000 population – Rural Standard
Justification	
<p>The value placed on natural and semi natural open space is clear, both in terms of the recreational resource these spaces offer and the role that natural areas play in biodiversity and conservation. While the household survey reveals a split in opinion between those who perceive there to be insufficient natural areas and those who are satisfied with current levels of provision, all other consultations emphasised the protection of existing provision from development rather than the creation of new spaces.</p> <p>It is therefore suggested that the local standard is set at the existing level of provision (to protect existing provision), and that emphasis is placed on improving the quality of existing sites from both a recreational and conservation perspective.</p> <p>The green nature of Telford and Wrekin has meant several extremely large natural and semi natural open spaces exist across the Borough. These vast expanses have been excluded from the calculations because they would set an artificially high quantity standard that would be both unachievable and generate unrealistic expectations.</p> <p>The urban and rural areas show substantial differences in terms of level of provision and the density of populations. It is therefore recommended that different standards be set in order to maintain the current levels of provision across the Borough. This is justifiable in light of the different characteristics of the rural and urban environments.</p>	

Current provision - quality

- 5.13 The quality of existing natural and semi natural open space in the Borough was assessed through site visits and is set out in Table 5.2. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted as a snapshot in time and are therefore reflective of the quality of the site on one specific day.
- 5.14 The quality scores are weighted according to the findings of the local consultation. Those elements that were highlighted through consultation as being particularly important determinants of quality have been weighted higher to ensure that they have a greater influence on the overall quality score that each site achieves. In particular, the quality and variety of the vegetation was perceived to be particularly important for natural and semi natural open spaces. The full rationale behind this approach is set out in Appendix G.

SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

- 5.15 Site assessments undertaken do not consider the ecological or biodiversity value of the site in any great detail. In general terms, larger sites would be expected to have the highest potential ecological value.

Table 5.2 – Quality of natural and semi natural open space across Telford and Wrekin

Geographical area	Number of sites	Range of quality Scores (%)	Average quality scores (%)	Lowest quality sites	Highest quality sites
Telford north west	34	30%-80%	49.5%	Limekiln Lane NSN – site ID 197	Glade Way NSN – site ID 113
Telford north east	25	26%-78%	55.8%	Copperfield Drive NSN – site ID 142	Derwent Drive NSN – site ID 310
Telford central	31	30%-76%	50%	Doseley Road NSN – site ID 518	The Coppice – site ID 322
Telford south	28	38%-78%	54.1%	Orchard Lane NSN – site ID 622	Meadowpit Mound – site ID 618
Newport	5	32%-54%	44.5%	Fallow Deer Lawn NSN – site ID 916	Norbroom Park NSN – site ID 35
Rural	20	32%-72%	48%	Area Adjacent to Tibberton Primary School Field – site ID 13	Dothill NSN – site ID 701
Overall	143	26%-80%	51%	Copperfield Drive NSN – site ID 142	Glade Way NSN – site ID 113

- 5.16 The key issues emerging from Table 5.2 and the consultation relating to the quality of natural and semi natural open space include:
- findings from the household survey show a split in the perception of the quality of natural and semi-natural areas, with 53% of respondents indicating that the quality is good/very good and 46% stating the quality is average/poor
 - across the analysis areas similar results are evident. The lowest level of satisfaction is found in Newport, where 50% of residents feel the quality of natural and semi-natural open space is average/poor. A commonly cited problem was litter and this was reflected in the findings of the drop in sessions

SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

- Table 5.2 supports the findings from the consultation with Newport having the lowest average quality scores within the six individual analysis areas (44%)
- Table 5.2 also supports the split in the perception of quality, with scores ranging significantly from 26% - 80%. Therefore, a balance between quality and quantity should be established to improve the quality of current sites
- safety concerns were considered to be the key barrier to increased usage of natural open spaces
- natural features, well maintained footpaths and a variety of trees were particularly important to those residents who use natural and semi natural open spaces
- within five of the six analysis areas the highest quality sites all scored over 72% and should therefore be considered examples of good practice. Providers of other sites should aspire to achieve the same quality standard as these high quality sites
- across all six analysis areas the lowest scoring sites are below 30%. These sites should be prioritised for enhancement to help achieve the quality standard set for this type of open space.

Setting provision standards – quality

- 5.17 The recommended local quality standard for natural and semi natural open space is summarised overleaf. Full justifications and consultation relating to the quality of provision for the local standard is provided within Appendix G.

Quality standard (see Appendix G)

Recommended standard – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE		
Local consultation, national guidance and best practice therefore suggest that the following features are essential and desirable to local residents:		
Essential	Desirable	
Nature features	Good access	
Footpaths	Clean/litter free	
Flowers/trees	Dog bins	
Detailed analysis of the local consultation suggests that with regards to natural and semi natural areas, the relative importance of the key components is as follows:		
Component of quality	Proportion of possible total responses received	Weighting
Security and safety	22%	1
Cleanliness and maintenance	22%	2
Vegetation	54%	4
Ancillary accommodation	29%	3

Setting provision standards – accessibility

- 5.18 The local standard is set in the form of a distance threshold and is derived directly from the findings of the local consultations.
- 5.19 Consultation and analysis highlights that the key issues with regards accessibility include:
- the signage and awareness of natural and semi natural open spaces across Telford and Wrekin is considered to be a key issue, with many residents highlighting that the awareness of sites is poor. Signs to larger sites may increase awareness of these sites
 - 64% would walk to reach a natural and semi natural open space site
 - site assessments highlighted that information and signage was a key issue with a large number of sites scoring very poor. A lack of interpretation boards was also reflected in consultation. Interpretation boards may help to enhance the benefit to residents gained from the use of natural and semi natural open spaces
 - in terms of transport, the most common rating was average.

SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

- 5.20 The recommended local accessibility standard for natural and semi natural open space is summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

Accessibility standard (see Appendix H)

Recommended standard
10 MINUTE (480 METRES) WALK TIME
Justification
<p>Local consultation highlights the split in opinion regarding whether natural and semi natural sites should be accessed by walking or driving (24% of respondents would travel by car, whilst 64% of people stated that they would walk). To a certain extent, this will relate to the varying size and function of spaces within each locality.</p> <p>An assessment of the 75% threshold level Borough wide suggests that residents are willing to walk up to 15 minutes to a natural and semi natural open space. However, the modal response time was 10 minutes and current usage patterns show 74% of residents currently travel between 0-10 minutes to access natural and semi natural sites. Furthermore, expectations show that of those who would walk to a natural and semi natural open space, 60% would be willing to travel between 5-10 minutes. Given the high level of agreement from respondents to the household survey (namely the current usage patterns and the expectations of residents) regarding the appropriateness of a 10 minute (480 metre) walk time, it is recommended that the standard should be set at this level.</p> <p>A drive time standard would produce a significantly larger distance threshold than a walk time standard. PPG17 states that higher thresholds may be appropriate if there is no realistic possibility of sufficient new provision to allow lower thresholds to be achievable, but can result in levels of provision that are too low and may not meet some local needs. In the context of the local consultation findings regarding the quantity of provision (33% think that there is not enough as opposed to only 5% who think there is more than enough) and given the importance of facilitating everyday contact with nature, a standard based on a walk time is recommended as this will help to deliver a greater number of localised natural and semi natural spaces.</p>

*a straight-line distance of 480m has been used rather than the pedestrian distance of 800m. This is based on average walking distances reduced by a factor of 40% to account for the fact that people do not walk in straight lines. The 40% factoring is based on the approach set out in the NPFA Six Acre Standard.

Applying provision standards

- 5.21 The application of the recommended quality, quantity and accessibility standards is essential in understanding the existing distribution of open space, sport and recreation facilities and identifying areas where provision is insufficient to meet local need.
- 5.22 The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a much more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately.

SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

5.23 The application of the local standard for quantity results in the following issues:

Table 5.3 – Application of quantity standard

Analysis areas	Future provision (2016) in hectares balanced against local standard (6.00 hectares per 1000 population)
Telford north west	-62.62
Telford north east	-31.66
Telford central	27.66
Telford south	64.38
Newport	-53.81
Overall	-151.19

Analysis areas	Future provision (2016) in hectares balanced against local standard (15.30 hectares per 1000 population)
Rural	-12.96

Green = above the minimum standard, Red = below the minimum standard

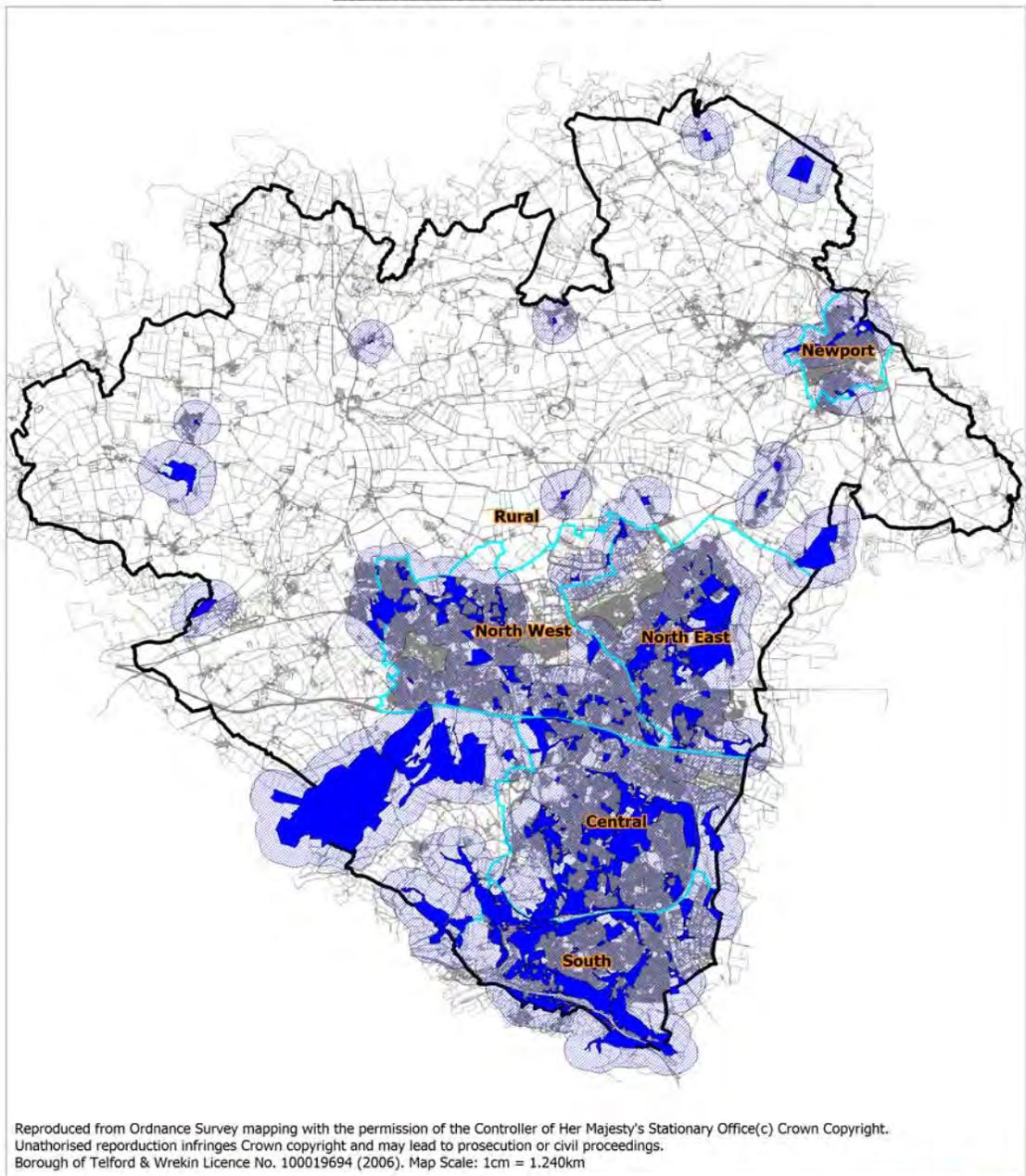
- applying the standard against the projected population in 2016 reveals that there are likely to be deficiencies in Telford North West, Telford North East and Newport
- reflecting the consultation findings, where residents of Telford North West displayed the lowest level of satisfaction, when applying the local standard up to 2016 there is a large deficiency of –62.62 hectares, the largest deficiency of all the analysis areas
- Telford Central and Telford South both have sufficient provision in positive terms when measuring the existing provision against the recommended local standard of 6.00 hectares per 1000 population suggesting that in quantitative terms, there is sufficient natural open space to meet demand

SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

- the different characteristics of the rural area and the abundance of natural and semi natural open space resulted in a different standard within this area. When comparing this to the projected future population it can be seen that provision may be slightly below the recommended minimum standard by 2016 by just over a half of the average site size in the rural area
 - it is again important to reiterate the need to analyse the application of the quantity standard alongside the accessibility standard, especially in light of the eight large strategic open spaces discussed in paragraph 5.9.
- 5.24 The application of the local accessibility standards for natural and semi natural open space is set out in Map 5.1 overleaf.

Map 5.1 - Provision of natural and semi natural open space in Telford and Wrekin

**Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments,
Natural and Semi Natural**



	Natural and Semi Natural Catchment - Natural and Semi Natural (480m Buffer)	Analysis Areas 	Master Map 	
		District 		

SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

- 5.25 As illustrated in Map 5.1, natural and semi natural open space sites are well distributed across the Borough. A major reason for this is the development of Telford New Town around vast areas of natural and semi natural open space and the distribution of natural areas is therefore largely historic.
- 5.26 Indeed it is the abundance of natural open space that many residents feel is integral and defines the character of the Borough. The need to protect these sites from development was one of the overriding themes of consultation.

NSN1	In light of the wider benefits of natural and semi natural open spaces and the expressed importance of these sites by local residents, the Council should protect all natural and semi natural sites from development.
-------------	--

- 5.27 With the exception of residents living within small rural settlements (where there is usually good access to nearby countryside) the majority of residents are able to reach at least one natural and semi natural open space site within the recommended distance threshold. Telford Town Park provides a large centrally located area of natural and semi natural open space that attracts both residents and visitors alike, despite its primary classification in Parks and Gardens.
- 5.28 The local quantity standard equates to the current Borough wide level of provision, indicating that on the whole, there is perceived to be sufficient natural open space. This encourages a focus on the enhancement of the quality of these sites as opposed to encouraging the development of more natural open space. In light of the vary nature of natural and semi natural open space, development of new sites can be both challenging and a long term process.
- 5.29 The importance of qualitative enhancements is reinforced by the findings of the site assessments, which suggest that the quality of natural areas was significantly lower than many other types of open space, with an average score of just 50%. Future efforts should therefore be concentrated into improvements to the quality of natural and semi natural spaces where it is the intention that these sites should be for public use. In some instances, the visual amenity of natural and semi natural open space may take on greater importance than the recreational benefits that the site can bring. Where this is the case, quality enhancements may be inappropriate.
- 5.30 While it is not expected that these sites will be managed in the same way as formal parks/amenity spaces, they should be inviting and controlled. Many natural sites were perceived to be poor in terms of safety and security. Ancillary features (such as signage and benches) are also a key area for improvement. Many residents indicated that they would value interpretation boards, enabling them to learn about the sites and the wildlife benefits that they offer. Consultation highlighted that vegetation was a key determinant of the overall quality of a natural site. Where qualitative improvements are made to natural and semi natural open spaces, it will be essential that these are integrated within the overall character of the site.
- 5.31 In light of the importance of the quality of natural and semi natural open spaces, the quality of existing sites has been divided into quartiles. This analysis is set out in table 5.4 overleaf and a selection of sites falling into each category is listed. A full list of all scores achieved during site assessments can be found within Appendix C. To fall within the top quartile, a score of 61% would be required.

Table 5.4 – Detailed analysis of the quality of existing sites

Above upper quartile	61% +	(90%) Town Park NSN – Central – Site ID 458 (64%) Hillside NSN – Rural – Site ID 95
Median upper quartile	51% - 60%	(60%) Holmer Lake NSN – Central – Site ID 576 (52%) Shrubbery Road NSN – North West -Site ID 265
Lower quartile	41% - 50%	(50%) Donnerville Gardens NSN – Rural – Site ID 702 (42%) Beechfields Way NSN – Newport – Site ID 36
Less than lower quartile	Below 40%	(40%) Sambrook NSN – Rural – Site ID 4 (26%) Copperfield Drive NSN – North East – Site ID 142

NSN2	Strive to improve the quality of natural and semi natural sites (where appropriate), taking into account recommendations made within the Green Space Strategy.
-------------	--

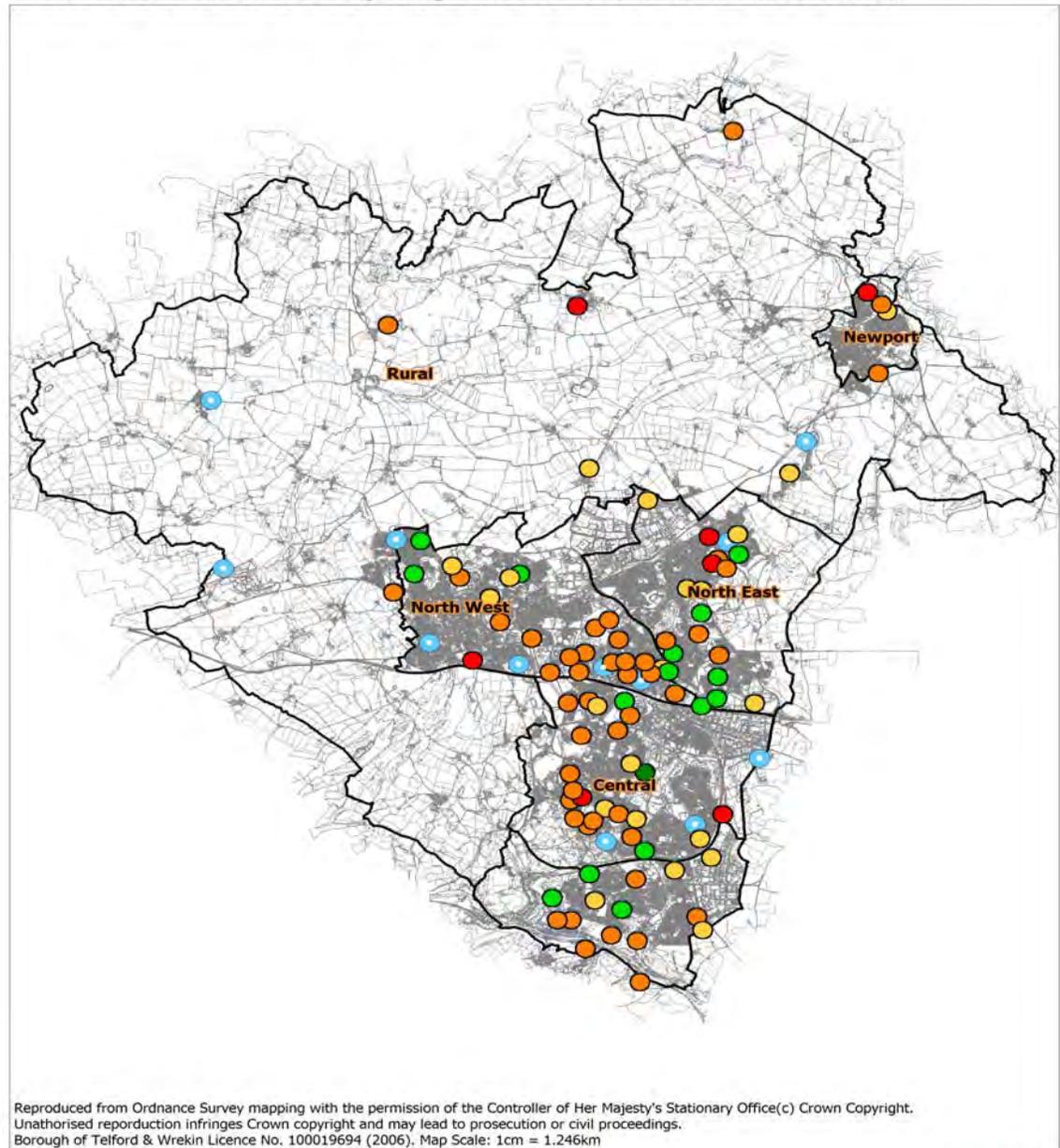
5.32 The key issues emerging from the above table and site assessments area:

- the average quality score for natural and semi natural sites in Telford and Wrekin is 51%. This highlights the need for significant qualitative improvements to this typology in the Borough
- only 24% of sites within Telford and Wrekin achieved the upper quartile quality score
- 57% of sites achieved a quality score of 50% and below, further emphasising the need for significant improvements.

5.33 The application of the quality standard for natural and semi natural open space is set out in Map 5.2 overleaf.

Map 5.2 - The quality of existing natural and semi natural sites in Telford and Wrekin

Telford and Wrekin OSS - Quality Scores, Natural and Semi Natural



SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

5.34 It can be seen that key areas for improvement of the quality of natural and semi natural open spaces include:

- Ketley and Oakengates
- Dawley Magna
- Newport North
- Ironbridge Gorge

5.35 The quality of provision of natural and semi natural open spaces should not only consider recreational opportunities, but should also take into account the biodiversity and wildlife value of the site. Many participants in consultations considered this to be imperative.

NSN3	Work to improve the quality of natural and semi natural open spaces in wards that contain a large number of low scoring quality sites. These include Ketley and Oakengates, Dawley Magna, Newport North and Ironbridge Gorge.
-------------	---

NSN4	Maximise biodiversity on natural and semi natural open spaces through the implementation of effective management and maintenance regimes.
-------------	---

5.36 Although the distribution of sites is good, it is essential to provide adequate access to these sites to ensure that they do effectively meet the local need. Site visits highlight that signage to natural sites is particularly poor. The entrance to sites is also frequently hidden. To an extent, access can depend upon the ownership of the site (and the management). Some sites may also be inaccessible due to safety considerations.

NSN5	Increase access where appropriate to natural and semi natural open space sites by ensuring that entrances to sites are visible and that appropriate signage is provided.
-------------	--

5.37 In addition to natural and semi natural open spaces located within settlement boundaries, there is also an array of larger strategic sites within the Borough (for example the Wrekin and Limekiln Wood). While these do not serve local needs within a five minute catchment, they complement the provision within settlements and ensure that residents have choice and opportunity.

5.38 Within the rural areas of the Borough, accessible countryside provides much of the natural provision for residents. It is important that this countryside is made accessible through signposting rights of way and green corridors. There are many residents living in rural villages outside of the recommended catchment area for natural and semi natural open space within their village. It is therefore essential to maximise the accessibility of the countryside.

SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

NSN6	Work to establish a network of accessible green corridors to link natural and semi natural sites within settlements to other types of local open space and also the wider countryside through the provision of appropriate public rights of way.
-------------	--

- 5.39 While the overall emphasis is on improving the quality of existing sites, the application of both the quantity and accessibility standards highlights some areas of deficiency. Opportunities to provide naturalised areas in these locations should be seized.
- 5.40 Additional provision of natural and semi natural open space should not be a priority at the moment as the current provision is satisfactory. However, there will be a need for additional natural and semi natural provision over the Local Development Framework period (up to 2016) as population increases. The qualities and characteristics of natural and semi natural provision differ from other typologies, as such, any new provision may take longer to establish.
- 5.41 New provision should be targeted in localities that are lacking. In terms of the current breakdown in provision, quantitative deficiencies can be found in the Telford North West, Newport and Telford North East areas. As discussed below, along with new provision there is potential for other typologies to help alleviate these deficiencies. Although excluded from calculations, larger sites such as The Wrekin are excluded within this analysis. The Wrekin plays a particularly important role in serving resident sin the south of the Town.
- 5.42 When considering the provision to the north of Telford town, application of the accessibility standards supports the findings of the quantity standards to an extent, as there are small deficiencies in both of these areas. These are highlighted on Figures 5.1 and 5.2: Town Park has a particularly important role to play in ensuring that the majority of residents to the north of the town are within the recommended distance threshold of at least one amenity space.

Figure 5.1

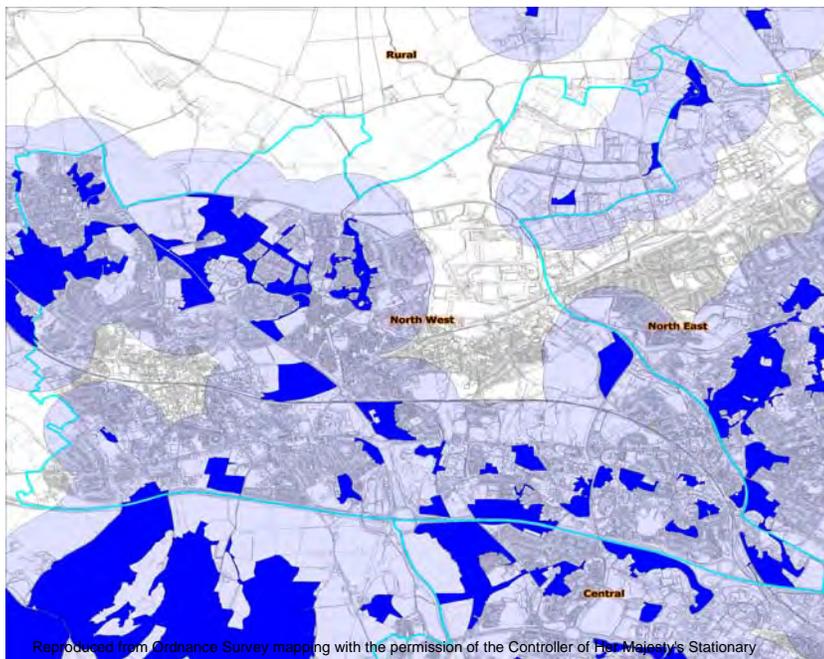
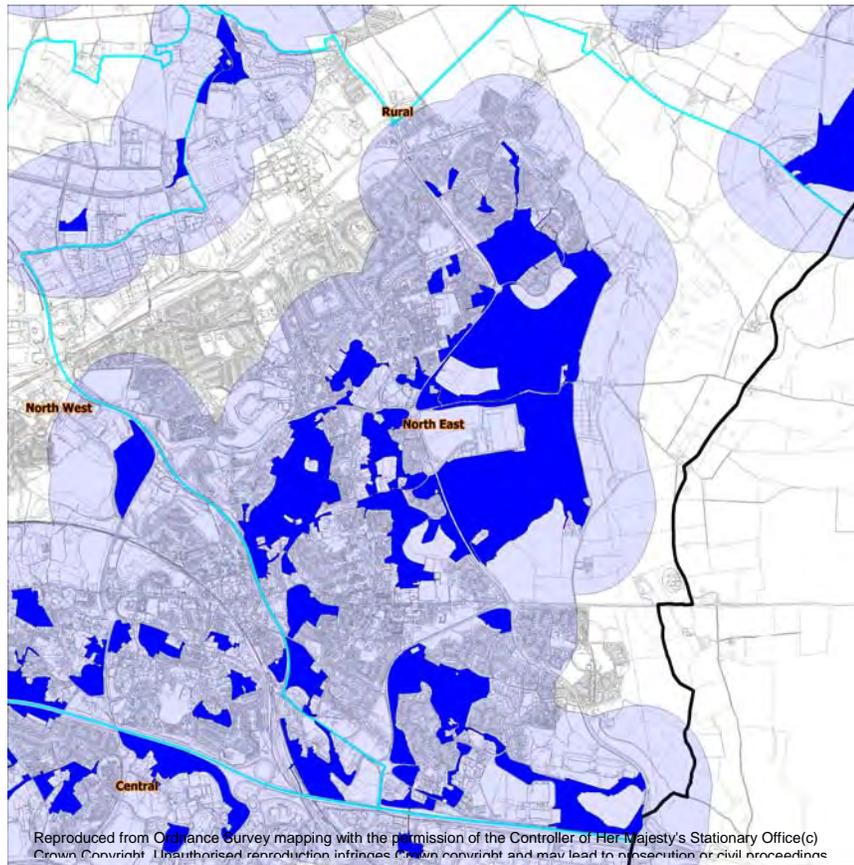


Figure 5.2



5.43 It can be seen that the deficiency to the north west (Figure 5.1, Haygate, Park and part of Hadley and Leegomery ward) is small. While opportunities for new provision should be taken, the Haygate and Park area is well served by amenity green space so residents can access some informal open space. Furthermore, although outside of the recommended accessibility catchment, a large proportion of residents in the northwest analysis area have large strategic open spaces in reasonably close proximity (eg the Wrekin). As a major recreational, landscape and wildlife resource residents may be willing to travel further to access sites such as this.

5.44 Deficiencies in this area are largely historic as a result of development patterns and industrial and mining activity. Consideration should be given to opportunities to provide an element of natural open space within a larger site of another typology. In terms of the deficiency located within the Hadley and Leegomery ward, residents also fall outside of the recommended local standard for amenity green space, meaning this area should be a priority for future provision.

NSN7	Seize opportunities to address the quantitative and access deficiencies to natural and semi natural open space within the Park, Haygate and Hadley and Leegomery areas of north west Telford.
-------------	---

SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

- 5.45 The presence of a large quantitative deficiency to the north west of the town, despite limited deficiencies in accessibility, indicates that existing sites may not have the capacity to meet the needs of local residents ie the sites are too small.
- 5.46 As consultation highlights, natural and semi natural open spaces are the most popular of all of the open spaces in the Borough. The nature of these spaces and the wildlife and habitat value offered within them means that balancing the recreational use of these sites and monitoring the impact of recreational use is essential.

NSN8	Monitor the impact of recreational use on natural and semi natural open space sites (in all areas but particularly in the north west) and ensure that recreational opportunity is balanced with biodiversity.
-------------	---

- 5.47 Quantitative shortfalls of provision are smaller to the north east of Telford, despite this, there remains a small area of residents who are outside of the catchment area for natural and semi natural spaces (illustrated in Figure 5.2, in Wrockwardine Wood and Trench and Donnington). Despite the local accessibility deficiencies, Donnington Wood is located to the far east. As a large and highly valued site, it can be expected that residents will travel further to access this open space, thus fulfilling some local need.

NSN9	Seek opportunities to address the quantitative and access deficiencies to natural and semi natural open space within the Wrockwardine and Trench and Donnington areas of Telford.
-------------	---

- 5.48 By 2016, the second largest quantitative shortfall of natural and semi natural open space will be located in Newport (-53.81ha). Analysis of the application of the accessibility standard highlights that there are small areas of existing deficiency in a belt across the central area. Assessment of the provision of parks and amenity space within Newport highlights that there are also deficiencies in similar areas, particularly on the eastern side of the town. As new provision of natural and semi natural areas is largely opportunity led, consideration should be given to the inclusion of naturalised open space within other open space types in Newport. The opportunity to maximise the function of the existing open spaces in Newport South (by designing a natural park) was also raised to offset existing deficiencies in park provision.

NSN10	Investigate opportunities to provide natural and semi natural open space on the edge of Newport. Seek to implement innovative solutions combining natural and semi natural spaces with other types of open space in order to best meet the needs of local residents and maximise the benefits derived from the available open space.
--------------	--

Summary

- 5.49 Natural and semi natural open space is the most popular of all types of open space in Telford, with 24% of residents visiting these spaces daily and a further 33 % visiting them weekly. This reinforces how highly valued these spaces are to residents of the Borough.

SECTION 5 – NATURAL AND SEMI NATURAL OPEN SPACE

- 5.50 In addition to the recreational value of natural resources, residents also frequently recognise the wider benefits of natural open spaces, particularly in terms of providing opportunities for biodiversity and habitat creation. Some local natural areas also provide an educational experience through interpretation boards and signage, and these were perceived to be of particular value by local residents
- 5.51 Natural and semi natural open spaces, alongside areas of countryside, were perceived to be a key part of the character of Telford and Wrekin and the value placed on these sites was clear. The need to protect these sites from development was a key theme throughout all consultations.
- 5.52 Application of the recommended quality, quantity and accessibility standards highlights that the key priority for natural and semi natural open space is improvements to the quality of sites. Maximising access to natural and semi natural sites both within settlements and to those in the surrounding countryside should also be a key future priority.
- 5.53 Opportunities to address locational deficiencies to the north of Telford and the south of Newport should be taken, however due to the nature of this typology, any new provision will need time to establish and mature.

SECTION 6

AMENITY GREEN SPACE

Amenity green space

Introduction and definition

- 6.1 This type of open space is most commonly found in housing areas. It includes informal recreation spaces and green spaces in and around housing, with a primary purpose of providing opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancing the appearance of residential or other areas.
- 6.2 Amenity green space is also often found in villages, in the form of village greens. Amenity green spaces can have an overlapping function with parks and gardens and natural areas and can also be used as informal areas for children's play where there are no other facilities. It is important therefore to consider the provision of amenity green spaces in the context of other types of open space.
- 6.3 Green space is a central feature of the town of Telford and is integral to its character. This has stemmed from Telford's development as a new town which integrated buildings and development with a network of functional open space. In addition to vast grass verges and green links, there are large quantities of amenity green space. As well as providing a recreational resource, these spaces provide a key contribution to the landscape and setting.
- 6.4 This section relates to amenity green spaces and sets out the strategic context, key findings of the consultations and recommended local standards. The standards are then applied, considering the adequacy of the existing amenity green space and the associated demand for these spaces. Standards are also applied in the context of other open spaces with overlapping functions.
- 6.5 The key issues for amenity green space arising from a review of strategic documents are:
- within the **Local Play Strategy 2006-2016**, the promotion of health and physical activity for children will involve informal recreation. Informal recreation on unequipped play areas fall within the amenity green space typology
 - whilst encouraging enjoyment and activity, these areas should also be safe and free from harm
 - the **Wrekin Local Plan** discusses how the application of policies and the provision of any additional formal recreational facilities –must not conflict with the retention and enhancement of areas of natural conservation, visual amenity and informal recreational value
 - the aims of the green network incorporates several features common to amenity green spaces: to retain and enhance the individual identity and/or sense of local community of parts of the town through the separation of built up areas with green wedges, being both easily accessible and relieving the feeling of congestion within the densely built up areas by introducing visual variety that people seek.

Consultation – Assessing Local Needs

6.6 Consultation undertaken as part of the study highlighted that:

- amenity green space is one of the most infrequently used of all of the types of informal open space, with only 8% of residents visiting these sites daily. 18% of residents never use amenity green space
- the lower levels of use of amenity green space in comparison to some other typologies of open space reflect the nature of amenity spaces and their location in close proximity to their home. The wider benefits of these sites were recognised by local residents, particularly the contribution to landscape benefits
- consultation highlights that the contribution of these local spaces to the overall landscape was perceived to be so significant that they were highlighted as integral to the character of the town. The quality of these sites is therefore central to their overall perceived value
- the importance of the protection of amenity green space was a key theme of many consultations.

Quantity of existing provision

6.7 The provision of amenity green space in Telford and Wrekin is summarised in Table 6.1 below.

Table 6.1 – Provision of amenity green space across Telford and Wrekin

Analysis areas	Current provision	Number of sites	Smallest site (hectares)	Largest site (hectares)	LDF population (2016)	Provision (ha) per 1000 population (2016)
Telford north west	75.3	40	0.11	11.1	48,739	1.5450
Telford north east	34.62	34	0.20	4.34	35,662	0.9708
Telford central	61.70	49	0.14	5.81	45,756	1.3485
Telford south	14.69	16	0.37	2.62	23,440	0.6267
Newport	2.60	8	0.08	0.94	12,648	0.2056
Rural	13.71	15	0.15	2.10	15,855	0.8647
Overall	202.62	162	0.08	11.1	182,100	1.1127

6.8 The key issues emerging from Table 6.1 and consultations relating to the quantity of provision of amenity green space across the Borough include:

SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

- while 32% of respondents state that there is not enough, 31% indicate that provision of amenity green space is about right. Dissatisfaction is particularly high within the Newport area of the Borough. This is reflected in table 6.1, with Newport containing the lowest amount of provision per 1000 of the population in 2016
- residents highlighted the importance of these spaces because of their contribution to making Telford and Wrekin a green area. Specific comments centred on the need to strike a balance between the quality and quantity of the amenity green spaces
- the overall level of provision in Telford and Wrekin equates to 202.62 hectares. It can be seen that this is spread unevenly across the Borough – 75.3 hectares in Telford north west and 2.60 hectares in Newport.

Setting provision standards – quantity

6.9 The recommended local quantity standard for amenity green space has been derived from the local needs consultation and audit of provision and is summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix F.

Quantity Standard (see Appendices E and F – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
1.17ha per 1000 population	1.17ha per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>While amenity green space is valued, there is a split in opinion regarding the adequacy of the current level of provision.</p> <p>Analysis indicates that there may be locational deficiencies in provision. Local access is particularly important to residents and young children, and many residents highlighted that a lack of very local provision is a key determinant of their perception of the overall quantity.</p> <p>Many residents highlighted the importance of the protection of amenity green space and expressed concerns about the loss of spaces to development. In terms of quality, while residents value amenity spaces, many highlighted a preference for sites containing a variety of facilities.</p> <p>While the findings of the household survey suggest that there are quantitative deficiencies, other consultations highlighted that quality was more important. Coupled with a preference for sites containing a range of facilities (and the difficulties with maintaining large quantities of small pieces of land), it is recommended that a standard be set at the current level of provision. This will bring out locational deficiencies and enable a focus to be placed on qualitative improvements.</p>	

Current provision - quality

- 6.10 The quality of existing amenity green space in the Borough was assessed through site visits and is set out in Table 6.2. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted as a snapshot in time and are therefore reflective of the quality of the site on one specific day.
- 6.11 The quality scores are weighted according to the findings of the local consultation. Those elements that were highlighted through consultation as being a particularly important determinant of the quality of green spaces have been weighted higher to ensure that they have a greater influence on the overall quality score that each site achieves. In particular, the quality and variety of the vegetation was perceived to be particularly important for amenity green spaces. The full rationale behind this approach is set out in Appendix G.

Table 6.2 – Quality of amenity green space across Telford and Wrekin

Geographical area	Number of sites	Range of quality scores (%)	Average quality scores (%)	Lowest quality sites	Highest quality sites
Telford north west	40	46%-90%	64.6%	Mercia Drive AGS – site ID 642	Hadley Castle AGS – site ID 324
Telford north east	34	42%-86%	63.8%	Hollyhurst Road (South) AGS – site ID 958	Hereford Drive AGS – site ID 315
Telford central	49	48%-98%	68.1%	Prince Edward Crescent AGS – site ID 450	Glendale AGS – site ID 666
Telford south	16	32%-70%	51%	Sunniside AGS – site ID 168	Withybrook AGS – site ID 591
Newport	8	50%-86%	61.2%	Masons Place AGS – site ID 34	Adams Crescent AGS – site ID 66
Rural	15	30%-93.3%	56.6%	Quarry View AGS – site ID 172	High Ercall Primary School AGS – site ID 90
Overall	162	30%-98%	63.1%	Quarry View AGS – site ID 172	Glendale AGS – site ID 666

SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

- 6.12 The key issues emerging from Table 6.2 and the consultation relating to the quality of amenity green space include:
- consultation indicated that the quality of amenity areas is perceived to be average by 42% of household respondents. A higher percentage of people stated that they were good (24%) as opposed to poor (22%)
 - the majority of respondents in four of the six analysis areas suggested that the quality of amenity green space is average. Within the two remaining areas residents felt the quality was good. The highest level of satisfaction being located in the rural area, where 51% of respondents rated the quality of amenity green spaces as good. The lowest level of satisfaction is located in Telford south, where 35% of residents feel the quality of this type of open space is poor
 - Table 6.2 reinforces the consultation findings, showing Telford south contains the lowest average quality score with 51%
 - on the whole, children and young people felt that the provision of amenity green spaces was good, with sites being perceived as clean, safe and litter free
 - seating, well kept grass and cleanliness were perceived to be essential features of a good quality amenity green space site
 - the main issue identified by residents at drop in sessions was the need for a balance between quality and quantity
 - the average quality score for amenity green spaces within Telford and Wrekin is 63%, however there is significant range in the quality of provision across the area. This reinforces perceptions expressed in consultation that there is a significant variation in the quality of sites.

Setting provision standards – quality

- 6.13 The recommended local quality standard for amenity green space is summarised overleaf. Full justifications and consultation relating to the quality of provision for the local standard is provided within Appendix G.

Quality Standard (see Appendix G)

Recommended standard – AMENITY GREEN SPACE		
Local consultation, national guidance and best practice suggest that the following features are essential and desirable to local residents:		
Essential	Desirable	
Seating	Footpaths	
Well kept grass	Flowers/trees	
Clean/litter free	Litter bins	
Detailed analysis of the local consultation suggests that with regards to amenity green spaces, the relative importance of the key components is as follows:		
Component of quality	Proportion of possible total responses received	Weighting
Security and safety	39%	2
Cleanliness and maintenance	46%	3
Vegetation	33%	1
Ancillary accommodation	50%	4
<i>Analysis suggests the improvement in quality of amenity green space is considered to be more important than increasing its provision.</i>		

Setting provision standards – accessibility

- 6.14 The accessibility of sites is paramount in maximising usage as well as providing an opportunity for all people to use the site. The recommended local standard is set in the form of a distance threshold and is derived directly from the findings of the local consultations.
- 6.15 Site specific accessibility issues were also analysed as part of the site visits where information and signage, transport and general accessibility issues were assessed.
- 6.16 Consultation and analysis shows that the key issues with regards accessibility are:
- amenity green spaces were particularly popular with the younger children (up to 11 years old) – possibly due to limited need to travel to access them. They were generally thought of as good places to meet friends

SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

- the importance of ensuring that amenity green spaces are located in close proximity to housing is further reinforced by the expectation that local residents expect to reach an amenity green space on foot
- site assessments reveal that the general access to sites is varied, with results ranging from very good to very poor. The information and signage at sites received relatively poor scores,. However, this may be a result of the nature of the typology.

6.17 The recommended local accessibility standard for amenity green space is summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

Accessibility Standard (see Appendix H)

Recommended standard
10 MINUTE (480 METRES) WALK TIME
Justification
<p>Given the large emphasis on walking rather than driving in terms of the expectations of respondents it is recommended that a walking standard is set. The expressed desire for local amenity green space throughout consultations supports the recommendation that a standard based on walking is most appropriate.</p> <p>At a Borough wide level, the 75% threshold from the household survey of 15 minutes walk, which is higher than the modal response (10 minutes). Whilst setting a standard based on the 75% threshold level of a 15-minute walk time has been considered, this has to be rationalised against the local nature of amenity green spaces and the aspiration of residents for these local open spaces through consultation. In the absence of other forms of open space, sport and recreation provision within close proximity of residents, the value of localised amenity green spaces is particularly important. This was particularly apparent during consultation with children and young people as great emphasis was placed on the importance of the provision of local open spaces.</p> <p>Applying a shorter walk time will highlight real priority areas of deficiency. Furthermore, whilst having a smaller distance threshold will reveal a larger number of accessibility deficiencies, within these areas the provision of alternative forms of open space can often substitute for provision of informal amenity green spaces. A smaller accessibility catchment will ensure all residents have local access to some type of open space, facilitating delivery of increased participation in sport and physical activity. The importance of local provision to break up the urban landscape should also not be underestimated.</p>

Applying provision standards

6.18 The application of the recommended quality, quantity and accessibility standards is essential in understanding the existing distribution of open space sport and recreation facilities and identifying areas where provision is insufficient to meet local need.

SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

- 6.19 The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately.
- 6.20 The application of the local standard for quantity results in the following issues:

Table 6.3 – Application of quantity standard

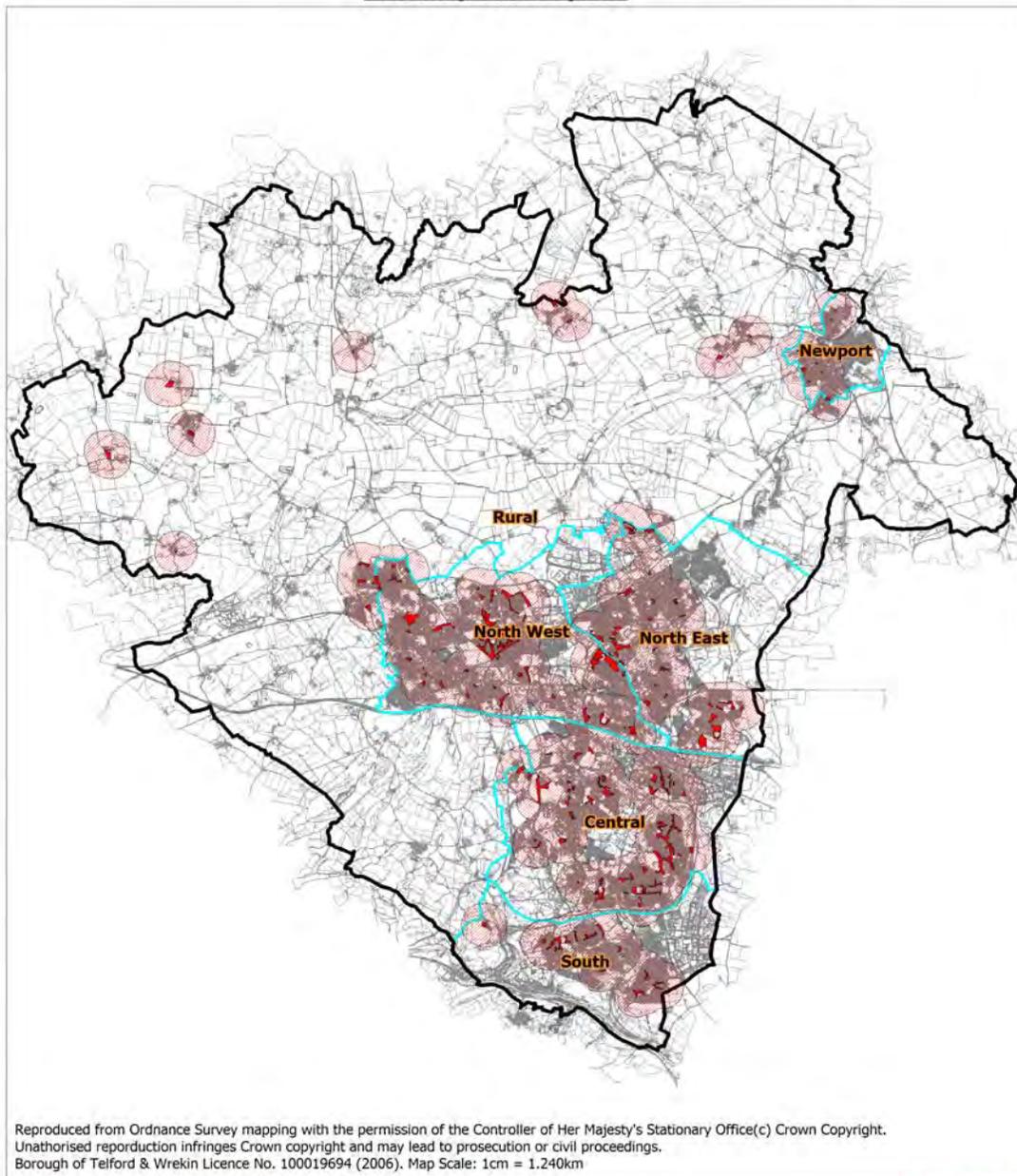
Analysis areas	Future provision (2016) in hectares balanced against local standard (1.17 hectares per 1000 population)
Telford north west	18.28
Telford north east	-7.10
Telford central	8.17
Telford south	-12.73
Newport	-12.20
Rural	-4.84
Overall	-10.44

Green = above the minimum standard, Red = below the minimum standard

- the overall standard is set at the current level of provision. By 2016, in light of population increases, there will be an overall shortfall in provision of over 10ha
 - when looking at the future provision per 1000 of the population balanced against the standard of 1.17 hectares, four of the analysis areas show a deficiency, the largest being in Telford south (-12.73 hectares)
 - two analysis areas currently have supply which exceeds the minimum standard, Telford north west (by 18.28 hectares) and Telford central (by 8.17 hectares).
- 6.21 The application of the local accessibility and quality standards for amenity green space is set out overleaf. Provision of amenity space is also considered in relation to the location of parks and gardens and this can be seen in Map 6.1. It must be noted that Figure 6.3, illustrating the results of the quality assessment considers only those sites that received a quality assessment.

Map 6.1- Provision of amenity space

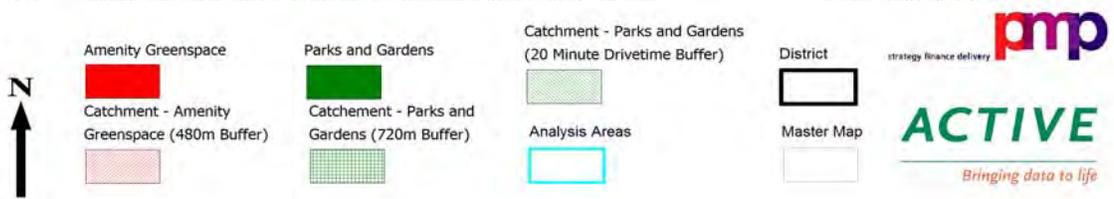
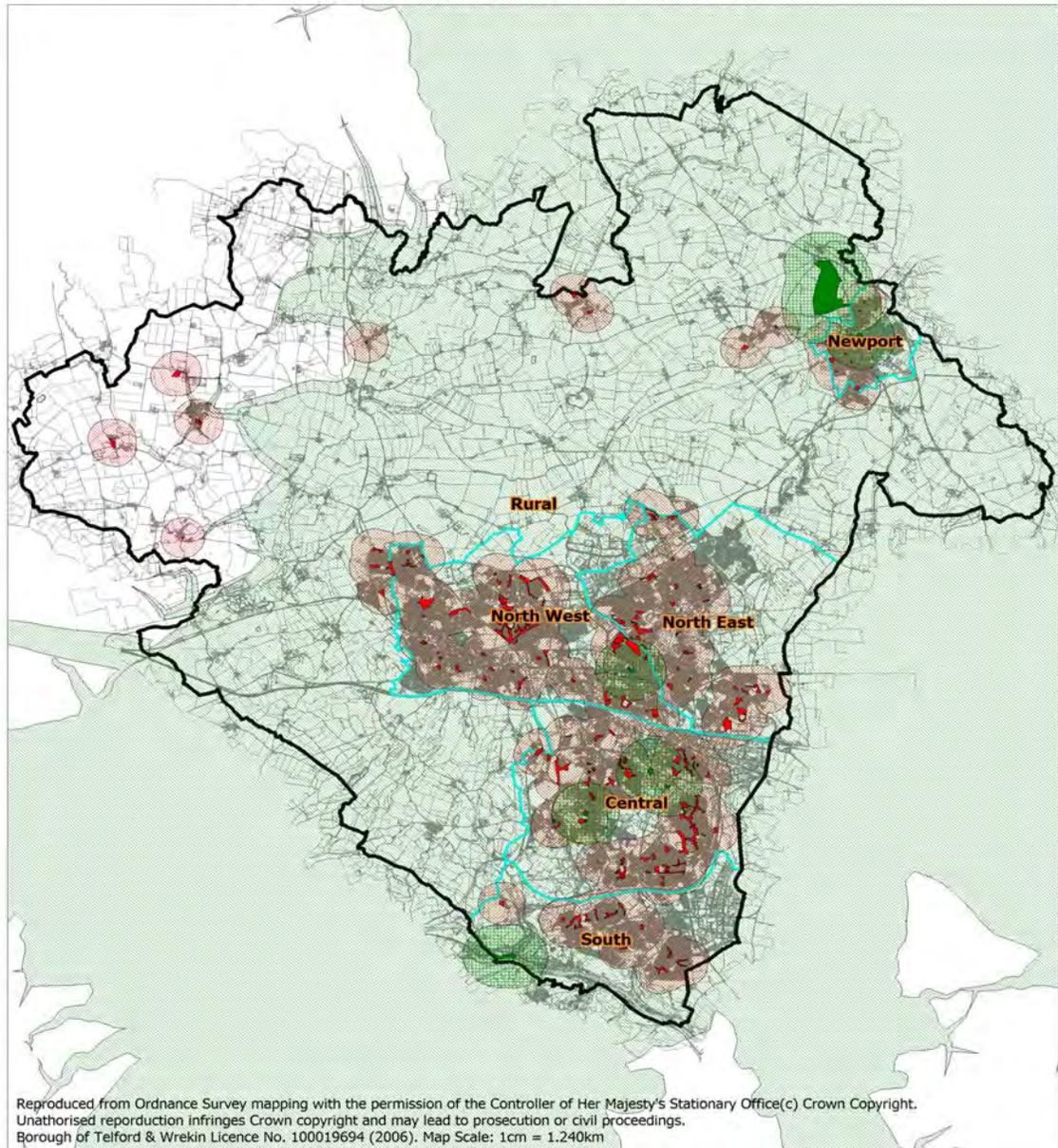
**Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments,
Amenity Greenspace**



<p>N</p>	<p>Amenity Greenspace</p>	<p>Analysis Areas</p>	<p>Master Map</p>	 <p>ACTIVE</p> <p><i>Bringing data to life</i></p>
	<p>Catchment - Amenity Greenspace (480m Buffer)</p>	<p>District</p>		

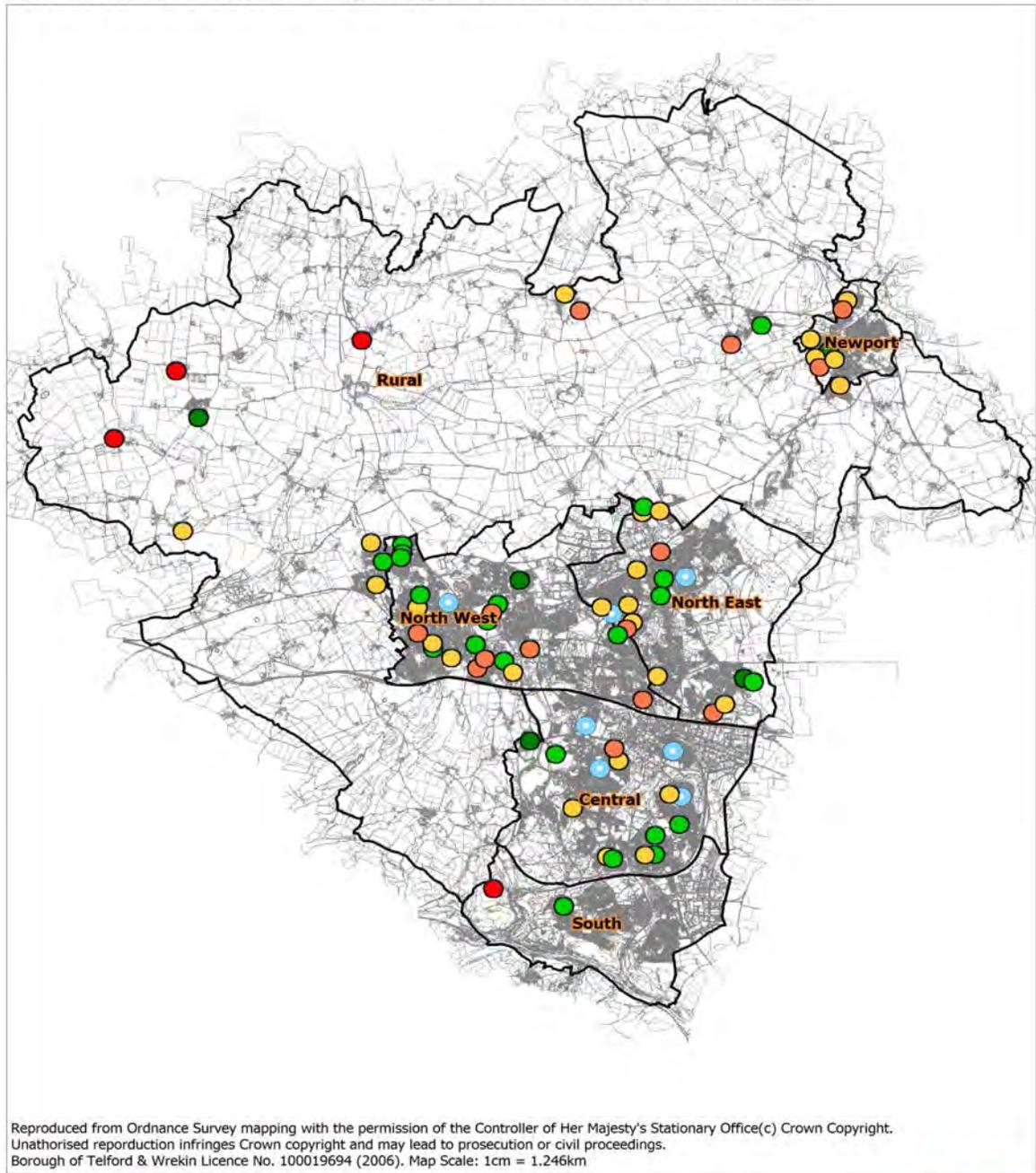
Map 6.2 – Provision of amenity space and parks and gardens

Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments,
Amenity Greenspace and Parks & Gardens



Map 6.3 – Quality of existing amenity greenspace in Telford and Wrekin

Telford and Wrekin OSS - Quality Scores, Amenity Greenspace



SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

6.22 The key issues arising from the accessibility mapping (Map 6.1) regarding the distribution of sites are:

- the application of the accessibility standard reveals several areas across Telford and Wrekin that fall outside of the 10 minute walk time catchment for amenity green space
- there is an uneven distribution of sites across the analysis areas, with several sites in close proximity to one another
- many residents outside of the catchment area for formal parks and gardens are able to access amenity green space. In some instances, residents are able to access a park but not amenity green spaces.

6.23 The key issues emerging from the quality assessments of existing amenity greenspace in Telford and Wrekin (Map 6.3) are:

- within Telford and Wrekin there is a unbalanced distribution of high quality sites in the urban areas of the District
- in the rural area there is a large number of poor quality facilities
- in Newport there is a large cluster of average to poor quality sites.

Applying the quantity, quality and accessibility standards

6.24 The current supply of amenity green space matches the recommended local standard of 1.17 hectares per 1000 population. However, the accessibility mapping shows that there are significant accessibility deficiencies within all analysis areas.

6.25 Consultation highlights the importance of obtaining a balance between the quality and quantity of amenity space. The existing quality of amenity spaces is variable, with provision in Telford south and the rural area being of particularly low quality, as shown in Figure 6.1 and 6.2 below.

Figure 6.1

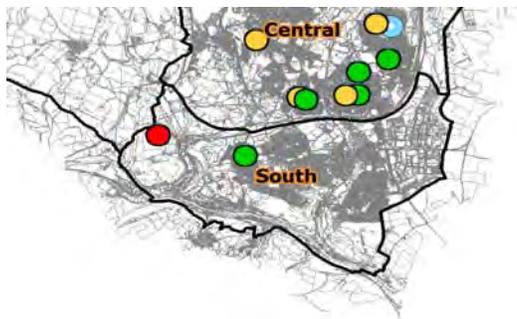
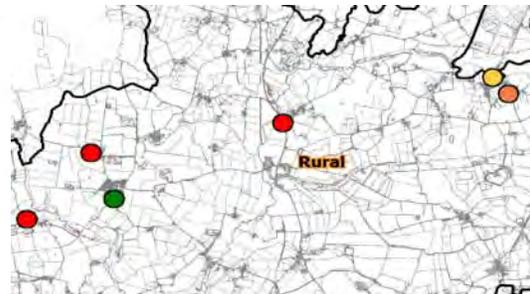


Figure 6.2



SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

- 6.26 In light of the importance of the quality of amenity open spaces, the quality of existing sites has been divided into quartiles. This analysis is set out in Table 6.4 below and a selection of sites falling into each category is listed. A full list of all scores achieved during site assessments can be found within Appendix C. It can be seen that to fall within the top quartile, a score of 73% would be required.

AGS1	Strive to improve the quality of amenity sites, aiming to improve the quality of all sites so that they achieve 73% (the score required to fall within the top quartile). In particular, it is likely that improvements to the provision of ancillary facilities will be of particular benefit to the overall quality of amenity green space.
-------------	---

Table 6.4 – Detailed analysis of the quality of existing sites

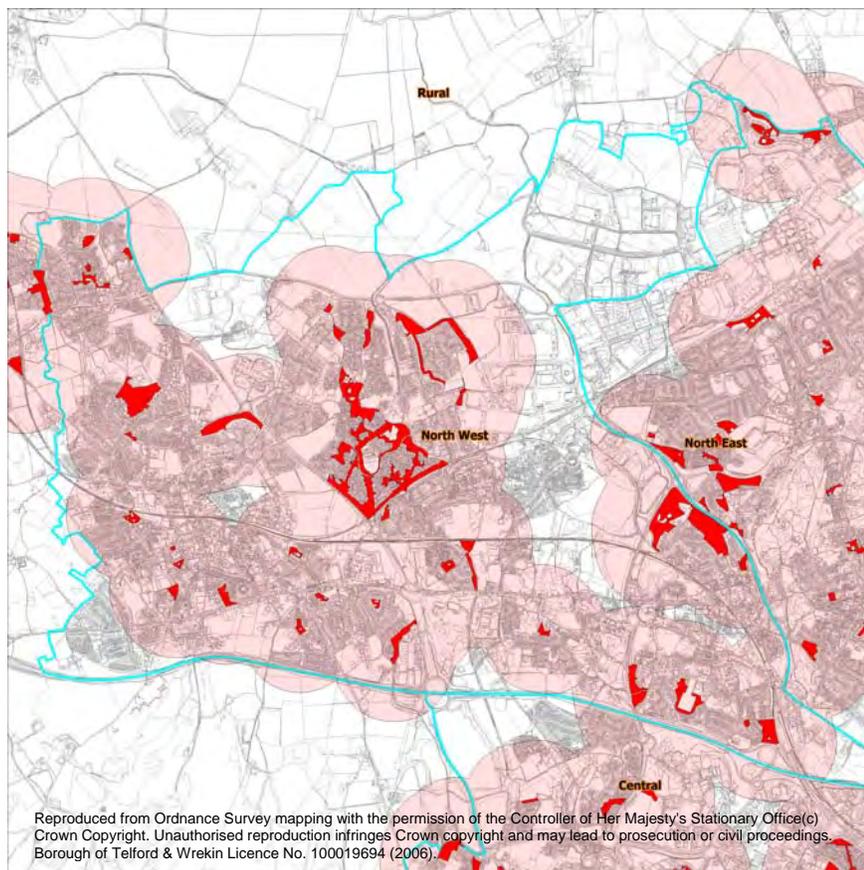
Above upper quartile	73% +	(98%) – Glendale AGS – Central – Site ID 666 (74%) Severn Drive AGS – North West – Site ID 698
Median – Upper quartile	65% - 72%	(72%) – Harvey Crescent AGS – North West – Site ID 207 (65%) – Admaston Green AGS – Rural – Site ID 909
Lower quartile – median	53% - 64%	(64%) Glovers Way AGS – Rural – Site ID 107 (54%) Deer Park Road AGS – Newport – Site ID 696
Less than lower quartile	Below 52%	(52%) The Common AGS – North East – Site ID 235 (30%) Quarry View AGS – Rural – Site ID 172

- 6.27 The key issues emerging from Table 6.4 and the site assessments include:
- 25% of sites scored above the upper quartile level of 73%, indicating the need for improvements to the majority of sites to meet the quality standard
 - the average score of amenity green space in the Borough is 64%. However, there is a large variation in the quality of sites.
 - ten sites scored below 50%. These sites should be prioritised for improvement and look to achieve the upper quartile percentage score of 73% (full details of these sites can be found in Appendix C).

SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

- 6.28 The breakdown of provision by analysis areas has revealed a requirement for further provision up to 2016 in four of the six analysis areas, with only Telford north west and Telford central containing sufficient provision. This is supported by the application of the accessibility standard, which suggests that there are pockets of residents within each analysis area outside of the recommended distance threshold. However, the majority of these residents have access to open space in the form of a formal park or natural and semi natural provision. As such, we recommend qualitative improvements rather than the provision of additional amenity spaces.
- 6.29 In order to ensure the future quality of open spaces, consideration should be given to the size of sites. Smaller sites (particularly those located in proximity to larger facilities) may be of limited value to the residents and costly in terms of maintenance to the provider.
- 6.30 The most appropriate priorities for each area of the Borough are therefore discussed taking into account the relationship between quality, quantity and accessibility.
- 6.31 As indicated, the application of the local quantity standard suggests there is currently adequate provision within Telford north west. However, due to the distribution of these sites, a number of residents within the Hadley and Leegomery ward (to the east of the analysis area) fall outside of the accessibility catchment, as is illustrated in Figure 6.3 below.

Figure 6.3



SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

- 6.32 As highlighted in Section 4, the western side of Telford Town is deficient in parks although residents are relatively close to Telford Town Park. However, Map 6.2 suggests that there is an abundance of amenity green space in this area, which is confirmed by the application of the quantity standard. Opportunities to upgrade one or more of these sites into a park to offset existing deficiencies should be seized. Chockleys Drive (Site ID 387), Leegomery Pools (Site ID 331), Wombridge Road (Site ID 412), Constable Drive (site ID 109) and Severn Drive (Site ID 698) are all examples of particularly large facilities, which could be upgraded to perform park functions. Furthermore, there may be opportunities to change the use of some amenity green spaces to better meet the needs of the local population.

PG6	Investigate opportunities of formalising at least one amenity green space to the north west of Telford town to provide a more formal park.
------------	--

- 6.33 Sites of particularly low quality may be of limited value to local residents.
- 6.34 In light of the quantitative surplus and overlapping catchments of amenity spaces across the north west of the town, there may be some opportunities for disposal of sites in this area. Only sites with limited value to residents (ie poor quality, low accessibility and overlapping catchments) should be considered and sites should be assessed in terms of their value as other open space types prior to their loss as amenity sites.

AGS2	Consider the appropriateness for disposal of sites in the north west of Telford. Capital received through the release of any land should be reinvested in qualitative improvements in the area.
-------------	---

- 6.35 Recommendation AGS2 has been based on the application of the local standard against the future population figures as shown in Table 6.3.
- 6.36 There will be no further requirement for additional amenity space to the west of Telford Town and the focus should therefore be on the enhancement of existing facilities.
- 6.37 In quantitative terms, the largest deficiency is to the south of the town. This is reflected through the application of the accessibility standards, where it can be seen that there are large areas (for instance Ironbridge Gorge and Coalbrookdale) outside of the catchment area for amenity green space. A large proportion of these areas are also outside of the catchment for parks, indicating that there is a real need for local recreational space (Figure 6.4). There is a large stretch of natural and semi natural space in this area that could be developed into a multifunctional area (Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.4

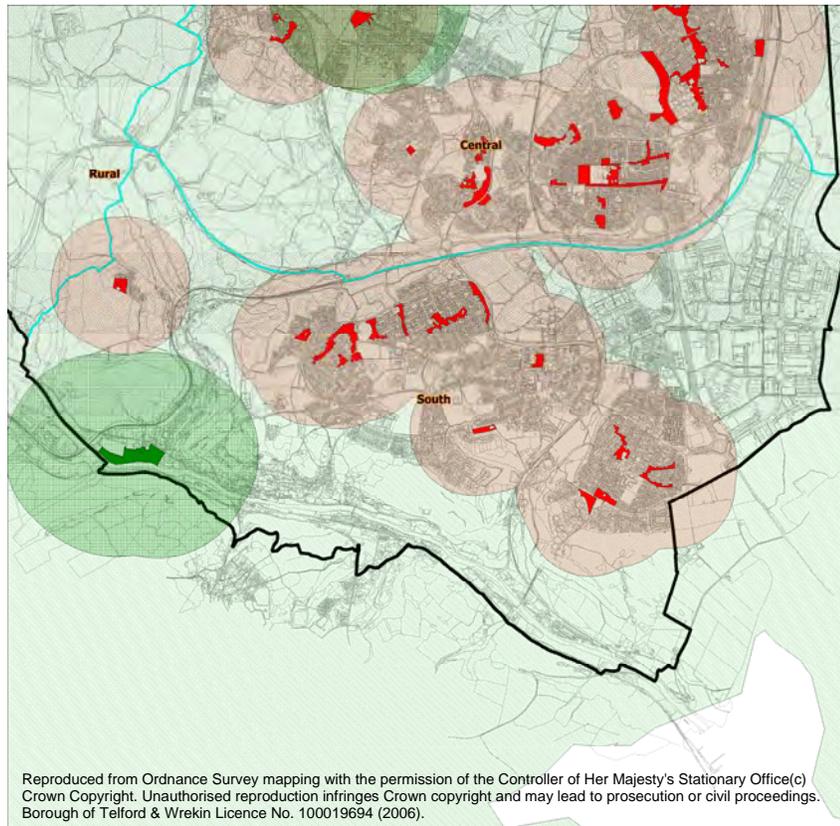
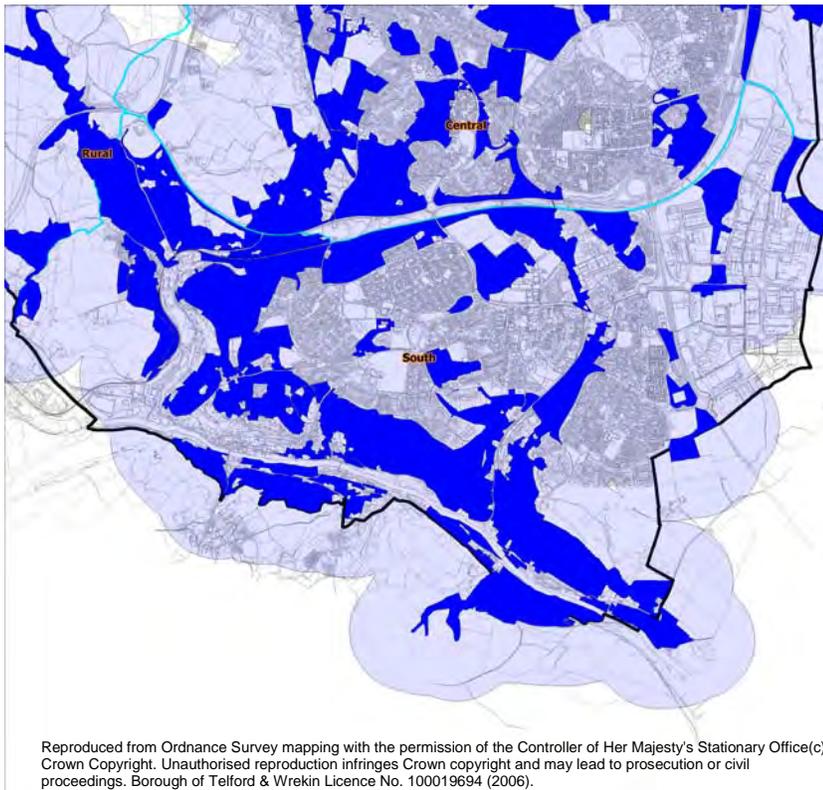


Figure 6.5



SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

- 6.38 Despite deficiencies highlighted in Figures 6.4 and 6.5, provision of amenity space in the estates of Telford Town is extensive. New provision is not required in this area and efforts should therefore focus on improving the quality of these open spaces.

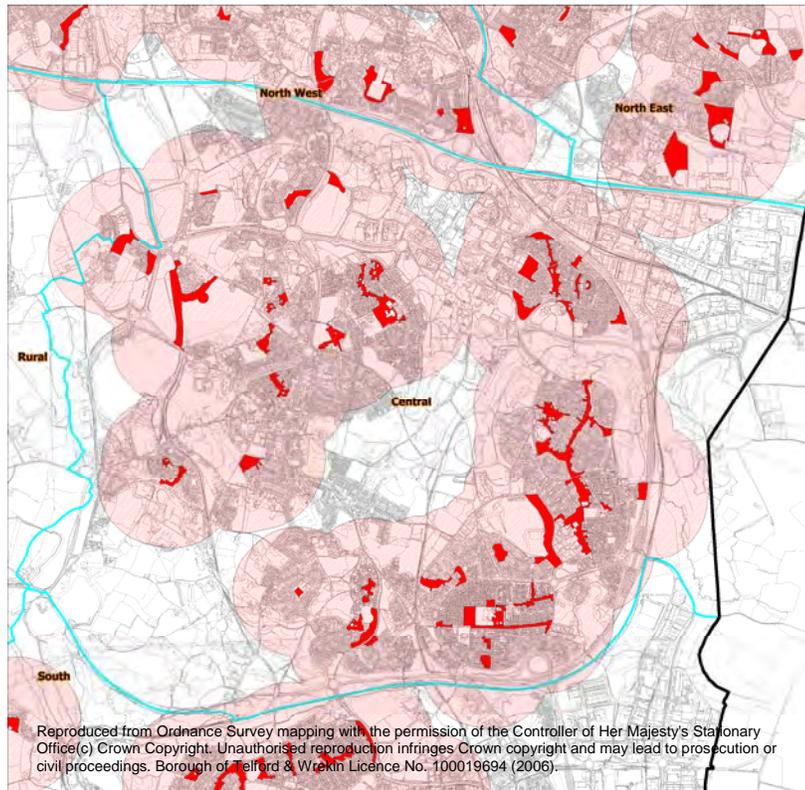
AGS3	Opportunities to provide new amenity spaces to the south of Telford town should be identified. Areas where is a specific deficiency include Ironbridge Gorge and Coalbrookdale. Where no deficiency exists, the focus should be on quality enhancement of existing sites.
-------------	---

- 6.39 Like the southern area of Telford, the northeastern area exhibits deficiencies in terms of the provision of amenity green space. Deficiencies in the north east are particularly important, as residents in this area have no reasonable access to a park. The primary areas of deficiency are in the north of the Muxton ward, where residents are also outside of the catchment for a park. There is a vast array of natural space in this area hence residents do have access to informal recreation opportunities. However, consideration should be given to opportunities to address the lack of amenity green space.

AGS4	Formalise a natural area in the north eastern area of Telford Town to offset deficiencies in amenity spaces and parks.
-------------	--

- 6.40 When measured against the quantity standard the Central analysis area has sufficient provision to meet local need, application of the accessibility standard also shows a reasonable spread of provision with few residents outside of the catchment for amenity space. Furthermore, the provision of informal opportunities in this area is significantly enhanced by the presence of large strategic sites, for example Telford Town Park.
- 6.41 Given that there are some small deficiencies in provision in this area, opportunities for new sites in these areas (illustrated overleaf – Figure 6.6) should be taken, however the primary focus should be on improving the quality of existing amenity spaces. Amenity spaces in the central area were of significantly lower quality on average than in other areas.

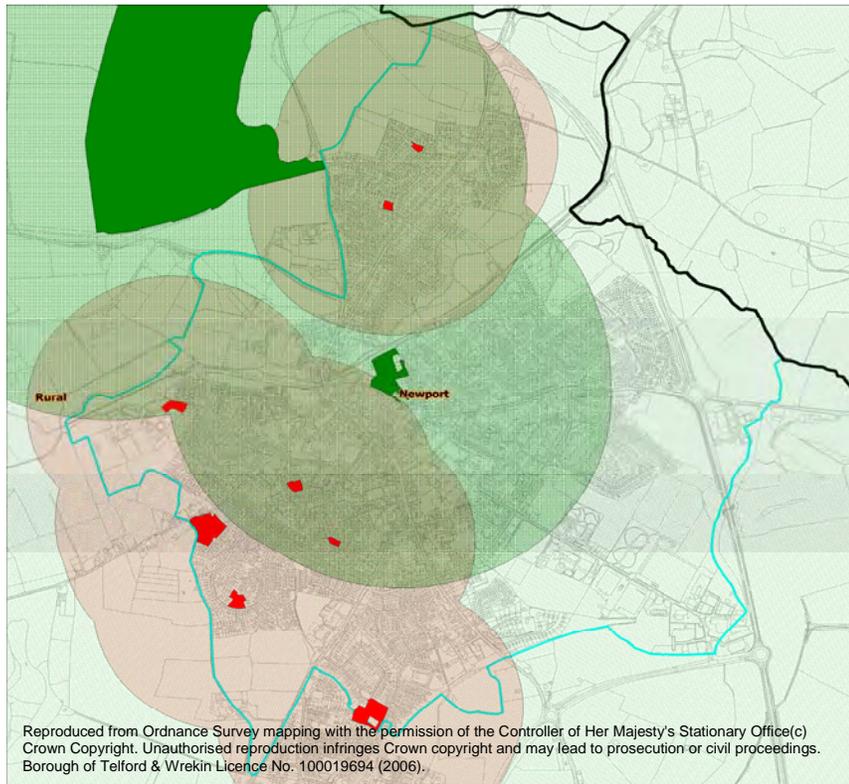
Figure 6.6



AGS5	Use the findings of the site assessment to prioritise sites for qualitative improvement within the central Telford area.
-------------	--

- 6.42 Application of the standards to the town of Newport highlight that while the western side is well served, there are deficiencies to the east of the town . This is also reflected through the application of the quantity standard, where there are deficiencies in provision.
- 6.43 As illustrated overleaf (Figure 6.7), the majority of residents outside of the catchment of amenity spaces are within the recommended distance threshold of a park. As a higher order facility (ie one with more facilities) the presence of a local park negates the need for additional provision of amenity space for those within the catchment of the park that is recommended for amenity space (10 minutes). While this minimises the area of deficiency, there remains a segment of the Newport east and south wards outside of the recommended catchment. While this is perhaps not a priority in light of the proximity to the park, it is preferable that these residents have access to local open space. These residents are also able to access outdoor sports facilities.
- 6.44 Although many residents to the north of Newport outside of the catchment area for amenity space have access to a park (Chetwynd Park) it must be noted that there is limited access to this site and therefore the development of local amenity space would be preferable.

Figure 6.7



AGS6	Provide new amenity green space in the eastern area of Newport should the opportunity arise. In light of the limited access to Chetwnyd Park, consideration should also be given to the provision of amenity space in the northern area of Newport.
-------------	---

- 6.45 Other investment in the Newport area should focus on improving the quality of provision.
- 6.46 Analysis of amenity green spaces in the rural area shows that there are several facilities where amenity green space is provided, although they are primarily located to the north of Telford Town. Few settlements in the south of the Borough have access to amenity green space. Amenity green space can be particularly important in the rural area, and in many instances may fulfil some of the roles of formal play provision where there is no equipment.
- 6.47 Based on the local quantity standard and the average size of an amenity green space within the rural area (used to define the minimum size) it could be suggested that amenity green space should be provided in settlements where the population exceeds 1000. Those settlements without sufficient provision should therefore be prioritised for improvement. This links with the provision for children, where a slightly larger population is required before an equipped facility is provided.

SECTION 6 – AMENITY GREEN SPACE

6.48 Given the importance of providing amenity space in every area, while priority should be given to larger settlements, it should be ensured that all settlements have access to informal space. High quality amenity green space can play an important role in village life. Those currently devoid of any open space and therefore requiring further investigation include:

- Sambrook
- Crudgington
- Allscott

AGS7	Ensure that all villages with over 1000 residents contain an amenity green space. Consideration should also be given to providing amenity space in settlements devoid of any other open space.
-------------	--

6.49 The quality of facilities in the rural area was also amongst the lowest in the Borough. Support should be given to providers of these facilities to enhance their quality where appropriate.

AGS8	Provide support to providers of amenity spaces in village areas to make qualitative improvements to sites.
-------------	--

Summary

- 6.50 For many residents amenity greenspace will be the most accessible form of open space provision. The value of amenity green spaces within close proximity to residents was noted through the local consultation. While amenity green space often fulfils a similar role to larger informal open spaces (eg parks and natural areas) the local nature of this type of open space is of particular importance.
- 6.51 Local consultation highlighted the importance of the balance between quality and quantity.
- 6.52 Application of the local standards highlighted that there is an imbalance in provision, with large quantities of amenity green space to the north west and central area of Telford town, with a more sporadic distribution elsewhere across the Borough. In many instances those areas deficient in amenity green space also exhibit shortfalls in the provision of parks, indicating that there are limited opportunities for informal recreation.
- 6.53 While the overall direction should remain on enhancing the quality of amenity spaces (particularly with regards cleanliness and maintenance and increasing the range of facilities provided), opportunities to address the identified deficiencies should also be taken.

SECTION 7

PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Provision for children and young people

Introduction and definition

- 7.1 PPG17 states that the broad objective of provision for children and young people is to ensure that they have opportunities to interact with their peers and learn social and movement skills within their home environment. At the same time, they must not create nuisance for other residents or appear threatening to passers-by.
- 7.2 This typology encompasses a vast range of provision from small areas of green space with a single piece of equipment (similar to the typology of amenity greenspace) to a large, multi purpose play areas. The National Playing Fields Association categorises play facilities into three distinct types of facility, specifically:
- Local Areas of Play (LAPs)
 - Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAPs)
 - Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play (NEAPs).
- 7.3 PPG17 notes that using these sub-types of provision for children and young people often ignores the needs of older children such as teenagers. Each site and range of equipment has a different purpose and often serves a different age group and catchment. Provision of facilities for children does not necessarily negate the need for provision for young people and vice versa.
- 7.4 For this reason, this typology has been subdivided and provision for children and facilities for young people have been analysed separately.
- 7.5 Provision for children is taken to include equipped children's play areas and adventure playgrounds that are perceived to cater for children under 12. This typology relates primarily to equipped provision for children and therefore primarily focuses on the play equipment within the LEAPs and NEAPs categories. LAPs would fall under the category of amenity green space and are therefore discussed as part of Section 6.
- 7.6 Facilities for teenagers is taken to include the following types of provision:
- Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs)
 - skateparks
 - basketball courts
 - youth shelters
 - informal kickabout areas
 - BMX tracks.
- 7.7 This section of the report sets out the strategic context, key findings emerging from consultation and assessment of current provision for children and young people. Local standards have been derived from the local consultation undertaken as part of this study and are therefore directly representative of local needs. The application of these standards provides the Council with a number of policy options for the delivery of facilities for young people and children.

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

7.8 The key issues for children and young people's facilities arising from a review of strategic documents are:

- the **Local Development Framework** identifies a design criteria for the provision of children's play spaces which includes the following key criteria:
 - play spaces should be sited on land that is suitable for the type of play space identified. For example, equipped or kick about areas on slopes are inappropriate
 - a wide range of play opportunities should be provided. Playgrounds should include unobstructed appropriate open space to kick or throw a ball, as well as natural opportunities to play for creative development
 - play spaces need to be attractive and safe to encourage children to play there, as well as meet the needs of the wider area, particularly of those people living nearby
 - all play spaces should be accessible by safe, practical routes
 - all play spaces should be sited in welcoming, open areas, not on backland or land that cannot be developed for other purposes
 - play spaces should be accessible from pedestrian routes and away from major vehicle movement.
- the **Telford and Wrekin Local Play Strategy 2007** states the Council is committed to enhancing the quantity and quality of play and youth facilities across the Borough and contains the following key points:
 - the vision of the strategy - "All children and young people will be involved in quality play opportunities"
 - all play opportunities will be freely accessible, free of charge and children and young people will have the freedom to come and go
 - the council aims to meet the NPFA quality design criteria for location and design of new development where possible
 - environmental play - the Council aims to help children understand and feel secure in their surroundings, and to care for the natural and built environment
 - maintenance and Inspection - the Council will apply the highest standards of maintenance and inspection to ensure that all formal play areas are safe and continue to meet the needs of children
 - open green spaces - the Council will actively encourage the right of children's informal play particularly in the landscape of open green spaces
 - protection of exiting play/youth facilities - where play spaces are proposed to be lost through development, a suitable replacement facility or feature (to the satisfaction of the Council) of equal or

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- greater quality and accessibility is required to be provided, unless highlighted in the Implementation Plan as to be surplus to requirement
 - equipment - equipment will be selected on the basis of quality, best value, safety, durability, play value and visual attractiveness
- the strategy aims to:
 - provide more and better local and inclusive play opportunities where they are most needed
 - improve children’s access to safe places to play and socialise
 - provide more and better local and inclusive play opportunities where they are most needed
- consultation identified a number of key findings:
 - there is a need to increase play opportunities and eliminate barriers to play for socially vulnerable children and young people
 - there is a lack of equitable play opportunities across the Borough
 - the need to address the disparity of play and youth facilities and identify gaps in facilities and target areas for investments
 - there is a lack of youth provision and youth facilities in some areas of the Borough
- the **Parks Strategy 2003 –2008** highlights an audit of service delivery indicates that service satisfaction with play areas and playgrounds has increased from 1999 –2001 to 59%
- the Telford and Wrekin Children and Young People’s Plan 2005 – 2010 states the vision for children and young people is to “...Work together with children, young people, families and their communities to build a safe, prosperous and bright future for all the children and young people in Telford and Wrekin”
- the plan focuses on five aims: promoting health and early years, staying safe, enjoying and achieving, making a positive contribution and achieving economic wellbeing
- the Parks Strategy 2003 – 2008 Best Value Consultation found that facilities for young people are the third worst feature of living in Telford and are in need of improvement. 22.6% of residents feel facilities for young people have got worse
- the **Wrekin Local Plan** through policies LR4 and LR6 states that an on site equipped play area (LEAP/NEAP or potentially both) may be required if the proposed development has over 75 but below 200 new child bed spaces (provision of a LEAP required). For developments providing over 200 new child bed spaces a NEAP would be required.

Consultation – Assessing Local Needs

7.9 Consultation undertaken as part of the study highlighted the following key issues relating to provision for children and young people. Although some areas may be deemed to have sufficient provision or could be created through new residential development creating new demand in the area, locational deficiencies could still exist and this should be explored through the accessibility standard:

- residents highlighted the importance of the provision of good quality play and recreational opportunities for young people and children. Play for young people and children was the overriding theme of consultations on the provision of open spaces across Telford
- the provision of exciting and innovative opportunities for play was viewed as one of the key challenges in addition to ensuring that there are sufficient appropriate facilities across the Borough. The appropriateness of existing facilities is a key issue for children and young people
- the impact of insufficient or inappropriate provision for children and young people on other types of open space was a key theme
- in addition to providing young people and children with an opportunity to play, facilities for children and young people encourage social interaction and provide educational opportunities.

Quantity of provision

7.10 The provision for children across Telford and Wrekin is summarised in Table 7.1 below.

Table 7.1 – Provision for children across Telford and Wrekin

Analysis areas	Current provision	Number of sites	Smallest site (hectares)	Largest site (hectares)	LDF population (2016)	Provision (ha) per 1000 population (2016)
Telford north west	3	26	0.02	0.39	48,739	0.0616
Telford north east	2.23	24	0.02	0.32	35,662	0.0625
Telford central	5.14	38	0.01	1.51	45,756	0.1123
Telford south	2.1	19	0.01	0.43	23,440	0.0896
Newport	1.35	9	0.02	0.44	12,648	0.1067
Rural	2.04	14	0.02	0.51	15,855	0.1287
Overall	15.86	130	0.01	1.51	182,100	0.0871

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 7.11 The key issues emerging from Table 7.1 and consultations relating to the quantity of provision include:
- in total, 63% of respondents feel there is nearly enough/not enough provision for children and 33% indicate provision is about right/more than enough. This suggests that there is a perception that children's provision in Telford and Wrekin is insufficient. This level of dissatisfaction is one of the most conclusive of all open space typologies and was an overriding concern of the local residents attending all consultations. The highest level of satisfaction was found in the rural area
 - Table 7.1 supports the consultation findings, and in particular the high level of satisfaction displayed within the rural analysis area. As can be seen, moving through the LDF period, the rural analysis area contains the highest level of provision per 1000 population (0.13ha)
 - there are currently 130 play areas in Telford and Wrekin, with significant differences in the level of distribution across the analysis areas, the most with in Telford central (38) and the fewest in Newport (9)
 - the overall current provision is 15.86 hectares, equating to an average site size of 0.122 hectares. The smallest sites can be found in Telford central and Telford south (0.01 hectares); however, Telford central also contains the largest site (1.51 hectares).

7.12 Table 7.2 overleaf summarises the provision of facilities for young people. This table considers the number of facilities provided. Some sites contain more than one facility; as per the Council's play policy. Although there are 36 facilities, in reality these are concentrated onto a much smaller number of sites. This reinforces the importance of the application of the accessibility standards.

Table 7.2 – Provision for young people across Telford and Wrekin

Analysis areas	Current provision	Number of Facilities	Smallest facility (hectares)	Largest facility (hectares)	LDF population (2016)	Provision (ha) per 1000 population (2016)
Telford north west	1.44	11	0.02	0.65	48,739	0.0295
Telford north east	0.31	2	0.14	0.17	35,662	0.0087
Telford central	1.52	11	0.04	0.57	45,756	0.0332
Telford south	0.46	5	0.06	0.14	23,440	0.0196
Newport	0.19	2	0.06	0.13	12,648	0.0150
Rural	0.52	5	0.01	0.22	15,855	0.0328
Overall	4.44	36	0.01	0.65	182,100	0.0244

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 7.13 The key issues emerging from Table 7.2 and consultations relating to the quantity of provision for young people include:
- the theme of dissatisfaction regarding the level of provision for children is again reflected in the findings relating to provision for young people across Telford and Wrekin. Analysis of perceptions across different geographical areas of the Borough indicates that feelings are consistent. The highest level of satisfaction can be found in Telford south, where 21% of residents indicated provision was about right/more than enough. In all areas, over 70% of residents were dissatisfied, indicating that there is an overwhelming perception of insufficient provision
 - the information displayed in the table reinforces the findings from the household survey, indicating that there is a lack of provision across the Borough for young people, with very low levels of provision per 1000 of the population
 - as suggested within the provision for children, although two areas have sufficient provision to meet the local standard, locational deficiencies could still exist and this should be explored through the application of the local accessibility standard
 - the Council's play strategy identifies that opportunities are taken to collocate facilities for young people i.e. both ball games and wheeled sports will be provided at the same location where possible. A number of existing sites have already provided these opportunities. While this report evaluates the number of facilities provided at sites (in order to consider the level of choice and opportunity provided), greater emphasis will be placed on the application of the accessibility standard to reflect this. New development may also create additional deficiencies.

Setting provision standards – quantity

- 7.14 The recommended local quantity standards have been derived from the local needs consultation and audit of provision and are summarised overleaf. Full justification for each of the standards is provided within Appendix F.
- 7.15 These standards are also based on detailed research undertaken as part of the Play Strategy, which reinforces the high levels of unmet demand for young people across the Borough.

Quantity standard – provision for children (see Appendices E and F – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
0.092 ha per 1000 population	0.095 ha per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>In light of the emphasis on the need for greater levels of provision during both qualitative and quantitative consultations, it is recommended that a standard is set above the existing level of provision (currently 0.092ha per 1000 population).</p> <p>It is important that the provision of new facilities for children is balanced with the need to improve the quality of existing provision. This is particularly important given that the key complaint regarding existing provision from children was that facilities are not sufficiently innovative or exciting.</p> <p>Setting a standard just above the existing level of provision will ensure that new provision can be delivered where it is most needed, without requiring extensive additional facilities and limiting the qualitative improvements that can take place. This standard can be achieved through the creation of additional sites (in order to achieve this standard, based on the average size of existing play provision across Telford, approximately 10 additional play areas would be required over the LDF period), through the extension of existing facilities or through new residential development creating new demand in area.</p>	

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Quantity standard – provision for young people (see Appendices E and F – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
0.025ha per 1000 population	0.04ha per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>Similar to the provision for children, there is an overriding need for more facilities for young people across Telford and Wrekin. A standard significantly above the existing level of provision is therefore recommended (currently 0.025ha per 1000 population). The location of facilities was perceived to be particularly important to encourage young people to use facilities. The preference for facilities located in close proximity to the home places a greater demand on the quantity of facilities required. Recent Council policy looks to provide a variety of facilities on each site, which requires a larger area than a traditional facility. This is reflected in the quantity standard.</p> <p>While quantity was the key concern emerging through consultation, the quality of facilities, and ownership of these sites was also frequently mentioned, particularly by young people themselves. In addition to setting a standard that recognises the need for increased provision across Telford and Wrekin, it is therefore important to ensure that the quality of facilities is also considered and that the need for community ownership is taken into account.</p> <p>The recommended standard will result in the need for the creation of an additional 12 sites (24 facilities) over the LDF period. This is also reflective of the findings of the Play Strategy.</p>	

Current provision - quality

- 7.16 The quality of provision for children and young people was assessed through site visits and is set out in Tables 7.3 and 7.4 overleaf. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted as a snapshot in time and are therefore reflective of the quality of the site on one specific day.
- 7.17 The quality scores are weighted according to the findings of the local consultation. Those elements that were highlighted through consultation as being a particularly important determinant of the quality have been weighted higher to ensure that they have a greater influence on the overall quality score that each site achieves. The full rationale behind this approach is set out in Appendix G. Cleanliness and maintenance was perceived to be the key issue for both children and young people. For young people, security and safety was considered to be more important than the facilities at the site. Facilities took on greater importance in the provision of sites for children.

Table 7.3 – Quality of provision for children

Geographical area	Number of sites	Range of quality scores (%)	Average quality scores (%)	Lowest quality sites	Highest quality sites
Telford north west	25	37.8%-88.9%	66.5%	Copper Beech Road play area – site ID 403	Hadley Learning community phase 1 and 2 play areas – site ID 950
Telford north east	24	34%-98%	68.5%	Gower youth centre play area – site ID 308	Humber Way childrens play area – site ID 905
Telford Central	38	24%-93.3%	61%	Hafren Road CYP – site ID 553	Culmington play area – site ID 545
Telford South	19	44%-88.9%	63.7%	Hills Lane CYP – site ID 609	Park Lane play area – site ID 579
Newport	9	40%-86%	65.1%	Boughy Road CYP – site ID 65	Newport showground play area – site ID 28
Rural	14	60%-92%	72.8%	Manor Place CYP – site ID 42	Little Wenlock play area – site ID 165
Overall	129	24%-98%	66.2%	Hafren Road CYP – site ID 553	Humber Way childrens play area – site ID 905

Table 7.4 – Quality of provision for young people

Geographical area	Number of facilities	Range of quality scores (%)	Average quality scores (%)	Lowest quality sites	Highest quality sites
Telford north west	11	40%-95.6%	62.8%	Wellswood Avenue BMX track – site ID 368	Harvey Crescent Teenagers Play Area – site ID 911
Telford north east	2	51.1%-60%	55.5%	Wellington Road Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)– site ID 935	School Lane senior childrens play area – site ID 228
Telford central	11	22%-86.7%	60.4%	Daddlebrook games area – site ID 645	Randlay Ave. village green Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)– site ID 924
Telford south	5	44%-88.9%	70.6%	Hills Lane BMX track – site ID 999	Park Lane games area – site ID 583
Newport	2	44%-80%	62%	Norbroom Park BMX track – site ID 32	Beechfields Way teenagers play area – site ID 918
Rural	5	62.5%-95.6%	82%	Higher Ercall village hall young people play area – site ID 902	Admaston Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) – site ID 908
Overall	36	22%-95.6%	65.4%	Daddlebrook games area – site ID 645	Harvey Crescent teenagers play area – site ID 911, Admaston Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)– site ID 908

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 7.18 The key issues emerging from Tables 7.3 and 7.4 and the consultation relating to the quality of facilities for children and young people are:
- although the quantity of provision was the overriding theme of consultations, the quality of provision was also considered to be important. Many existing facilities were criticised for the lack of innovative and exciting play equipment
 - young people identified a greater variety of facilities as the key improvement that they would like to see
 - anti social behaviour and vandalism was perceived by local residents to be problems at facilities for both children and young people. Security and safety was highlighted as the key barrier to further use of facilities
 - litter bins and cleanliness were of particular importance to local residents, as was the appropriate maintenance of the facilities
 - the average quality of sites for children and young people is similar, with children's facilities scoring 66% and young people's facilities 65%. The range of quality scores is also consistent
 - the highest quality sites for both children and young people are found in the rural area, suggesting significantly higher quality facilities in this area
 - low quality sites can be found in all areas, in particular Daddlebrook Games Area and Haften Road which scored just 22% and 24% respectively.

Setting provision standards – quality

- 7.19 The recommended local quality standard for provision for children and young people is summarised overleaf. Full justifications and consultation relating to the quality of provision for the local standard is provided within Appendix G.

Quality Standard (see Appendix G)

Recommended standard – provision for children		
Local consultation, national guidance and best practice suggest that the following features are essential and desirable to local residents:		
Essential	Desirable	
Play equipment	Well kept grass	
Litter bins	Good access	
Clean/litter free	Equipment maintenance	
Detailed analysis of the local consultation suggests that with regards to play areas for children, the relative importance of the key components is as follows:		
Component of quality	Proportion of possible total responses received	Weighting
Security and safety	26%	2
Cleanliness and maintenance	42%	4
Vegetation	23%	1
Ancillary accommodation	31%	3
Analysis highlights the need for innovative and imaginative provision of facilities for children. Community involvement from children in the provision of play facilities was also considered to be particularly important.		

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Recommended standard – provision for young people		
Local consultation, national guidance and best practice suggest that the following features are essential and desirable to local residents:		
Essential	Desirable	
Equipment maintenance	Equipment	
Good access	Clean/litter free	
Range of facilities	Litter bins	
Detailed analysis of the local consultation suggests that with regards to facilities for young people, the relative importance of the key components is as follows:		
Component of quality	Proportion of possible total responses received	Weighting
Security and safety	46%	3
Cleanliness and maintenance	52%	4
Vegetation	29%	1
Ancillary accommodation	41%	2
<i>Analysis highlights the need for innovative and imaginative provision of facilities for teenagers. Community involvement from teenagers in the provision of facilities was also considered to be particularly important.</i>		

Setting provision standards – accessibility

- 7.20 The accessibility of sites is paramount in maximising usage as well as providing opportunities for people to use the site. The recommended local standard is set in the form of a distance threshold and is derived directly from the findings of the local consultations.
- 7.21 Local access to provision for children and young people is particularly important in order to promote use of the site.
- 7.22 Site specific accessibility issues were also analysed as part of the programme of site visits where information and signage, transport and general issues were assessed.
- 7.23 Consultation and analysis highlights that the key issues with regards accessibility of provision for children and young people include:
- security and safety is the key barrier to the access of facilities for children and young people

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- unsurprisingly, consultation findings highlight that residents expect local provision for children and young people and there is very little reliance on the car. Suitable access for those travelling on foot and public transport links are therefore instrumental in the effective delivery of facilities for children and young people
- site assessment scores highlighted transport links as an issue with the majority of children's facilities scoring average or poor. Concerns were also raised over information and signage, with the most common score being very poor
- site assessments carried out at facilities for teenagers showed that the access to these sites is average (which was the modal score rating). As with children's facilities, a large number of sites were rated as very poor in relation to information and signage

7.24 The recommended local accessibility standards for children and young people are summarised overleaf. It can be seen that residents expect to travel further to reach facilities for teenagers than they do for children. Provision of both types of facility is expected in close proximity to the home. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

Accessibility Standard (see Appendix H)

Recommended standard – provision for children
10 MINUTE (480 METRES) WALK TIME
Justification
<p>The majority of respondents to the household questionnaire indicate that they would expect to walk to a children’s play facility (84%). Furthermore, the distances parents are willing to let their children travel unaccompanied from their homes to play facilities has reduced as concerns over safety have grown. Facilities should therefore be in close proximity to the home. However, PPG17 suggests that distance thresholds should be reflective of the maximum distance that typical users can reasonably be expected to travel. The 75% threshold level for children using the responses from the household survey was a 10 minute (480 metre) walk time across the Borough. This figure was consistent across all analysis areas with the exception of Newport (11 minutes), indicating an overall consensus of opinion. Furthermore the modal response was also a 10 minute walk time (consistent across all of the geographical areas).</p> <p>Setting the standard in accordance with the 75% threshold level is advocated in PPG17. Moreover, a larger accessibility catchment provides greater flexibility in terms of striking a balance between qualitative and quantitative improvements in provision. Where a five minute catchment would place a greater requirement on new provision, local consultation also revealed the importance of high quality sites and not just new facilities. The Council should continually seek to promote measures designed to improve accessibility, such as better public transport or cycling routes.</p> <p>A standard of 10 minutes (480 metre) walk time therefore meets user expectations and provides a realistic target for implementation. Furthermore, this local standard encompasses all types of provision for children, including the larger, more strategic sites that people could be expected to travel further to visit. The provision of local facilities meets with the aspirations of children and ensures that the use of these play facilities is maximized. It is important to consider the provision of play facilities in the context of amenity green spaces and other typologies providing more informal play opportunities for children.</p>

*a straight-line distance of 720m has been used rather than the pedestrian distance of 1200m. This is based on average walking distances reduced by a factor of 40% to account for the fact that people do not walk in straight lines. The 40% factoring is based on the approach set out in the NPFA Six Acre Standard.

Recommended standard – Provision for Young People
10 MINUTE (480 METRES) WALK TIME
Justification
<p>60% of people stated that walking is the preferred method of travel to a young person's facility; therefore it is recommended that a walk time standard be adopted. A secondary point is that young people do not always have access to a motorised vehicle and consequently a walk time enables access for all ages and users. Provision of localised facilities meets the needs of young people as identified within internet survey. Location was a particularly important determinant of the level of use of a site.</p> <p>While the 75% threshold level is 15 minutes, the modal response rate is 10 minutes. Given that the overriding issue emerging from consultations was a shortfall of provision for children and young people and the need for local facilities, it is recommended that the standard is set at 10 minutes in line with the modal response.</p> <p>A 10 minute walk time is further justified, as within Telford north west, Telford north east and Telford south, the 75% level is a 10 minute walk, indicating that residents expect facilities which are more local.</p> <p>In applying the local standards, consideration should be made for other open spaces that are used by young people, such as amenity green spaces, parks and outdoor sport facilities. The Telford Borough Council Play Strategy sets out the key features that will be provided as part of the provision of facilities for young people and it should be ensured that new facilities developed are of sufficient quality and appropriate for the young people they are designed for.</p>

Applying provision standards

- 7.25 The application of the recommended quality, quantity and accessibility standards is essential in understanding the existing distribution of open space sport and recreation facilities and identifying areas where provision is insufficient to meet local need.
- 7.26 The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a much more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately. The application of these standards is set out overleaf in Table 7.5.
- 7.27 The findings of the application of these standards should complement the principles set out in the play strategy and inform future decision-making.

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

7.28 The application of the local standard for quantity results in the following issues:

Table 7.5 – Application of quantity standard

Analysis areas	Children	Young people
	Future provision (2016) in hectares balanced against the local standard (0.095 hectares per 1000 population)	Future provision (2016) in hectares balanced against local standard (0.04 hectares per 1000 population)
Telford north west	-1.63	-0.51
Telford north east	-1.16	-1.12
Telford central	0.79	-0.31
Telford south	-0.13	-0.48
Newport	0.15	-0.32
Rural	0.53	-0.11
Overall	-1.44	-2.84

Green = above the minimum standard; Red = below the minimum standard

- in terms of children’s facilities, the application of the of the local standard (0.095ha per 1000 population) shows an overall shortfall in provision across the Borough of 1.44ha by 2016
- three areas show a future deficiency in provision: Telford north west (1.63ha), Telford north east (1.16ha) and Telford south (0.13ha)
- for teenage facilities, the local standard of 0.04ha per 1000 population shows that up to 2016 all areas will have a deficiency in provision
- the total deficiency across the Borough equates to 2.84 hectares, with Telford north east having the greatest shortfall (1.12ha per 1000 population)
- it is important to note that whilst it appears that three of the analysis areas have sufficient provision for children in quantitative terms, locational deficiencies could still exist and this should be explored through the application of the local accessibility standard.

7.29 In light of the local nature of both facilities for children and facilities for young people, consideration has been given to the application of the quantity standard at a ward level. This further highlights shortfalls and surpluses and is set out in Table 7.6 (children) and Table 7.7 (young people) overleaf.

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Table 7.6 – Provision of facilities for children by ward

Ward	Population (2016)	Provision for children (hectares)	Local standard (ha/1000)	Per 1000 population current	TOTAL requirement	Surplus / deficiency
Apley Castle	3,945	0.100	0.095	0.0253485	0.3748	-0.274775
Arleston	4,234	0.140	0.095	0.0330657	0.4022	-0.26223
Brookside	8,204	0.360	0.095	0.043881	0.7794	-0.41938
Church Aston and Lilleshall	3,966	0.050	0.095	0.0126072	0.3768	-0.32677
College	4,124	0.230	0.095	0.0557711	0.3918	-0.16178
Cuckoo Oak	6,702	0.730	0.095	0.1089227	0.6367	0.09331
Dawley Magna	10,652	0.600	0.095	0.0563275	1.0119	-0.41194
Donnington	7,276	0.610	0.095	0.0838373	0.6912	-0.08122
Dothill	3,724	0.070	0.095	0.018797	0.3538	-0.28378
Edgmond	4,242	1.110	0.095	0.261669	0.403	0.70701
Ercall	3,873	0.260	0.095	0.0671314	0.3679	-0.107935
Ercall Magna	3,879	0.460	0.095	0.1185873	0.3685	0.091495
Hadley and Leegomery	5,075	1.260	0.095	0.2482759	0.4821	0.777875
Haygate	2,320	0.040	0.095	0.0172414	0.2204	-0.1804
Horsehay and Lightmoor	3,862	0.210	0.095	0.054376	0.3669	-0.15689
Ironbridge	3,471	0.110	0.095	0.0316912	0.3297	-0.219745
Ketley and Oakengates	10,104	0.640	0.095	0.0633413	0.9599	-0.31988
Lawley and Overdale	5,686	0.190	0.095	0.0334154	0.5402	-0.35017
Madeley	6,333	0.700	0.095	0.1105321	0.6016	0.098365
Mainslee	7,031	2.670	0.095	0.3797468	0.6679	2.002055
Muxton	3,340	0.400	0.095	0.1197605	0.3173	0.0827
Newport east	3,816	0.280	0.095	0.0733753	0.3625	-0.08252

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Ward	Population (2016)	Provision for children (hectares)	Local standard (ha/1000)	Per 1000 population current	TOTAL requirement	Surplus / deficiency
Newport north	3,920	0.580	0.095	0.1479592	0.3724	0.2076
Newport south	3,681	0.240	0.095	0.0651997	0.3497	-0.109695
Newport west	3,814	0.250	0.095	0.065548	0.3623	-0.11233
Park	3,708	0.260	0.095	0.0701187	0.3523	-0.09226
Priorslee	7,555	0.640	0.095	0.0847121	0.7177	-0.077725
Shawbirch	4,336	0.000	0.095	0	0.4119	-0.41192
St Georges	6,699	0.320	0.095	0.0477683	0.6364	-0.316405
The Nedge	10,647	1.110	0.095	0.1042547	1.0115	0.098535
Woodside	8,115	0.560	0.095	0.069008	0.7709	-0.210925
Wrockwardine	5,916	0.420	0.095	0.0709939	0.562	-0.14202
Wrockwardine and Trench	7,850	0.260	0.095	0.033121	0.7458	-0.48575

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Table 7.7 – Provision for young people

Ward	Population (2016)	Provision for teenagers (hectares)	Local Standard (ha/1000)	Per 1000 population current	TOTAL Requirement	Surplus / Deficiency
Apley Castle	3,945	0	0.04	0	0.1578	-0.1578
Arleston	4,234	0.04	0.04	0.0094473	0.1694	-0.12936
Brookside	8,204	0.21	0.04	0.0255973	0.3282	-0.11816
Church Aston and Lilleshall	3,966	0	0.04	0	0.1586	-0.15864
College	4,124	0.03	0.04	0.0072745	0.165	-0.13496
Cuckoo Oak	6,702	0.32	0.04	0.0477469	0.2681	0.05192
Dawley Magna	10,652	0.06	0.04	0.0056327	0.4261	-0.36608
Donnington	7,276	0.31	0.04	0.0426058	0.291	0.01896
Dothill	3,724	0	0.04	0	0.149	-0.14896
Edgmond	4,242	0.13	0.04	0.0306459	0.1697	-0.03968
Ercall	3,873	0	0.04	0	0.1549	-0.15492
Ercall Magna	3,879	0.23	0.04	0.0592936	0.1552	0.07484
Hadley and Leegomery	5,075	0.81	0.04	0.1596059	0.203	0.607
Haygate	2,320	0.1	0.04	0.0431034	0.0928	0.0072
Horsehay and Lightmoor	3,862	0	0.04	0	0.1545	-0.15448
Ironbridge	3,471	0	0.04	0	0.1388	-0.13884
Ketley and Oakengates	10,104	0.46	0.04	0.0455265	0.4042	0.05584
Lawley and Overdale	5,686	0.04	0.04	0.0070348	0.2274	-0.18744
Madeley	6,333	0	0.04	0	0.2533	-0.25332
Mainslee	7,031	0.26	0.04	0.0369791	0.2812	-0.02124
Muxton	3,340	0	0.04	0	0.1336	-0.1336
Newport East	3,816	0.13	0.04	0.0340671	0.1526	-0.02264

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Ward	Population (2016)	Provision for teenagers (hectares)	Local Standard (ha/1000)	Per 1000 population current	TOTAL Requirement	Surplus / Deficiency
Newport North	3,920	0.06	0.04	0.0153061	0.1568	-0.0968
Newport South	3,681	0	0.04	0	0.1472	-0.14724
Newport West	3,814	0	0.04	0	0.1526	-0.15256
Park	3,708	0	0.04	0	0.1483	-0.14832
Priorslee	7,555	0	0.04	0	0.3022	-0.3022
Shawbirch	4,336	0	0.04	0	0.1734	-0.17344
St Georges	6,699	0	0.04	0	0.268	-0.26796
The Nedge	10,647	0.95	0.04	0.089227	0.4259	0.52412
Woodside	8,115	0.14	0.04	0.017252	0.3246	-0.1846
Wrockwardine	5,916	0.16	0.04	0.0270453	0.2366	-0.07664
Wrockwardine and Trench	7,850	0	0.04	0	0.314	-0.314

7.30 It can be seen that there are only nine wards where the level of provision for children is sufficient to meet the needs of the local population. The greatest shortfalls per 1000 population exist in:

- Wrockwardine and Trench – 0.48ha
- Brookside – 0.41ha
- Dawley Magna – 0.41ha
- Shawbirch – 0.41ha.

7.31 There are only seven wards where the level of provision for teenagers is sufficient to meet local needs. The wards that contain the largest deficiencies per 1000 population are:

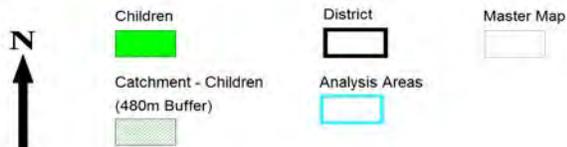
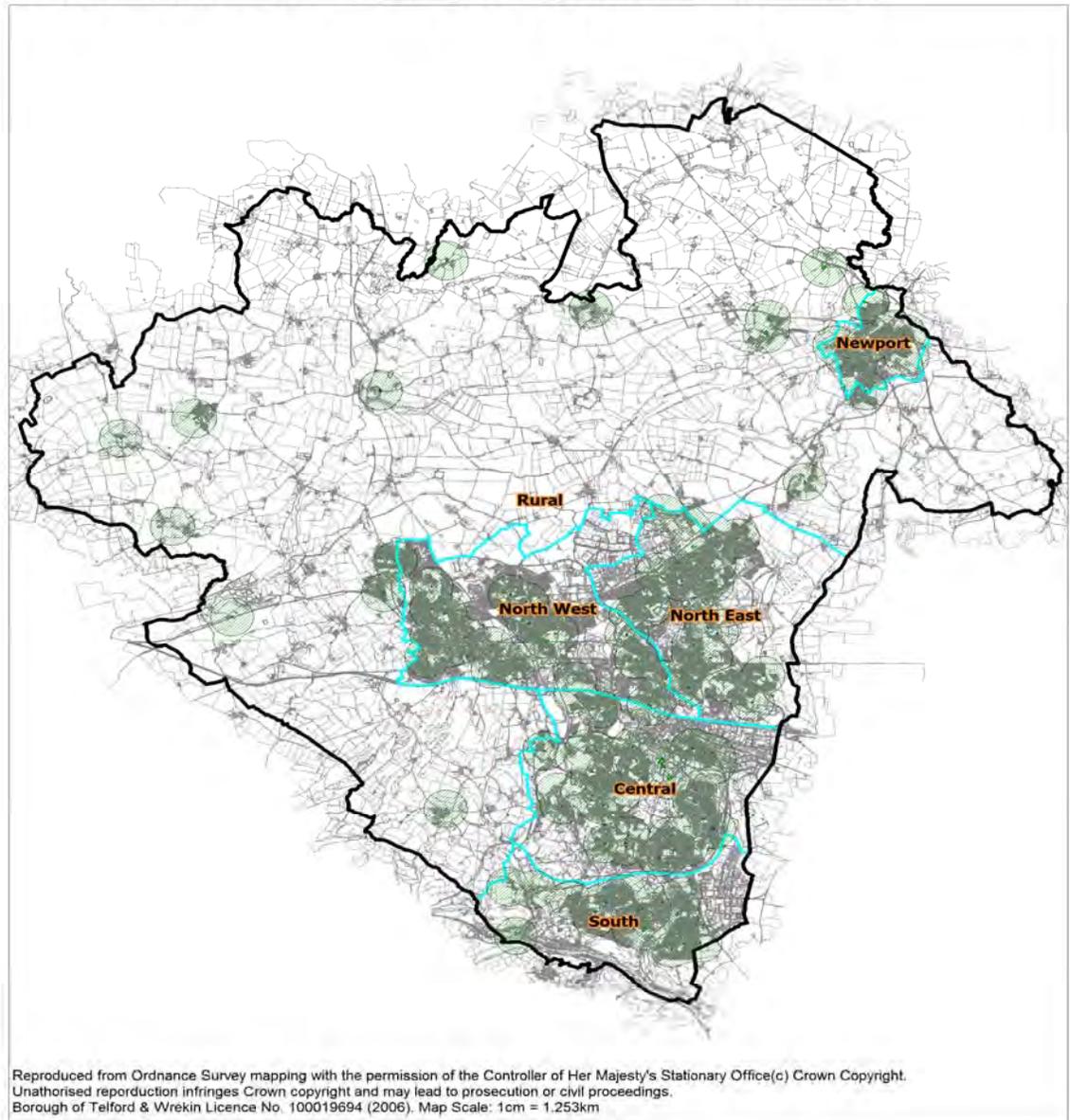
- Dawley Magna – 0.36ha
- Wrockwardine and Trench – 0.31ha
- St George – 0.26ha
- Madeley – 0.25ha.

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 7.32 Both Dawley Magna and Wrockwardine and Trench wards contain some of the largest deficiencies for both children and teenagers provision across the Borough.
- 7.33 The application of the local accessibility standards in relation to provision for children and young people is set out in Map 7.1 below and Map 7.2 overleaf.

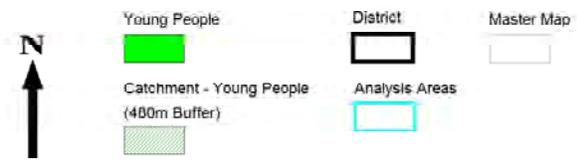
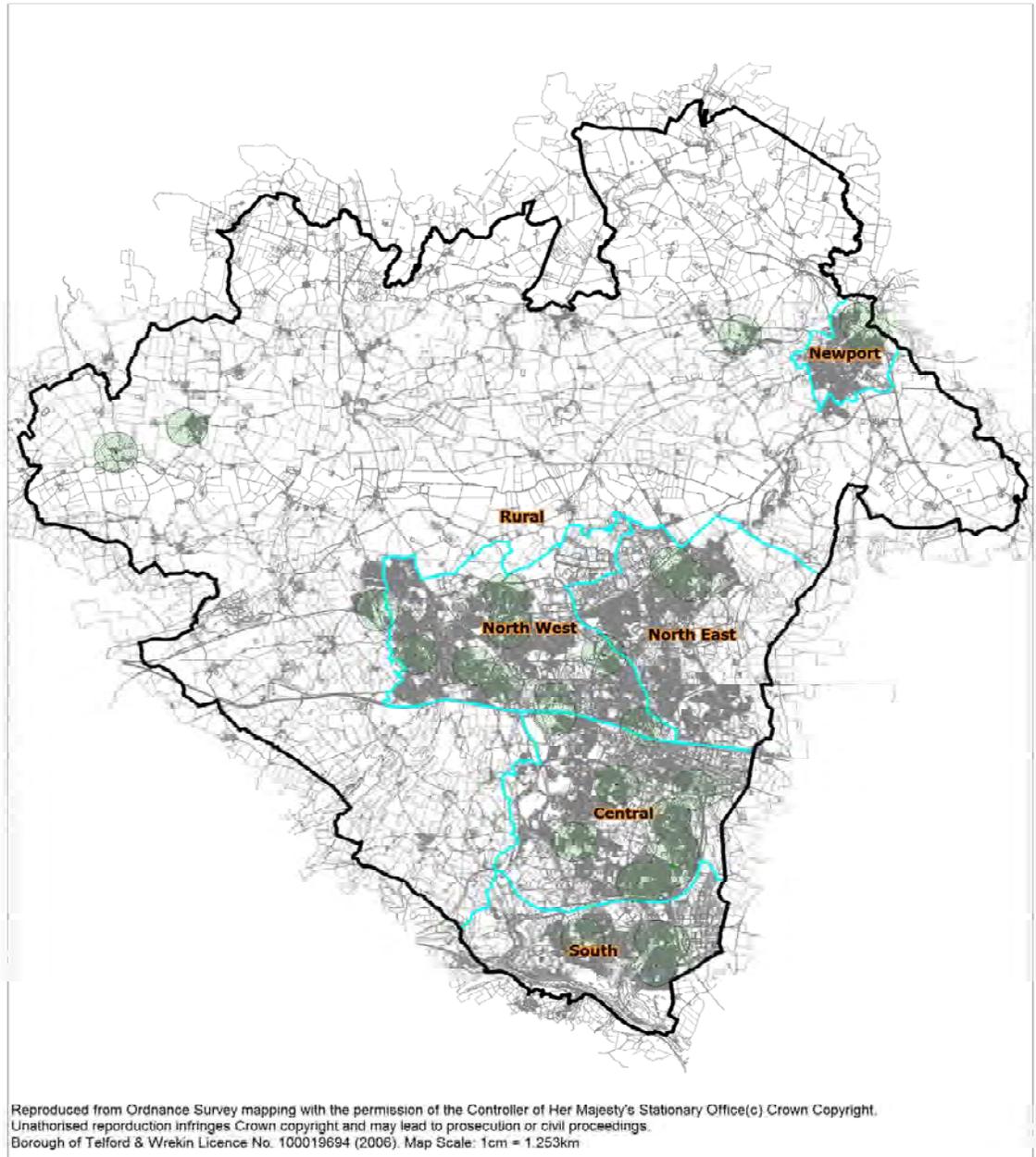
Map 7.1 – Provision for children in Telford and Wrekin

Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments, Children



Map 7.2 – Provision for young people in Telford and Wrekin

Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments, Young People

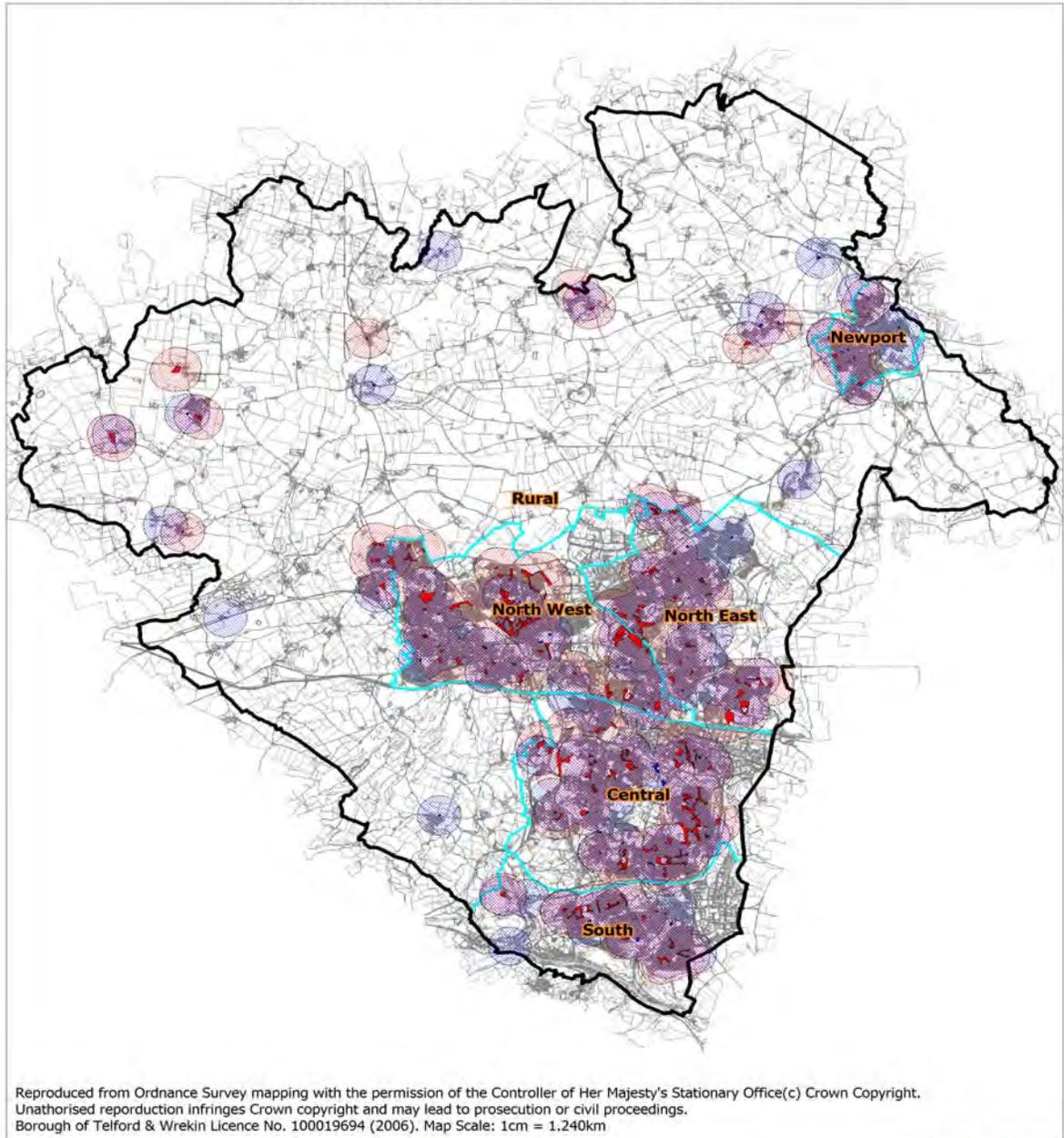


SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 7.34 Map 7.1 indicates that while facilities for children are evenly distributed across the Borough, there remain some areas where residents are outside the recommended distance threshold. In contrast, there are far fewer facilities for young people and hence there are large numbers of residents outside of the recommended catchment for facilities (Map 7.2). There are residents outside of the local area in both the rural and urban areas.
- 7.35 While this section focuses primarily on equipped areas for children and young people, it is also essential to consider the role that amenity green spaces play in offsetting the need for the provision of facilities for young people and children. Areas deficient in both amenity space and formal facilities should be a particular priority for new provision. The provision of amenity green space in relation to facilities for children and young people is set out overleaf in Maps 7.3 and 7.4. The role of amenity green space in the provision of play opportunities is a key theme of the Telford Play Strategy.

Map 7.3 – Provision of amenity greenspace and children’s facilities

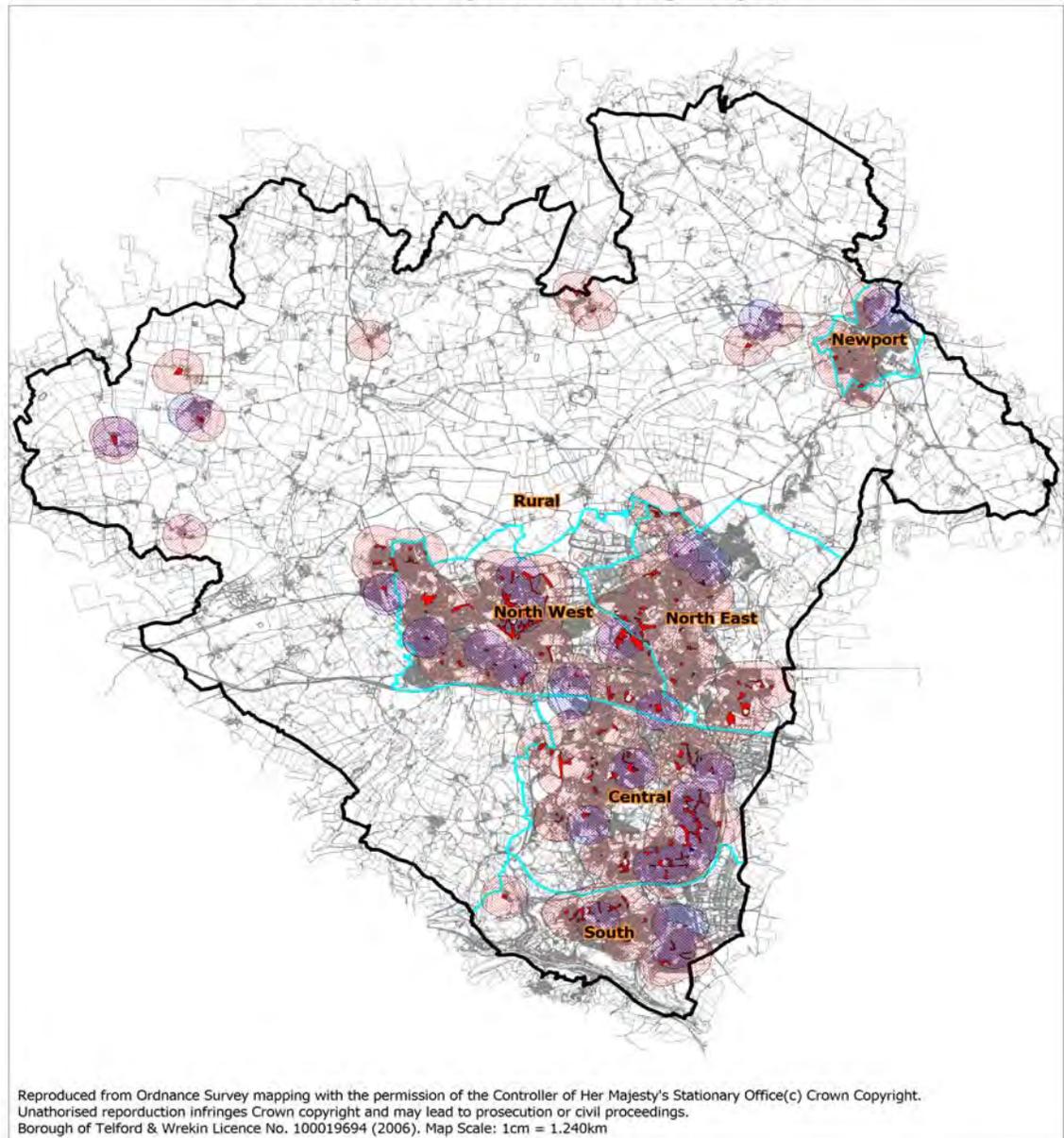
**Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments,
Amenity Greenspace and Children**



	Amenity Greenspace 	Children 	Analysis Areas 	Master Map 	
	Catchment - Amenity Greenspace (480m Buffer) 	Catchment - Children (480m Buffer) 	District 		

Map 7.4 – Provision of amenity greenspace and young people’s facilities

**Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments,
Amenity Greenspace and Young People**



	<p>Amenity Greenspace</p>	<p>Young People</p>	<p>Analysis Areas</p>	<p>Master Map</p>	 <i>Bringing data to life</i>
	<p>Catchment - Amenity Greenspace (480m Buffer)</p>	<p>Catchment - Young People (480m Buffer)</p>	<p>District</p>		

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

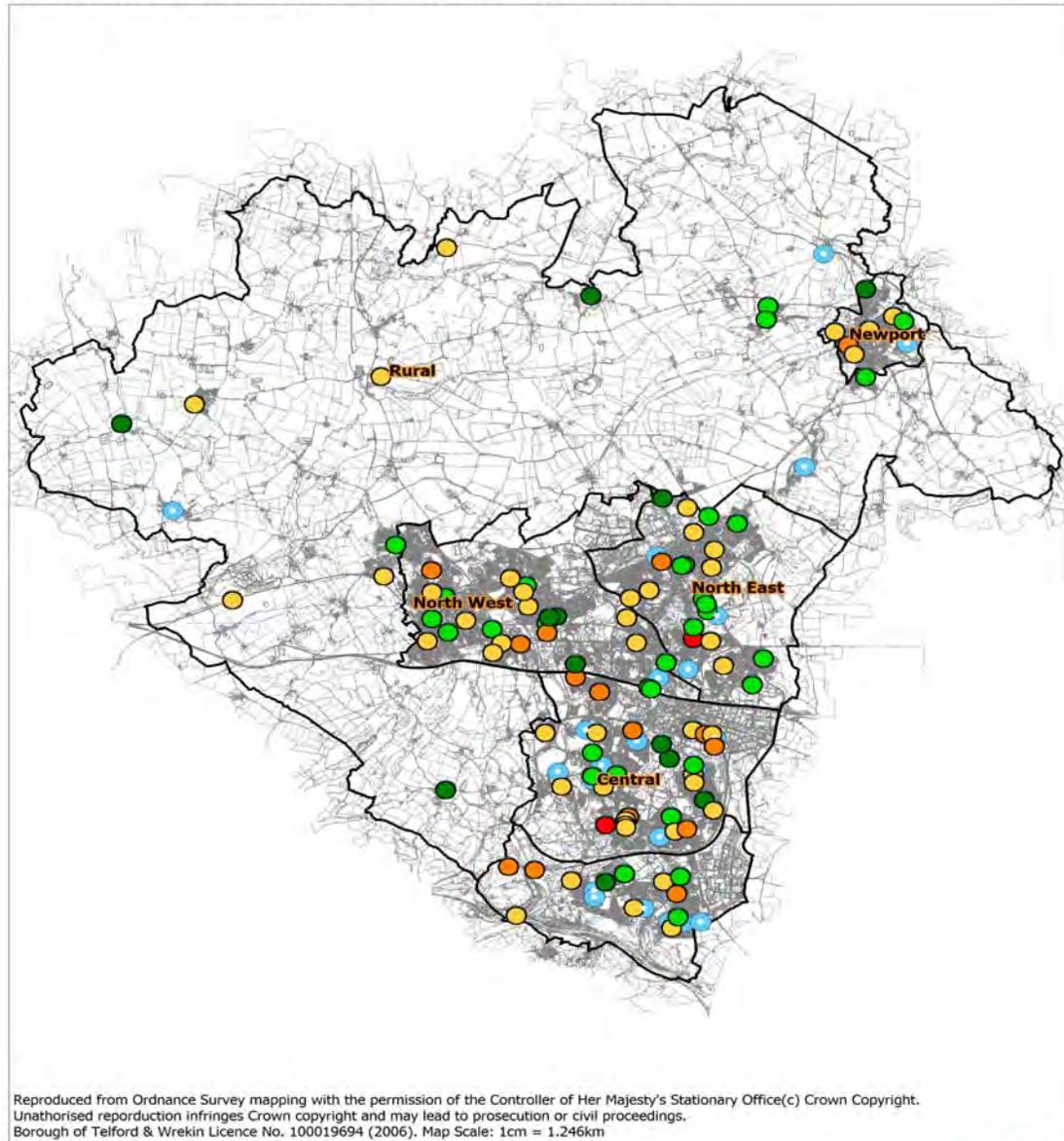
- 7.36 Despite mapping both provision for children and amenity green space together, Map 7.3 shows areas across Telford that are not served by either typology. The application of the accessibility catchment highlights particular deficiencies within Muxton, Hadley and Leegomery, and Cuckoo Oak.
- 7.37 Map 7.4 portrays a similar picture to that which has been discussed above. Mapping facilities for young people and amenity green space shows large areas within the Borough that still cannot access one of the two open spaces within the recommended travel times.
- 7.38 The points raised on the back of Maps 7.3 and 7.4 show that future provision should be a priority in the areas that are currently not served by children's facilities, young peoples facilities or amenity green space.
- 7.39 While the quantity of provision was the overriding theme of consultations, the quality of provision was also considered to be important, and many existing facilities were criticised for the lack of innovative and exciting play equipment.
- 7.40 The site assessments provide an indication of the quality of existing facilities and it is clear that there is significant variation across the Borough. The quality standard and related site assessments should inform a programme of improvements, highlighting sites in need of upgrading.

C1	Use the findings of the quality assessment to inform a programme of improvements across facilities for children and young people. Where the opportunity arises, priority should be given to poor quality play areas serving unique catchments. Consideration should be given to the provision of an appropriate variety of facilities.
-----------	--

- 7.41 The distribution of the quality of facilities can be seen on Map 7.5 overleaf. This highlights that there are clusters of high quality and poorer quality facilities.

Map 7.5 – Quality of existing children’s play areas in Telford and Wrekin

Telford and Wrekin OSS - Quality Scores, Children



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office(c) Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Borough of Telford & Wrekin Licence No. 100019694 (2006). Map Scale: 1cm = 1.246km

N

Quality % Score

- 84 to 100
- 69 to 84
- 52 to 68
- 36 to 52
- 20 to 36

Sites with no Quality Score

-

Analysis Areas

-

Master Map

-

ACTIVE
Bringing data to life

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

7.42 The key issues emerging from Map 7.5 regarding the quality of children’s play areas include:

- the distribution of high quality sites is even across the Borough
- to the west of the Telford south area in the Ironbridge Gorge ward there is a cluster of poor quality facilities
- to the north east of the Telford central area there is a cluster of poor quality sites serving a large settlement.

7.43 Given that quantity was a key theme of the consultation, new provision will be required in some areas.

C2	Any new facilities should meet the recommended quality standard. Provision of a range of facilities and effective maintenance were perceived to be of particular importance. Existing sites should be protected where they are of high value to the local community.
-----------	--

7.44 In light of the localised nature of play provision, consideration has been given to priorities within each analysis area. In terms of locating priority areas for new facilities, new provision should be targeted at those areas outside the distance threshold where there are sufficient people to justify new provision. Prior to any decision-making, consideration must be given to territorial issues, where young people do not wish to use certain facilities as they are encroaching into other areas. Localised provision may be required in these areas. Issues of accessibility should therefore be prioritised over quantity.

7.45 Consideration should be given to the feasibility of delivering new sites in partnership with schools, to maximise usage of the facilities and ensure best possible use of resources.

C3	Investigate opportunities to deliver new facilities for both children and young people at school sites. These facilities would meet the needs of the community at the same time as optimising the use of resources.
-----------	---

7.46 Analysis of the quantitative standards indicates that the northwestern area of Telford shows the greatest overall deficiency in the provision of equipped facilities for children, with a shortfall of 1.63ha by 2016. This suggests that there are insufficient facilities to meet the needs of current and future residents in this area. This is reinforced by the application of the accessibility standards, which highlights several areas of deficiency as shown (see Figure 7.1 overleaf). These areas of deficiency are also reflected in the ward by ward application of standards, which suggest that all but one ward within the north west area is deficient in provision. Areas where both accessibility and quantity is poor should be the priority. Hadley and Leegomery is also deficient in amenity green space, meaning that provision of facilities is of greater priority here (see Figure 7.2).

Figure 7.1

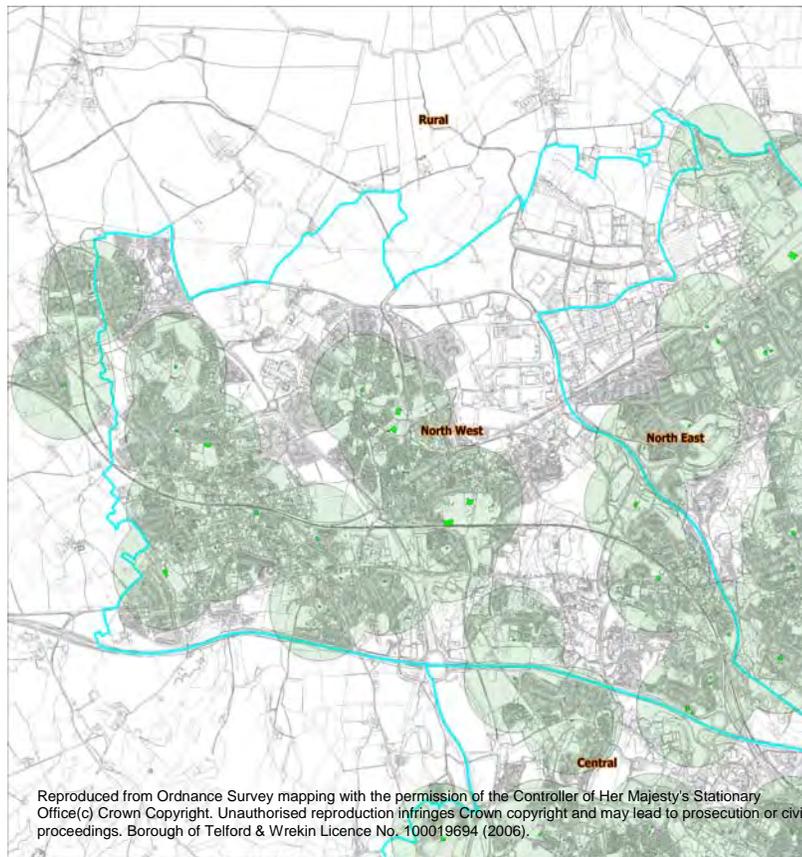
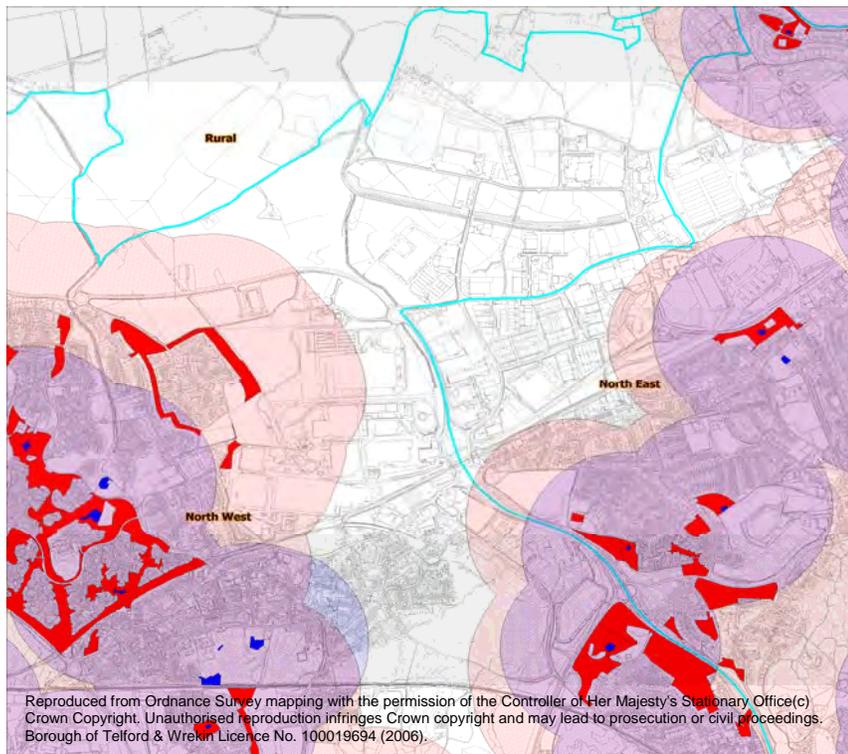


Figure 7.2



C4	Investigate opportunities for the provision of facilities for children in Hadley and Leegomery to the north west of Telford Town Centre.
-----------	--

7.47 Furthermore, in areas where the quantity of play areas is insufficient to meet local needs, the quality of these sites takes on greater importance. Dothill Play area is the only facility within Dothill and achieves a score of only 51%. Copper Beech Road Play area in Ketley and Oakengates is the poorest quality facility in this area and is in significant need of improvement.

7.48 Like provision for children, application of the local standards indicates that there are also shortfalls in provision for teenagers in the north west area of the town, in the Apley Castle and Hadley and Leegomery areas.

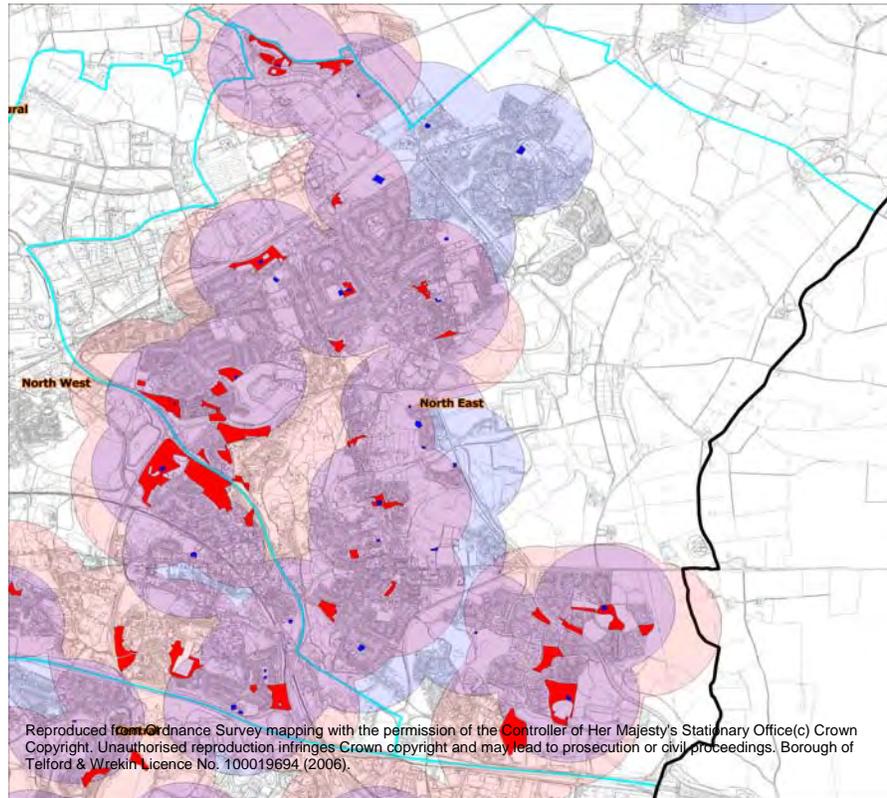
C5	Provide new facilities for young people within the Apley Castle and Hadley and Leegomery areas of the town. Any new facilities developed should be created in consultation with local teenagers to ensure that facilities meet local need and are well respected.
-----------	---

7.49 Quantitative and accessibility deficiencies for children’s facilities also exist within the north eastern side of the town, as is illustrated in Figures 7.3 below and 7.4 overleaf. These deficiencies are reinforced by the ward breakdown, which highlights that provision in many wards (including Wrockwardine Wood and Trench, St Georges, Priorslee and Donnington) is insufficient to meet local need. The importance of provision for children and young people is reinforced in this area, as the distribution of amenity green space highlights areas of deficiency.

Figure 7.3



Figure 7.4



7.50 The key areas of accessibility deficiency in this area are located in Muxton and Wrockwardine Wood and Trench. In light of the quantitative deficiencies shown in Tables 7.6 and 7.7, new provision should be prioritised within the Wrockwardine and Trench area. The quality of existing facilities in this area is poor (with one facility scoring below 50%). Wrockwardine Wood and Trench also have insufficient provision of amenity space, suggesting that there are fewer opportunities for children and young people in this area.

C6	Provide a new facility for children within the Wrockwardine Wood and Trench area of the Borough.
-----------	--

7.51 The north east of Telford is the most poorly served of all areas in terms of provision for young people, with only two facilities located in the area and both falling to the north of the area. This is reinforced by the application of the quantity standard, which indicates that the north eastern area falls significantly below the minimum standard. Application of this standard indicates that at least four additional facilities are required in this area. There are similar quantitative shortfalls across all wards to the north east of the town and it is therefore suggested that new provision is targeted at areas of particular accessibility deficiency in order to best serve the local population.

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

C7	Provide new facilities for young people on the north east side of Telford focusing on Wrockwardine Wood and Trench, St Georges and Priorslee. Any new facilities developed should be created in consultation with local teenagers to ensure that facilities meet local need and are well respected.
-----------	---

- 7.52 The south of Telford town is also deficient in both facilities for children and provision for young people in quantitative terms. Despite this, facilities for children are relatively well dispersed around the area and there are limited accessibility deficiencies. There are no facilities for children to the east of the dual carriageway in Halesfield, however this is an industrial area and facilities are therefore not required. It can be noted that the Ironbridge Gorge area of the town lacks facilities for young people.
- 7.53 Given the reasonable distribution of facilities to the south of the town, improvements to existing facilities should be prioritised. Hills Lane Play area (Cuckoo Oak site ID 609), Tweedale Crescent Play area (Madeley Site ID 602), Cherry Tree Hill Play Area (Ironbridge Site ID 656) and Sunnyside Play Area (Ironbridge Site ID 169) all achieved a score of 52% or below.
- 7.54 Although the highest level of provision for children per 1000 population is found within the Telford Central area and levels of provision exceed the minimum standard (suggesting that there is sufficient capacity to meet the needs of existing residents and that the area is not as high priority for new facilities) there are some areas outside of the catchment area for provision for children. A large proportion of the area outside of the distance threshold is Stafford Park, a large industrial estate providing office accommodation. There is therefore little demand for provision of facilities within this area. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this area is also deficient in provision for young people, although again there is little need for a facility in the area.
- 7.55 The remaining area deficient in accessibility terms is Lawley and Overdale (Figure 7.5 and 7.6) where there are several residential areas falling outside of the recommended catchment. This is illustrated by quantitative shortfalls in this area at ward level. These residential areas are reasonably well served in terms of amenity green space provision fall just on the periphery of the appropriate catchment area for a park. However, this does not negate the need for formalised provision for children and young people. Residents of the Lightmoor estate also have limited access to provision for children and young people (see Figure 7.5 and 7.6). This may be of particular importance in light of the anticipated population growth in this area over the LDF period.
- 7.56 3000 dwellings are to be created in the Lawley area over the plan period, which will impact upon the accessibility to play facilities. A series of new and upgraded facilities should be prioritised to meet this need.

Figure 7.5 - Children's facilities deficiency in Lawley and Overdale

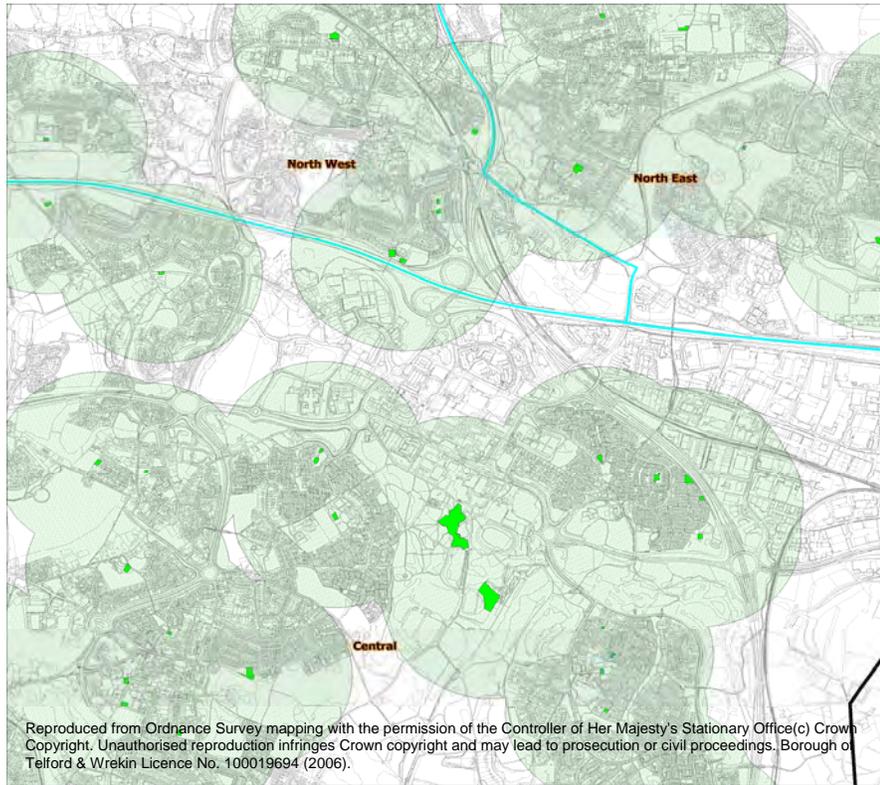
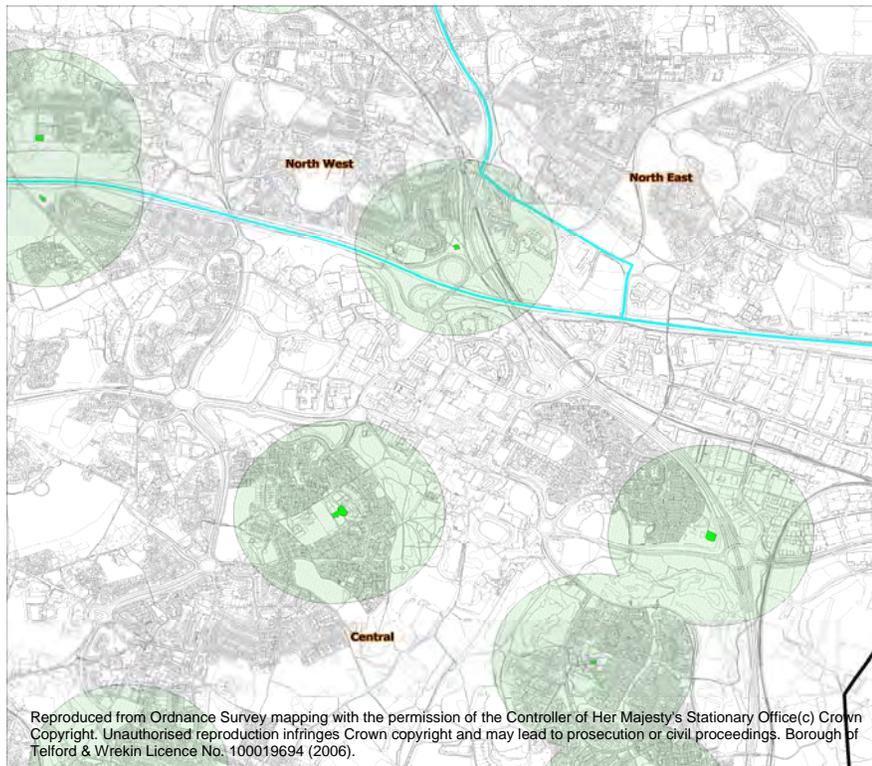


Figure 7.6 - Young people's facilities deficiency in Lawley and Overdale



C8	Investigate opportunities for the provision of facilities for young people and children in the Lawley and Overdale areas of Telford. Consider also the provision of facilities for children and young people in the Lightmoor area of the town. This will be particularly important in light of the anticipated growth that will occur in this area during the LDF period.
-----------	--

7.57 In contrast, those residents living within the Hollinswood and the Nedge area of the Borough appear particularly well served for facilities for children. Indeed, there are 12 play facilities for children within the Nedge ward, many of which appear to serve overlapping catchments. There may be scope for the disposal of one or more of these facilities in order to invest in the improvement of other facilities and ensure the optimum distribution of facilities.

C9	Investigate the value of existing sites in the Nedge ward in order to ensure that facilities offer the maximum community benefit.
-----------	---

7.58 While there are few deficiencies for children within the Telford Central area, facilities here are of poorer quality than any other area in the Borough. Where there are no deficiencies, opportunities should be taken to improve the quality of existing facilities.

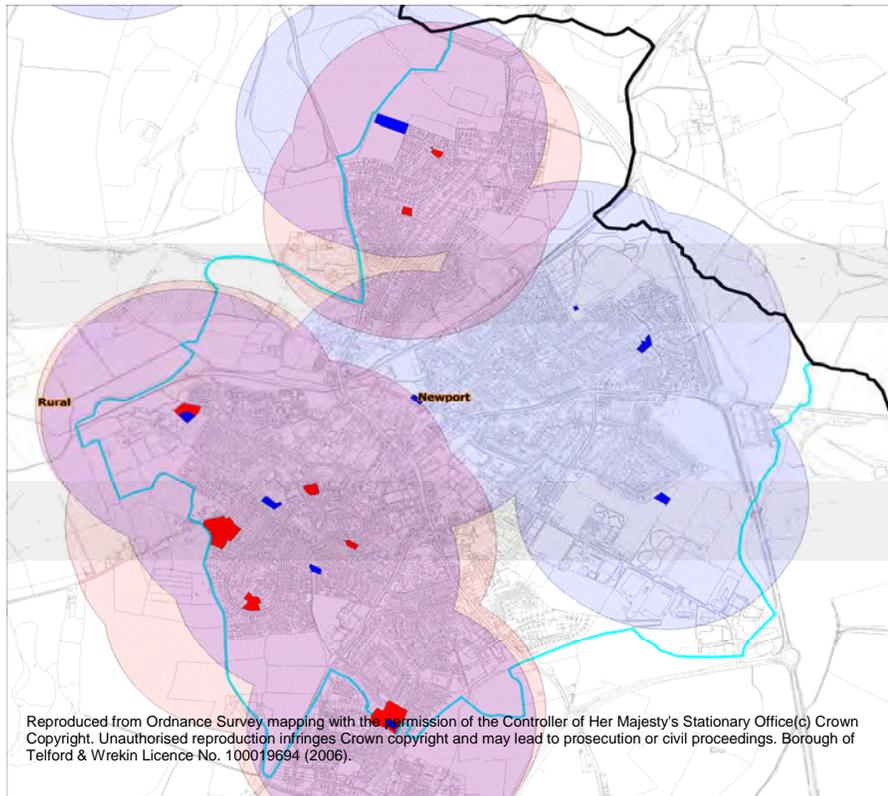
C10	Focus on improving the quality of facilities within the central area.
------------	---

7.59 In contrast, there are several accessibility deficiencies for young people within the central area, reinforcing the deficiency in quantitative terms. Like provision for children, there is an abundance of facilities to the east of the central area (in the Nedge ward) and limited provision to the west. There are both quantitative and accessibility shortfalls in Dawley Magna and Horsehay and Lightmoor wards.

C11	Investigate the need for further provision in the central area to meet the accessibility deficiencies to the west of the central area.
------------	--

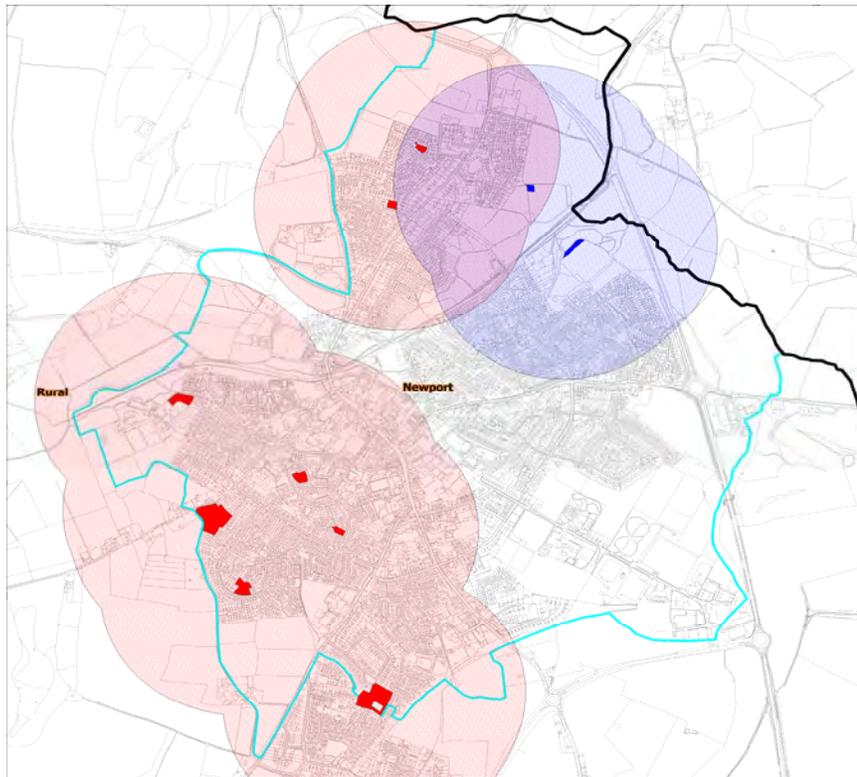
7.60 Like the central area, analysis of the quantity of provision in Newport suggests that there is sufficient capacity to meet the needs of local residents in terms of provision for children. The application of the accessibility standard in this area also reflects this, with few residents outside of the catchment area for a facility and existing facilities evenly distributed around the town. Only those living in the southern area of the town near to the school can be considered deficient in provision. These residents are also outside of the catchment for amenity spaces indicating that there are few informal opportunities for play (Figure 7.7).

Figure 7.7



7.61 In contrast, provision for young people in Newport is below the minimum standard of provision, with a deficiency of 0.32 ha by 2016. This is reinforced through the application of the accessibility standards, which highlights that only residents in the north east of Newport are currently within the recommended distance threshold of a facility and that the only two facilities in Newport for young people are located within close proximity of each other (Figure 7.8). Furthermore, while Beechfields Way Teenage area falls within the top quartile of all facilities for children in terms of quality, the BMX track at Norbroom Park achieved a score of only 44%, meaning that it is considered to be the second poorest of all facilities for teenagers in the Borough.

Figure 7.8



C12	Protect the existing facilities in Newport as all serve unique catchments. Where a facility is lost to development (and not found to be surplus to requirements, a replacement of equivalent quality and accessibility should be provided. Opportunities to improve the quality of existing facilities should be prioritised over new provision. Investigate access to facilities to the south of Newport.
C13	Provide two new facilities for young people within Newport, focusing in the southern and central areas of the town. Any new facilities developed should be created in consultation with local teenagers to ensure that facilities meet local need and are well respected.

7.62 The quantitative level of provision in the rural area is below the minimum standard of provision, however the shortfall is marginal (0.11ha) and is the lowest of all the analysis areas. To an extent, this is offset by the distribution of facilities, with the majority of residents of larger rural settlements having access to facilities.

7.63 Provision for children is however challenging within a rural area, as even residents living in small villages expect access to a facility. In order to effectively serve residents, it is therefore likely that the level of provision would exceed the recommended minimum standard. There are frequently few opportunities to provide formal play facilities within villages, and any new development of facilities should take into account the demand from the local community.

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 7.64 Application of the quantity standard would suggest that based on the average size of existing facilities within Telford and Wrekin, a play area should be provided if the population of a village exceeds 1064. Decisions regarding the provision of facilities in other smaller settlements should be based on demand from the local residents. Consideration should be given to the deliverability of play facilities on school sites.
- 7.65 It should be ensured that all villages have at least one type of informal open space where play can be promoted.

C14	Protect rural play facilities and support parish councils in the ongoing provision and maintenance of these sites. Where a facility is lost to development (and not found to be surplus to requirements, a replacement of equivalent quality and accessibility should be provided. Assist in providing new facilities in areas where there is sufficient population and where local demand is expressed.
------------	---

- 7.66 In a similar vein, effective provision for young people is challenging within the rural area and it would not be realistic to expect dedicated facilities for young people in every village. Alternative solutions should be explored to ensure that local needs are met, for example the provision of mobile facilities for teenagers. Additionally, it will be essential to ensure good public transport links between villages and facilities to maximise opportunities for young people

C15	Consider public transport links in the planning and development of new facilities for young people and ensure that facilities are accessible to young people within the rural area.
------------	---

Summary and recommendations

- 7.67 Equipped provision for children and young people was the overriding theme of consultations throughout the study with residents expressing concerns over the quantity of provision, as well as highlighting that the quality of many facilities is insufficient and that facilities are perceived to be boring and not challenging.
- 7.68 The recommended local standards address these issues, setting challenging criteria that can be used to identify priority areas. Analysis of existing facilities highlight that there is significant variation in the quality of sites although sites are distributed relatively evenly across the Borough.
- 7.69 Application of the standards highlights particular priorities to the north of Telford town for both young people and children. In contrast, residents in the central and southern areas have a greater access to facilities for young people and children and there are fewer accessibility and/or quantity deficiencies. Provision in Newport also meets minimum standards in quantitative terms, however it can be seen that there is a need for a new facility to the south of the town.
- 7.70 Any new facilities developed should meet the suggested quality criteria and should provide exciting play opportunities for children and young people. Site assessments carried out at existing facilities should also be used to inform decisions on those facilities in need of enhancement.

SECTION 7 – PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 7.71 Effectively providing facilities in the rural area is an important challenge and it will be essential to ensure that public transport links are maximised.
- 7.72 Consideration should be given to delivering facilities for young people and children at school sites to maximise resources and ensure that all residents are able to access at least one facility.
- 7.73 The impact of future housing growth, for example in Lawley, will impact on the demand and access to provision for children and young people. Any increased quantitative or accessibility deficiencies that arise as a result of housing growth should be addressed through the provision of new and upgraded facilities.

SECTION 8

OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

Outdoor sports facilities

Introduction and definition

- 8.1 PPG 17 guidance considers the provision of both indoor and outdoor sports facilities. For clarity, these amenities are separated into two distinct typologies within the document. This section considers the provision of outdoor sports facilities across Telford and Wrekin.
- 8.2 Outdoor sports facilities is a wide-ranging category of open space which includes both natural and artificial surfaces for sport and recreation that are owned and managed by town and parish councils, sports associations, schools and individual sports clubs. Examples include playing pitches, athletics tracks, bowling greens and golf courses with the primary purpose of participation in outdoor sports.
- 8.3 PPG17 considers the provision of all the different types of outdoor sport facilities as one and does not break down the typology into more detailed assessments for each sport. Sub strategies, considering the specific supply and demand for each sport should be undertaken in order to fully understand localised demand for each facility type. The Telford and Wrekin Playing Pitch Strategy provides specific information regarding shortfalls and surpluses of pitches that will be used to inform the development of this document.
- 8.4 PPG17 states that the provision of outdoor sport facilities is normally demanded and therefore it is possible to develop and use a population-based quantity standard. This will help to ensure an adequate supply of outdoor sport facilities over the LDF period. Participation will not only be dependent on the number of facilities but also on the degree to which facilities are accessible and of sufficient quality to persuade people that they are worth using. Therefore as with the other typologies covered by this report, quantity issues need to be considered alongside the locally derived quality and accessibility standards.
- 8.5 Outdoor sports facilities are often a focal point of a local community, functioning as a recreational and amenity resource in addition to a formal sports facility. This is particularly true of pitches, which often have a secondary function of a local dog walking and kickabout area. Bowring Park is a particular example of this, where the primary purpose of the site is the provision of significant sports facilities although it is also of high recreational value to the local community.
- 8.6 The effective provision of formal and informal facilities for sports will be instrumental if Telford and Wrekin Council are to increase participation rates. The recent Active People survey highlights that Telford and Wrekin Borough currently falls in the middle 50% nationally in terms of participation in sport and active recreation, with 20.6% of residents participating on at least three occasions weekly, compared to an average of 20.1% nationally.
- 8.7 The key issues for outdoor sports facilities arising from a review of strategic documents are:

SECTION 8 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

- the **Telford and Wrekin Playing Pitch Strategy (2005)** highlights the surplus and deficiencies of a number of sports pitches in the Borough
 - football – there is currently an over supply of senior football pitches in Telford and Wrekin. However, there is a shortfall in the provision of junior pitches
 - cricket – there is currently sufficient provision of cricket pitches to meet current and future demand, with the exception of South Telford
 - rugby union – within Telford and Wrekin there are enough rugby union pitches to meet current demand, but not future demand. There is a need for the increased provision of pitches in the future
 - hockey – at the time of this documents publication there was only one full sized, floodlit, synthetic hockey pitch within Telford and Wrekin. There are now five full size outdoor hockey pitches in Telford and Wrekin.
- the **Wrekin Local Plan** aims to achieve the National Playing Fields Association minimum target of 2.43 hectares per 1000 population of outdoor recreational open space and developments that result in the loss of existing open space or do not provide a suitable alternative location of similar specification will be rejected
- the **Telford Sport and Recreation Strategy 2002 – 2011** has a number of strategic objectives:
 - to encourage the provision and development of Sport and Recreation facilities and services in line with locally determined need
 - to promote the effective, efficient and sustainable use of Sport and Recreation facilities and resources through mutually beneficial partnerships and the values of excellence and innovation
 - to increase awareness and understanding of the local opportunities available and the benefits of participating in sport and recreation
 - Active People Survey results indicate that participation in sports in Telford and Wrekin is slightly below the national average, with around 19.1% of residents regularly participating.
- the **Telford and Wrekin Community Strategy 2006 – 2011** states that sport and leisure will play a key role in improving the community's health. Residents increased desire to engage in sport and leisure pursuits will be matched by a comprehensive network of sports and leisure facilities in Telford town centre and within the district centres, meeting the needs of its community and made available through local authority, community and private providers.

Consultation – Assessing Local Needs

8.8 Consultation undertaken as part of the study highlighted the following key issues:

- the user base of outdoor sports facilities and interest in the local provision in Telford is low. Only 16% of residents indicated that they frequently use outdoor sports facilities, contrasting with 46% who never use facilities
- despite this, the benefits that outdoor sports facilities offer in terms of health improvements are recognised by the local population. Parks, natural areas and amenity areas also offer significant benefits to local residents in terms of the health, encouraging them to participate in physical activity and recreation
- there are issues with the quantity of provision, indicating particularly that there are locational deficiencies of this type of open space. Improvements to the quality of existing provision were also highlighted as vital
- opportunities to increase the value of the sports stock to the local community through enhancing community access were highlighted. Residents also viewed the protection of pitches as particularly important.

Quantity of provision

8.9 The provision of outdoor sports facilities across Telford and Wrekin is summarised in Table 8.1 below.

Table 8.1 – Provision of outdoor sports facilities across Telford and Wrekin

Analysis areas	Current provision	Number of sites	Smallest site (hectares)	Largest site (hectares)	LDF population (2016)	Provision (ha) per 1000 population (2016)
Telford north west	79.69	38	0.17	12.52	48,739	1.64
Telford north east	59.11	33	0.11	16.49	35,661	1.66
Telford central	66.08	30	0.03	16.22	45,755	1.44
Telford south	45.8	15	0.75	9.85	23,439	1.95
Newport	27.05	10	0.28	7.87	12,648	2.14
Rural	31.79	24	0.1	5.49	15,855	2.01
Overall	309.52	150	0.03	16.49	182,097	1.70

SECTION 8 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

- 8.10 The key issues emerging from Table 8.1 and consultations relating to the quantity of provision of outdoor sports facilities across the Borough include:
- the recurring theme is the high proportion of residents having no opinion, highlighting the low level of interest regarding this type of open space. This disinterest is mirrored in responses to the level of use, which shows that 46% of residents in Telford and Wrekin do not use outdoor sports facilities
 - of the facility types surveyed, dissatisfaction was shown with the provision of all facility types, with the exception of golf courses. The highest levels of dissatisfaction shown were with regard to grass pitches, synthetic turf pitches and bowling greens
 - when considering the level of satisfaction across the analysis areas, the rural area showed the highest level of satisfaction in three of the six facilities, stating provision was about right for grass pitches (51%), tennis courts (34%) and athletics (29%). Telford north east displayed the lowest level of satisfaction in three of the six facilities, with residents indicating the provision of tennis courts (49%), bowling greens (35%) and golf courses (28%) was insufficient
 - consistent with the consultation findings, Table 8.2 shows that the rural analysis area has the second highest level of provision per 1000 population moving through the LDF period (2.01ha)
 - at drop in sessions the importance of outdoor sports facilities was emphasised by residents, with many viewing the protection of this type of open space as essential
 - the current level of provision is 309.52 hectares spread across 150 sites, which equates to an average site size of 2.06 hectares
 - due to the nature of the typology the size of sites varies significantly. The smallest site is found in Telford central (0.03 hectares) and the largest found in Telford north east (16.49 hectares).

Setting provision standards – quantity

- 8.11 The recommended local quantity standard for outdoor sports facilities has been derived from the local needs consultation and audit of provision and is summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix F.

Quantity Standard (see Appendices E and F – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
1.8ha per 1000 population	1.8ha per 1000 population
Justification	
<p>Outdoor sports facilities are very much demand-led and the outdoor sports facility typology encompasses a wide variety of different facilities including athletics tracks, pitches, golf courses and bowling greens. However, the concurrent theme is the high number of residents having no opinion, highlighting the low level of interest regarding this type of open space. In order to understand the demand for outdoor sports facilities in a greater level of detail it is therefore essential to consider each type of sports facility separately.</p> <p>The variation in responses indicates that there may be a disparity in the distribution of facilities across the Borough although overall, there is dissatisfaction in the quantity of all types of facility with the exception of golf courses (which have been removed from all figures due to their size and subsequent tendency to skew figures). While this indicates that a quantity standard greater than the existing level of provision should be set, many of the comments from other consultations focus on the quality of provision, and enhancing access to existing provision.</p> <p>Detailed investigations into the requirements for pitches indicate that there are surpluses in adult pitch provision which contrast with shortfalls in junior provision. Given that junior pitches are smaller in size than adult pitches, it can be considered that while the layout of pitches may change, the required quantity of provision should remain at similar levels to the existing quantity. In light of the opportunities to improve access to new/existing facilities, it is recommended that a quantity standard reflecting the existing level of provision is set. While this may identify locational deficiencies, it will ensure that resources are maximised and that a focus on quality is maintained</p>	

Current provision - quality

- 8.12 The quality of existing outdoor sports facilities in the Borough was assessed through site visits and is set out in Table 8.2. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted as a snapshot in time and are therefore reflective of the quality of the site on one specific day.
- 8.13 The quality scores are weighted according to the findings of the local consultation. Those elements that were highlighted through consultation as being a particularly important determinant of quality have been given a higher weighting to ensure that they have a greater influence on the overall quality score that each site achieves. The full rationale behind this approach is set out in Appendix G. The quality of both the playing surface and the ancillary accommodation were deemed to be particularly important for the provision of outdoor sports.

Table 8.2 – Quality of outdoor sports facilities across Telford and Wrekin

Geographical area	Number of sites	Range of quality scores (%)	Average quality scores (%)	Lowest quality sites	Highest quality sites
Telford north west	38	35%-100%	67.5%	New College Telford – site ID 192	Bowring Park – site ID 178
Telford north east	33	32%-94%	69.4%	West Croft Walk – site ID 964	Trench bowling club – site ID 340
Telford central	30	34%-86.7%	62%	Draycott playing field – site ID 972	Windmill Primary School playing field – site ID 568
Telford south	15	46%-92%	66.1%	Hills Lane playing field – site ID 610	Madeley Court sports centre – site ID 600
Newport	10	48%-100%	65.2%	Shukers Close playing fields (Nova United Football) – site ID 915	Newport bowling club – site ID 914
Rural	24	48.6%-100%	73.4%	High Street OSF – site ID 45	Ercall Magna bowling club – site ID 83
Overall	150	32%-100%	67.5%	West Croft Walk – site ID 964	Bowring recreation ground – site ID 178, Ercall Magna bowling club – site ID 83

8.14 The key issues emerging from Table 8.2 and the consultation relating to the quality of outdoor sports facilities include:

- responses from the household survey show mixed opinions concerning the quality of outdoor sports facilities. 39% of respondents rate their quality as average, 24% poor and 23% good. This may be reflective of varying quality around the Borough

SECTION 8 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

- the individual geographical areas provide similar results and the majority of respondents in five of the six analysis areas consider the quality of outdoor sports facilities to be average. Only in Telford north east does a significant proportion of residents (33%) feel the quality of outdoor sports facilities is good. Parish councils had a more positive viewpoint of the provision of outdoor sports facilities, suggesting that the quality on the whole is good
- consultation highlights the importance of appropriate maintenance (including well kept grass), provision of toilets and cleanliness as the three most important determinants of the quality of outdoor sports facilities. Ancillary accommodation was also perceived to be important
- the range of quality scores across Telford and Wrekin portrays a significant variation in the quality of provision across the Borough. The split in consultation responses reflects this
- a number of playing fields have particularly low quality scores and the Council should focus upon the enhancement of these sites.

Setting provision standards – quality

- 8.15 The recommended local quality standard for outdoor sports facilities is summarised overleaf. Full justifications and consultation relating to the quality of provision for the local standard is provided within Appendix G.

Quality Standard (see Appendix G)

Recommended standard – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES		
Local consultation, national guidance and best practice suggest that the following features are essential and desirable to local residents:		
Essential	Desirable	
Well kept grass	Clean/Litter free	
Toilets	Parking facilities	
Good access	Changing facilities	
Detailed analysis of the local consultation suggests that with regards to outdoor sports facilities, the relative importance of the key components is as follows:		
Component of quality	Proportion of possible total responses received	Weighting
Security and safety	39%	2
Cleanliness and maintenance	41%	4
Vegetation	24%	1
Ancillary accommodation	40%	3

Setting provision standards – accessibility

- 8.16 The accessibility of sites is paramount in maximising usage as well as providing an opportunity for all people to use the site. The recommended local standard is set in the form of a distance threshold and is derived directly from the findings of the local consultations.
- 8.17 Site specific accessibility issues were also analysed as part of the programme of site visits where information and signage, transport and general accessibility issues were assessed.
- 8.18 Consultation and analysis highlights that the key issues with regards accessibility were:
- access to outdoor sports facilities was highlighted as a key issue, particularly where sites are located at schools and are inaccessible to the local community outside of school hours
 - expectations regarding the appropriate mode of travel vary according to the type of outdoor sports facility in question. While people would expect to drive to synthetic pitches, athletics facilities and golf courses (and hence public transport links are particularly important at these venues), pitches, bowling greens are expected to be provided locally and should be accessible on foot

SECTION 8 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

- during site assessments, the modal rating for accessibility was good, with a number of sites rated as average or poor. As highlighted in the consultation, a key reason for this could be the inaccessible sites located within schools.
- 8.19 The recommended local accessibility standard for outdoor sports facilities is summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

Accessibility Standard (see Appendix H)

Recommended standard
15 MINUTE WALK TIME (720 METRES) = GRASS PITCHES, TENNIS COURTS, BOWLING GREENS
20 MINUTE DRIVE TIME = SYNTHETIC TURF PITCHES, GOLF COURSES, ATHLETICS TRACKS
Justification
<p>There are several factors to consider in setting a standard for outdoor sports facilities. In particular, the range of facilities that lie within this typology makes it difficult to set a meaningful standard that can be applied across the board as per PPG17 requirements. For example, residents have significantly different expectations for synthetic turf pitches (to which they are willing to travel further) than they do for grass pitches (where there is a presumption of more localised provision).</p> <p>Given the findings from the local consultation, it is suggested that two standards are set, one for grass pitches, tennis courts and bowling greens, and a separate standard for synthetic turf pitches, athletics tracks and golf courses. This reflects local expectations regarding driving and walking to outdoor sport facilities. The 75% threshold level for those who expect to walk to grass pitches, tennis and bowling greens is 15 minutes (720 metres). As a consequence a 15 minute (720 metre) walk time to these “local” outdoor sports facilities is considered an appropriate standard. It will ensure quantitative improvements whilst also focusing on improving the quality of existing provision. Furthermore, this 15 minute level is supported across all analysis areas. This is in line with incorporating sustainable transport choices, to account for the wide mix of facilities types within the standard to meet all expectations.</p> <p>The 75% threshold level for those who expect to drive to synthetic turf pitches and athletics tracks is 20 minutes, with a 10-minute drive time for golf courses. Given the more specialist nature of these facilities (and the vast area that golf courses cover), alongside the fact they are usually built in strategic locations to incorporate local demand, a 20-minute drive time standard is recommended.</p> <p>The formal use of school facilities by the community after school hours will be particularly important if the recommended standards are to be delivered. Should community use of school sites not be increased, new provision may be required.</p>

Applying provision standards

- 8.20 The application of the recommended quality, quantity and accessibility standards is essential in understanding the existing distribution of outdoor sports facilities and identifying areas where provision is insufficient to meet local need.

SECTION 8 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

- 8.21 The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately.
- 8.22 Given the broad nature of the outdoor sports facilities typology within PPG17, standards should only be applied to give a broad indication of planning need. In light of the demand led nature of each type of facility, specific studies identifying the nature of facilities required should be carried out to provide a further basis for informed decision making.
- 8.23 The application of the local standard for quantity results in the following issues:

Table 8.3 – Application of quantity standard

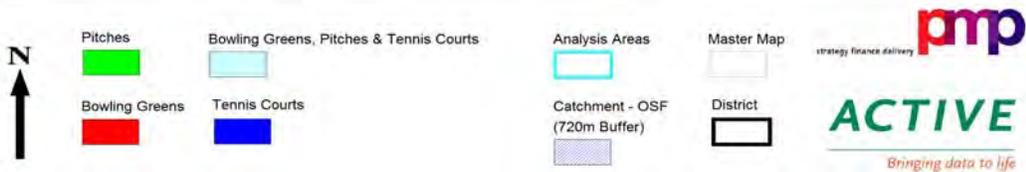
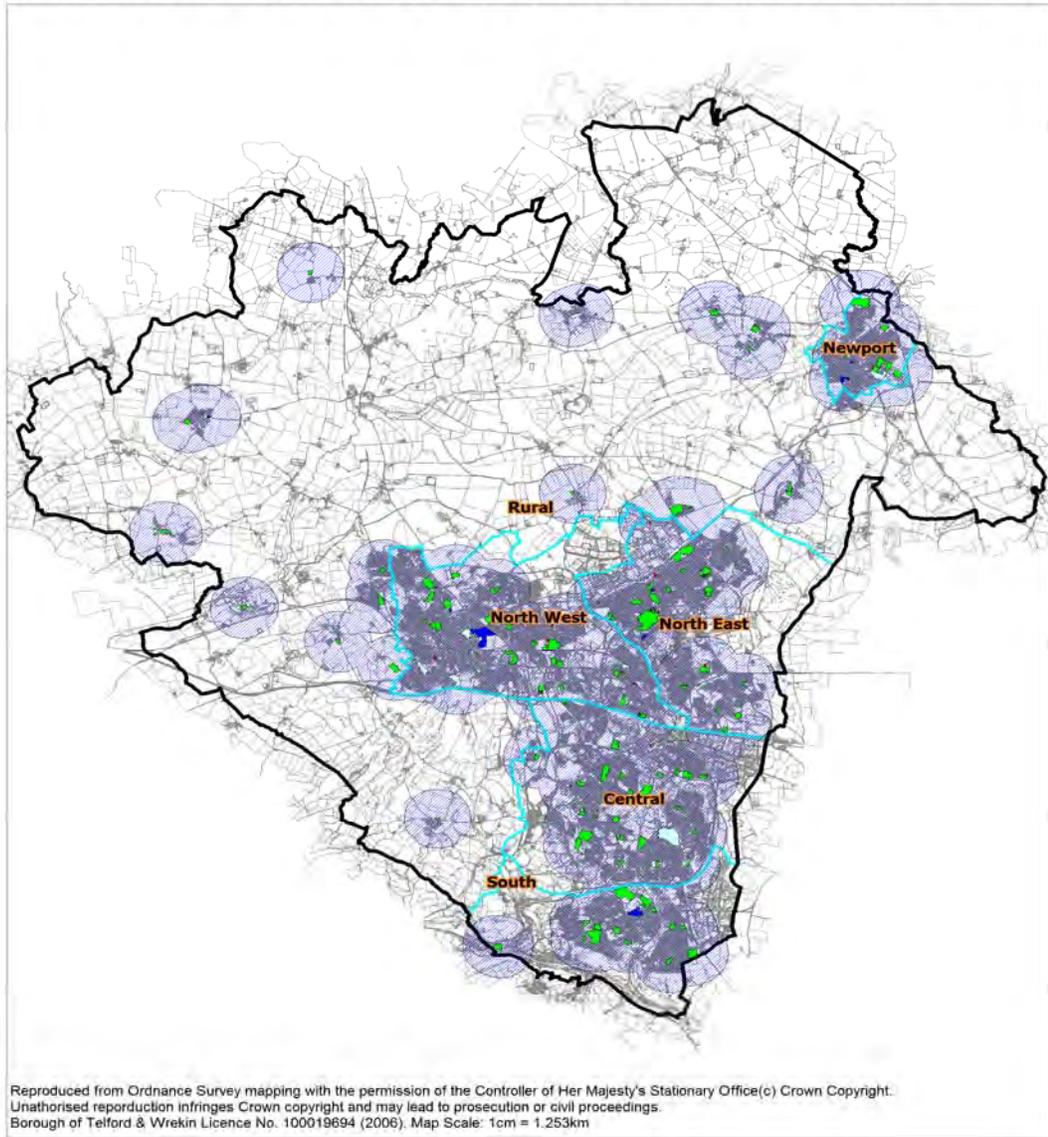
Analysis areas	Future provision (2016) in hectares balanced against the local standard (1.8 hectares per 1000 population)
Telford north west	-8.04
Telford north east	-5.08
Telford central	-16.28
Telford south	3.61
Newport	4.28
Rural	3.25
Overall	-18.25

Green = above the minimum standard, Red = below the minimum standard.

- the recommended local standard is higher than the current provision across the Telford Town areas. The remainder of the Borough appears well served with outdoor sports facilities.
 - in order to meet the minimum quantity standard, in the region of 18 hectares of outdoor sport facilities would be required across the Borough of Telford and Wrekin.
- 8.24 The application of the local accessibility and quality standards for outdoor sports facilities is set out overleaf in Map 8.1.

Map 8.1 – Provision of outdoor sports facilities

Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments, Outdoor Sports Facilities



SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

- 8.25 The key issues arising from the accessibility mapping regarding the distribution of sites include:
- there is a good distribution of outdoor sport facilities across both the urban and rural areas
 - despite some deficiencies in all analysis areas (with the exception of Newport), within the urban area of Telford, the majority of residents fall within the accessibility catchment. There are clear deficiencies in Telford north east and Telford north west. However, there is a large variety in the scale of outdoor sport facilities meaning that whilst some residents are in close proximity to large sites, other neighbourhoods are only served by very small sites
 - furthermore, school facilities have restricted accessibility and in some instances are not accessible at all. The importance of enhancing access to school facilities was raised throughout consultations
 - analysis of the spread of different outdoor sports facilities indicates that pitches are evenly distributed, suggesting a network of local provision. In contrast, bowling greens are focused predominantly to the north of Telford Town. There are several larger sites containing multiple facilities distributed across the Borough
 - the application of the accessibility catchment for synthetic turf pitches and athletics tracks shows that all key settlements within Telford and Wrekin are within a 20-minute drive time of these facilities.

Applying the quantity, quality and accessibility standards

- 8.26 Quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance.
- 8.27 The playing pitch strategy highlighted the importance of both central locations (ie larger strategic sites) as well as a network of smaller local facilities.
- 8.28 Consultation indicated that while the quantity of facilities is problematic in some areas, there is a real need to improve the quality of many existing sites. This was reflected through the significant variation in the quality of facilities. As there are few accessibility deficiencies, the initial focus should be on the enhancement of existing facilities.
- 8.29 The quality of existing sites has therefore been divided into quartiles. This analysis is set out in Table 8.4 overleaf and a selection of sites falling into each category is listed. A full list of all scores achieved during site assessments can be found within Appendix C. To fall within the top quartile, a score of 78% would be required.

Table 8.4 – Detailed analysis of the quality of existing sites

Above upper quartile	78% +	(100%) Newport Cricket Club – Newport – Site ID 913 (78%) Sinclair Social and Sports Club Bowling Green – North West – Site ID 955
Median – Upper quartile	71% - 77%	(77%) Muxton Primary School Playing Field – North East – ID 146 (71%) Higher Ercall Village Hall OSF – Rural – Site ID 87
Lower quartile – median	63% - 70%	(70%) Wrockwardine Wood C of E Junior School – North East – Site ID 341 (64%) Teagues Crescent – North East – Site ID 336
Less than lower quartile	Below 62%	(62%) Humber Way OSF – North East – Site ID 120 (32%) West Croft Walk – North East – Site ID 964

8.30 The key issues emerging from Table 8.4 and site assessments are:

- 35 sites achieved the upper quartile quality score, highlighting a small amount of high quality facilities in the Borough
- the average score for all sites is 70% indicating the need for qualitative improvements to sports facilities in Telford and Wrekin (in order to achieve the upper quartile score of 78%)
- 16 sites scored below 50%. These sites should be identified as priorities for improvement by the Council
- all facilities should aspire to achieve the upper quartile level currently achieved by 24% of sites within the Borough.

OSF1	Strive to improve the quality of outdoor sports facilities, to achieve 78% (the score required to fall within the top quartile). This should ensure that all are fit for their intended purpose .
-------------	---

8.31 In addition to the quality of outdoor sports facilities, consultation highlighted that the quantity of provision in some areas is problematic.

8.32 The quantitative analysis has revealed a requirement for further provision up to 2016 in three of the six areas, namely Telford north west, Telford north east and Telford central. This suggests that deficiencies and high demand is focused within Telford town rather than the outlying areas of the Borough.

SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

- 8.33 The good distribution of facilities illustrated on Map 8.1 suggests that on the whole, quantity issues relate to the capacity of existing facilities to accommodate the level of demand from local residents. Quantitative issues may relate to access to facilities (or to the specific type of facility required) rather than an overall shortfall.

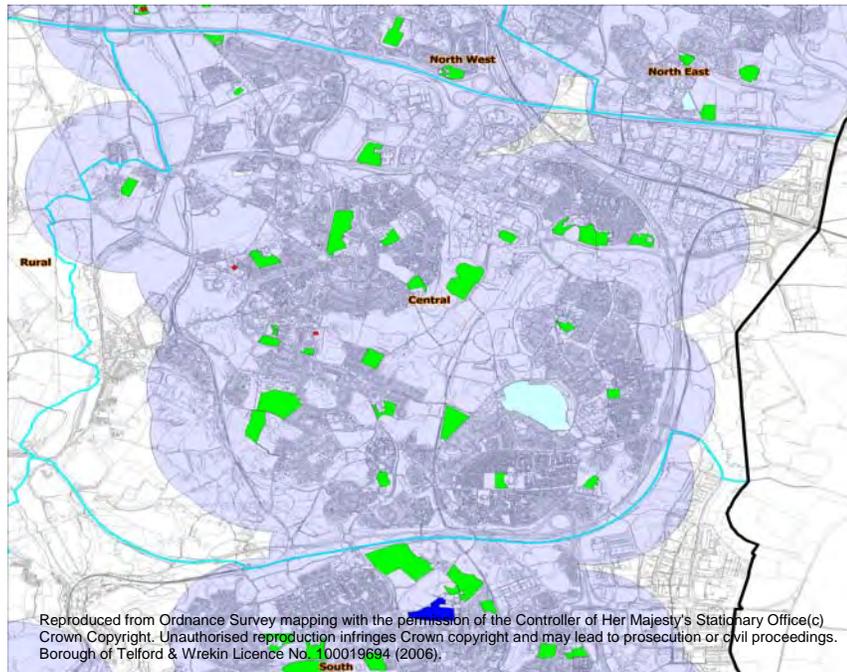
OSF2	Protect the existing outdoor sports facilities, especially those serving residents in the Telford north west, Telford north east and Telford central areas. Where a facility is lost to development (and not found to be surplus to requirements, a replacement of equivalent quality and accessibility should be provided.
-------------	---

- 8.34 This reinforces the need to maximise the number of sites that are accessible to local residents, in particular focusing on access to school facilities for local residents. This is particularly critical in the Telford town area, as well as across the Borough, given that there are deficiencies in provision.

OSF3	In locations where there is expressed demand for further sporting provision, and where school facilities could be made available to the public but aren't currently, the Council should consider the feasibility of formalising community-use agreements at school sites prior to seeking delivery of new outdoor sport facilities.
-------------	---

- 8.35 In order to address locational quantitative issues, in the section that follows, consideration is given to the opportunities for new provision within the different areas of the Borough. However the emphasis should remain with qualitative improvements to existing facilities.
- 8.36 Within Telford central, the majority of residents are within the appropriate distance threshold of at least one outdoor sports facility. Despite this, application of the local quantity standards has revealed an approximate requirement for over 16ha of new provision up to 2016, the largest of all areas (Figure 8.1). New provision may be particularly important in light of anticipated growth in this area of the town.

Figure 8.1



8.37 Priority for any new facilities should be given to those areas where access to outdoor facilities is more limited, specifically within Horsehay and Lightmoor and The Nedge wards. There is also limited provision within Lawley and Overdale. There are no clear deficiencies and therefore new provision should be demand led. While access to a range of provision is more limited in these areas, in particular the municipal Horsehay Village Golf Facility provides an important community facility for local residents.

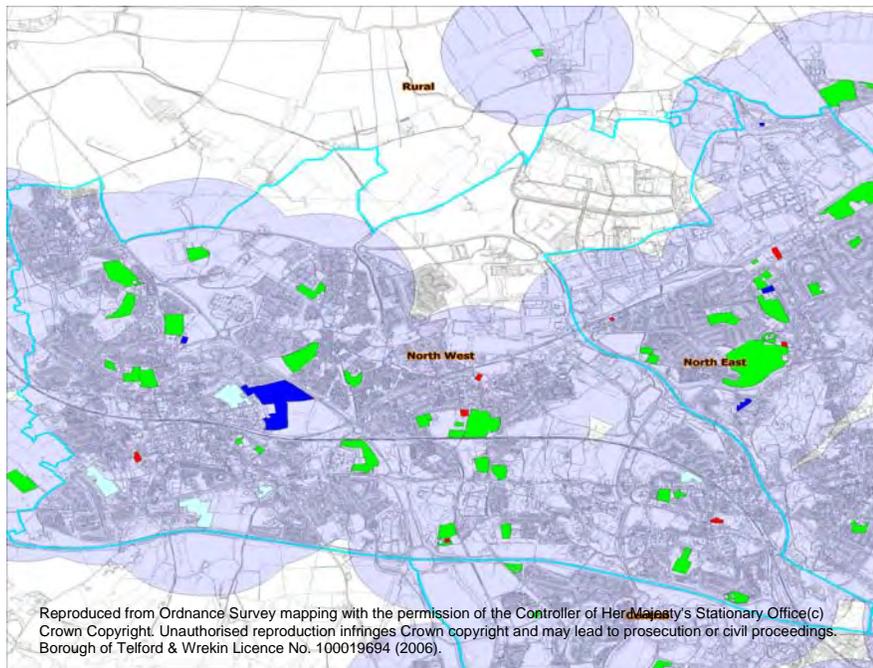
8.38 Alternatively, expansion of existing facilities may be required. Telford Hornets RUFC play within the central area. The Playing Pitch Strategy identified specific need for additional provision for rugby over the LDF period and there is therefore potential that this could be provided within the central area. The majority of provision within this area is focused around playing pitches and a wider diversity of facilities could therefore be provided.

8.39 As highlighted, prior to the development of new facilities, enhanced access to existing facilities should be explored.

OSF4	Investigate the demand for and the potential to deliver further provision of outdoor sport facilities in the central area of Telford.
-------------	---

8.40 Like central Telford, the north west of the town currently has an under provision of 3.04ha against the local quantity standard (as shown in Figure 8.2), with predicted population growth likely to see this deficiency rise to 8.04ha. The application of the accessibility standard highlights a small area of deficiency in Hadley and Leegomery, however there is no clear need for new provision. Like the central Telford area, this suggests that facilities are likely to be operating at capacity and may well be sustaining high levels of use. The focus in this area should therefore include maximising access to existing facilities as well as enhancing the quality of existing sites.

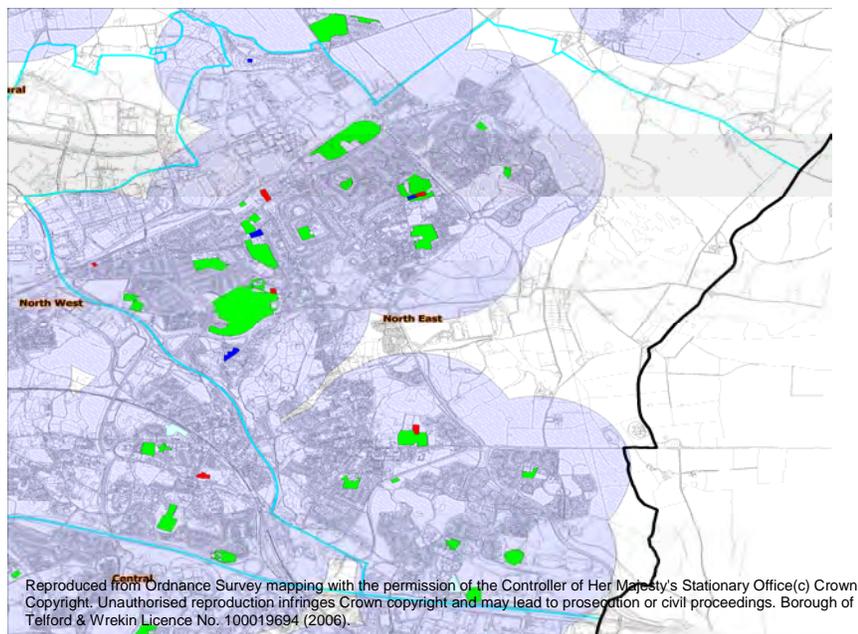
Figure 8.2



OSF5	Maximise access to existing facilities within Northern Telford and consider the provision of new facilities should the demand arise.
-------------	--

8.41 Telford north east (as can be seen within Telford north west) displays deficiencies against both the quantity and accessibility standards, shown in Figure 8.3. Up to 2016 this analysis area will have a shortfall of 5.08ha.

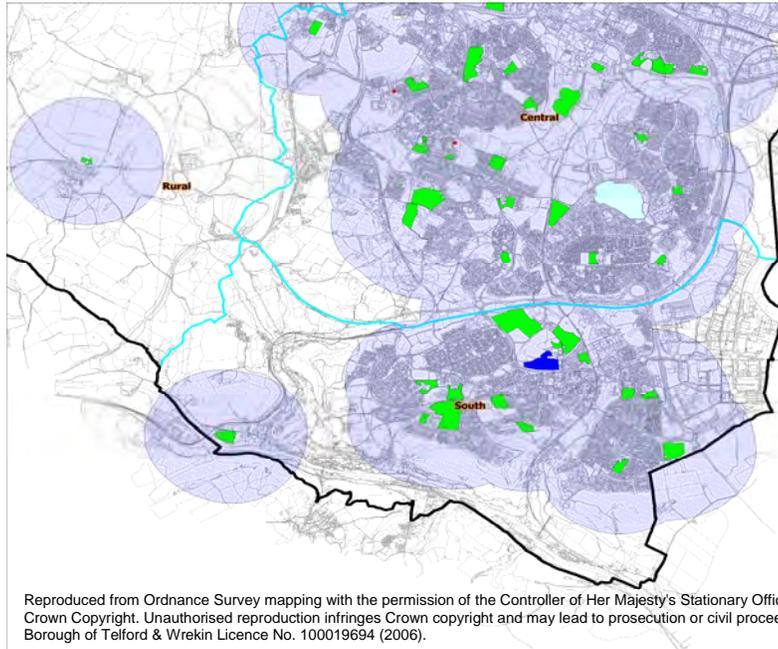
Figure 8.3



SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

- 8.42 Application of the local quantity standards shows Telford south is well served in terms of provision for outdoor sports facilities. However, the accessibility catchment highlights slight areas of deficiency on the periphery of the area (Figure 8.4). Any new provision should be targeted at these areas. Demand for a new cricket facility was identified within the playing pitch strategy within this area. Analysis of existing provision also suggests that there is limited variety of facilities within the south of the Borough.

Figure 8.4



- 8.43 Consideration of the quantity of provision within Newport indicates that there is sufficient to meet local needs. This is also reflected in the distribution of facilities, where all residents are able to access at least one type of sports site.
- 8.44 There is a wide variety of provision within the rural area and most of the larger settlements have access to facilities. New facilities will only be required where there is an expressed demand, and like other areas, the focus should be on enhancing the quality of existing facilities.

Summary

- 8.45 Outdoor sports facilities is a wide-ranging category of open space which includes both natural and artificial surfaces for sport and recreation that are owned and managed by town and parish councils, sports associations, schools and individual sports clubs. Examples include playing pitches, athletics tracks, bowling greens and golf courses with the primary purpose of participation in outdoor sports.
- 8.46 This PPG17 study considers the provision of all the different types of outdoor sport facilities as one and does not break down the typology into more detailed assessments for each sport. Telford and Wrekin's playing pitch strategy considers current and future pitch provision in detail as a bespoke element of outdoor sport facilities. It is recommended that a similar approach be taken with other outdoor sports.

SECTION 9 – OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

- 8.47 Consultation highlights issues with both the quality and quantity of facilities. Analysis of the existing provision supports this. There is significant variation in the quality of facilities across the Borough, with site assessment scores ranging from 30% to 100%.
- 8.48 The distribution of outdoor sport facilities across the Borough is even, suggesting a good spread of facilities. Despite this there is a large difference in the amount of land dedicated to these facilities, which is reflective of the type of facilities in each area. To some extent this determines the level of quantitative shortfall/surplus in an area. Analysis of the application of the accessibility standards highlights few deficiencies.
- 8.49 Improvements to the quality and accessibility of existing facilities should therefore be prioritised. This is particularly important given that many existing school sites are not available to the local community. Any new provision should be demand led.

SECTION 9

INDOOR SPORTS FACILTIES

Indoor sports facilities

Introduction

- 9.1 PPG17 states that it is essential to also consider the role that indoor sports facilities play in meeting the needs of local residents. It states that the provision of swimming pools, indoor sports halls, indoor bowls and indoor tennis should therefore be considered as part of the local supply and demand assessment.
- 9.2 The methodology for the assessment of indoor facilities is slightly different to other PPG 17 typologies in that specific demand modelling can be undertaken in line with Sport England parameters. Nevertheless, while these national standards are taken into account, the emphasis and focus remains on the development and application of local standards, which are representative of the needs and expectations of local residents.
- 9.3 The recently completed Telford and Wrekin indoor sports facility strategy sets out the strategic direction for the improvement of indoor sports facilities across the Borough. This document recognises and highlights the opportunities arising through the Building Schools for the Future Scheme. This document has been central to the consideration of the recommended local standards within this section and the findings of this PPG17 assessment dovetail with the indoor sports facilities strategy.

Strategic context and consultation

Sign up for sport - A Regional Plan for Sport in the West Midlands (2004-2008) - Sport England (West Midlands)

- 9.4 Sport England as the national agency driving sports development takes a strategic lead on the provision of sport.
- 9.5 Sign up for sport is a plan for sport and physical activity in the region. Its formulation has involved national, regional and local consultations with key stakeholders, agencies and organisations across the private, public and voluntary sectors that fully understand the strategic issues and local needs of the region.
- 9.6 The plan highlights the following seven main outcomes:
- to increase levels of participation in club and community sport
 - to improve levels of sports performance
 - widening access to sport
 - improving the health and well being of people through sport
 - creating safer and stronger communities through sport
 - improving education through PE and sport
 - benefiting the economy through sport.
- 9.7 The provision of indoor sports facilities that meet local and national standards will be key to the delivery of the above objectives.

SECTION 9 – INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

- 9.8 Active Places and Active Places Power provides a key resource for the Borough Council in the long-term management and resource planning for indoor sports. The recent Active People Survey found that the percentage of adults participating in at least 30 minutes moderate intensity sport and active recreation (including recreational walking) on three or more days a week in Telford and Wrekin is 19.4% compared to 21% nationally. This indicates that there is a lower level of physical activity in the Borough than the national average.
- 9.9 The key issues for indoor sports facilities emerging from a review of strategic documents are:
- the vision of the Telford Indoor Sports and Physical Activity Facilities Draft Strategy 2007 is “To create a network of inclusive high quality community and specialist sport and physical activity facilities within Telford and Wrekin that will encourage an increase in its communities physical activity levels, and enhance the quality of life of existing and future communities”
 - the strategy further identifies that all nine council leisure facilities are Quest accredited, four of which are highly commended
 - in terms of the CPA accessibility target, 52.7% of the population within Telford and Wrekin reside within 20 minutes travel time of a range of three different sports facility types of which one has achieved a quality assured standard.

Consultation

- 9.10 Consultation specific to indoor sports provision in Telford and Wrekin provides an indication of public opinion whilst providing some meaningful statistics. Key findings from consultation provide a justification for setting local standards against local needs and include:
- indoor sports facilities are of greater value to the local population than outdoor sports facilities, with 31% of local respondents frequently using these facilities. 33% however remain non-users of indoor sports facilities.
 - quality of existing facilities was the overriding issue for local residents, with many facilities perceived to be dated and no longer meeting local needs. Despite this, some issues with access to local facilities were also highlighted.

Current position

- 9.11 A broad review of indoor sport and recreation facilities has been undertaken to guide future planning within Telford and Wrekin based on the Active Places database. The Active Places database was also used as the primary source of information in the indoor sports facility strategy. This overview complements the findings of the facility strategy and provides an evidence base for planning purposes.
- 9.12 Provision of sports halls, swimming pools, indoor tennis and indoor bowls has been considered in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility. An overarching quality standard has been set for indoor facilities. Local standards for quantity and accessibility are specific to each type of facility and are detailed in the paragraphs that follow.

Quality

- 9.13 The PPG17 Companion Guide reinforces that design and management are factors integral to the successful delivery of a network of high quality sport and recreation, stating that:

“Quality depends on two things: the needs and expectations of users, on the one hand, and design, management and maintenance on the other.”

- 9.14 The quality standard for indoor facilities should reflect the views and aspirations of the local community and should be linked to the national benchmark and design criteria. The views and aspirations of the community were highlighted earlier in this section and the suggested essential and desirable features of an indoor sports facility within Telford were:

Essential	Desirable
Parking facilities	Good access
Toilets	Equipment maintenance
Changing facilities	Range of facilities

- 9.15 Improvements to the quality of existing facilities were highlighted as being of greater importance than increases in the overall quantity of provision. Further detail on the views and aspirations of the local community, alongside the recommendations for the local quality standard can be found in Appendix G.

Benchmarking and design specifications

- 9.16 In line with PPG17 recommendations, in addition to establishing a quality vision for sports facilities based on local community needs, a quality standard for indoor sport and recreation facilities has been set using national benchmarks, Sport England Technical Design Guidance Notes and Quest Best Practice Standards. Key objectives underpinning this quality standard are:

- to provide clear guidance relating to facility specifications, ensuring suitability of design for the targeted range of sports and standards of play as well as individual requirements for specialist sports and uses
- to ensure high standards of management and customer service are attained, which meet or exceed customer expectation and lead to a quality leisure experience for all users of facilities.

- 9.17 The quality standard is therefore split into two components:

- QS1 – design and technical
- QS2 – management and operational.

- 9.18 It can be seen that some elements of the quality standard, derived from local needs and aspirations, are linked to the specifications detailed in QS1 and QS2.

QS1: Quality standard (design and technical)

QS1: All new build and refurbishment schemes to be designed in accordance with Sport England Guidance Notes, which provide detailed technical advice and standards for the design and development of sports facilities.

- 9.19 A full list of Sport England Design Guidance Notes can be found on, and are available to download free, from the Sport England website.

http://www.sportengland.org/index/get_resources/resource_downloads/design_guidelines.htm

- 9.20 The space requirement for most sports depends on the standard of play – generally the higher the standard, the larger the area required. Although the playing area is usually of the same dimensions, there is a need to build in provision for increased safety margins, increased clearance height, spectator seating, etc. Similarly, design specification varies according to level of competition with respect to flooring type and lighting lux levels, for example.

- 9.21 Sport England Design Guidance Notes are based on eight standards of play. Consideration should be given to the desired specification of the facility in question at the outset.

QS2: Quality standard (facility operation and management)

QS2: All leisure providers to follow industry best practice principles in relation to a) Facilities Operation, b) Customer Relations, c) Staffing and d) Service Development and Review. The detail of the internal systems, policies and practices underpinning implementation of these principles will correlate directly to the scale of facility, varying according to the position of the facility within the levels of the established hierarchy.

Supply and demand analysis – developing quantity standards

- 9.22 In order to derive quantity standards for each type of indoor sports facility, the level of supply is compared to an estimated demand. The foundations of all demand assessments are based on an analysis of the demographic nature of the resident population within a catchment area of the site. Demand models are also used in the development of provision standards. The application of these provision standards will be critical in meeting the needs of the local community in light of the significant anticipated population growth.

Sport halls

- 9.23 Active Places Power considers the capacity of halls to meet demand for the local population. It also provides a measure of the number of halls (of four badminton courts or greater) per 1000 population. Findings reveal that there is currently 7753m² sports hall area in total (four court plus) in the Borough. Provision at facilities exclusively for club use, village halls and community facilities also adds additional supply.
- 9.24 The level of provision in Telford and Wrekin is equivalent to 45.14m² per 1000 population. This compares poorly to the equivalent figure for the West Midlands (46.43m²) and nationally (47.24m²).
- 9.25 Assuming that a fourcourt hall is 594m² and one court is 148.5m², the current level of provision is equivalent to 52 courts in total. Based on current population figures, this is equivalent to **0.30 courts per 1000 population. Based on the population of the Borough, Active Places Power reveals a marginal over supply of 1.8 courts.**
- 9.26 Facility size and accessibility for public use are key factors taken into consideration when assessing the current level of supply. Sports hall facilities that are below four badminton courts in size are not included within the audit due to the restrictions this puts on the mix of sports that can be played in the hall.
- 9.27 Based on the current population (171,730), the Sport England Facility Calculator, another demand tool, reveals a requirement for 12.51 halls (50.03 courts).

Sport England facility calculator demand	Current supply	Surplus/deficiency
50.03 badminton courts	52 badminton courts	Surplus of 1.97 badminton courts
Active Places power	Current supply	Surplus/deficiency
40 badminton courts	52 badminton courts	Surplus of 12 badminton courts

Setting a quantity standard

- 9.28 Sport England has published a good practice tool kit on its website to assist local authorities in devising appropriate contributions to open space and sport/leisure provision. A facility calculator has been set up, providing an indication of the expected level of provision based on the population within the local authority boundary.
- 9.29 Based on current population figures demand equates to 50.02 courts within Telford and Wrekin. Using this data, provision standards per 1000 population can be calculated by:
- population of Telford and Wrekin – 171,730
 - therefore demand per 1000 people = (50.02 courts / 171,730) * 1000
 - demand per 1000 population = **0.29 courts.**

SECTION 9 – INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

9.30 Based on the level of current provision of four court sports halls in the Borough, the level of provision is above the amount recommended by Active Places Power and the amount advocated by the Sport England Facility Calculator.

LOCAL QUANTITY STANDARD

0.30 courts per 1,000 population

9.31 However, given that the level of provision compares poorly to the national figure, and that the findings from the indoor strategy suggest an uneven distribution of facilities across the Borough, a local standard set at the existing level of provision is recommended. This will ensure that locational deficiencies are identified (through the application of accessibility standards) and that future provision expands to meet the needs of the population. This would also support the replacement/improvement in terms of quality of existing facilities without requiring additional provision which may not be financially viable or required.

9.32 Full justification for the local quantity standard is set out in Appendix F.

Accessibility

9.33 With regards to accessibility, Sport England research indicates that all residents should be within a 15 minute drive time of a sports hall. In terms of the CPA accessibility target, 52.7% of residents in Telford and Wrekin are within 20 minutes travel time (urban areas – by walk; rural areas – by car) of a range of three different sports facility types of which one has achieved a quality assured standard (standard suggests between 30% and 50%).

9.34 In line with the CPA recommendation to split the urban and rural areas, the standard is set at 15 minutes walk time in the urban areas and 20 minutes drive time in the rural areas. This standard is in line with the 75% threshold level and is reflective of the findings across the analysis areas. While this is more challenging than the national indicator, it is representative of the expectations and aspirations of local residents within Telford and Wrekin. The use of school facilities for community use will be particularly important if the recommended standards, particularly within the urban areas, are to be delivered.

9.35 It is important to recognise the valued contribution made by smaller provision such as village halls within the Borough. These may allow certain sporting activities to take place (particularly in the rural areas) and may be located much closer than the drive time standard but are not included within the analysis as the Active Places definition of a sports hall assumes four or more badminton courts.

9.36 Map 9.1 overleaf summarises the provision of swimming pools within Telford and Wrekin and illustrates any existing deficiencies based on the standards that have been set. It can be seen that while all residents within the rural area can access facilities within the recommended distance threshold, there are significant deficiencies in the urban area, where residents expect to access sports halls on foot. Even when taking into account the location of anticipated new halls, there will remain several areas out side of the catchment area.

LOCAL ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD

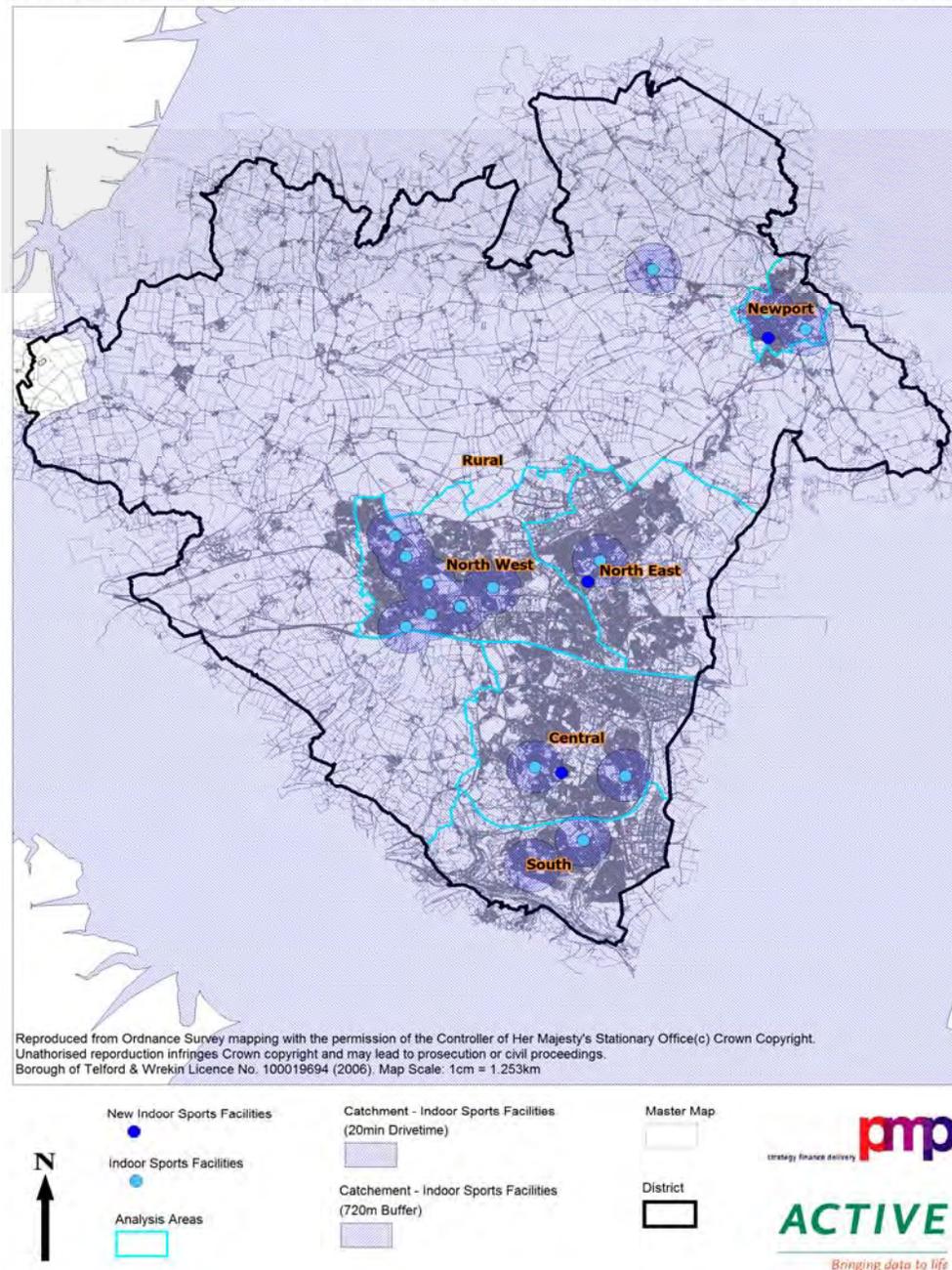
***15 minute walk
time - URBAN
20 minute drive
time - RURAL***

SECTION 9 – INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

- 9.37 These findings are reflected in the indoor facility strategy, which highlights that there is an uneven distribution of sports halls. While overall, the strategy states that supply is greater than demand, there remain some residents without access to facilities and there are some facilities with very limited community access. The strategy recommends the redistribution of some facilities and appears to focus on the redevelopment/relocation of facilities to better meet community need, rather than the development of new facilities.
- 9.38 The findings of the application of the recommended local standards should therefore be used to drive forward the actions emerging from the indoor facility strategy.

Map 9.1 – Provision of sports halls in Telford and Wrekin

Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments, Indoor Sports Facilities



Summary – Sports Halls

- 9.39 A local quantitative standard of 0.30 courts per 1000 population has been set for sports hall provision in Telford and Wrekin. This is in line with the current level of provision.
- 9.40 Club use facilities are excluded from the calculations due to a lack of casual public access. Improved access to these sites may help to reduce any programming difficulties at key sites in the Borough where there is high demand and also address the issues regarding an uneven distribution across the Borough. As participation increases, consideration should be given to the maximisation of resources on school sites and access by the community. Programmes such as Building Schools for the Future and the extended schools programme offer significant opportunities.
- 9.41 Providers of all indoor sports facilities should strive to achieve the quality vision and where possible, larger sites should work towards Quest accreditation, the national benchmark for quality. The majority of sites within Telford have already achieved this accreditation, highlighting the overall good level of provision.

Swimming pools

- 9.42 The current level of provision in Telford and Wrekin is equivalent to 3226m² of water space in total (based on Active Places). Based on current population figures, this is equivalent to **14.8m² per 1000 population**. This compares favourably to the equivalent figure for the West Midlands (14.41m²) but is lower than the national figure of 17.45m².
- 9.43 Based on the current population (171,730), the Sport England Facility Calculator reveals a requirement for 1815.16m² of water space (8.54 pools/34.17 lanes). Active Places Power reveals a requirement for 2361.5m² of water space or 11.08 pools.
- 9.44 Based on a future population of 178,730, the Sport England Facility Calculator reveals a requirement for 1082.3m² of water space (8.88 pools). Active Places Power reveals a requirement for 2457.7m² of water space or 11.52 pools.
- 9.45 Assumptions of the demand model include:
 - club facilities - facilities accessible only to clubs making block bookings are excluded from calculations as a result of the lack of casual access to the facilities
 - private facilities - excluded from the calculations
 - public facilities - pool area in public facilities is included within the demand model.

Sport England facility calculator demand	Current supply	Surplus/deficiency
1815m ²	3226m ²	Surplus of 1411m ²
Active Places Power	Current supply	Surplus/deficiency
2361m ²	3226m ²	Surplus of 865m ²

Setting a quantity standard

9.46 Sport England has published a good practice tool kit on their website to assist Local Authorities in devising appropriate contributions to open space and sport/leisure provision. The Sport England facility calculator sets out the level of provision required based on a series of national parameters.

9.47 On this basis, demand within Telford and Wrekin is equivalent to 1815m². Using these provision standards, demand per 1000 population can be calculated as:

- population of Telford and Wrekin – 171,730
- therefore demand per 1000 people = (1815m² / 171,730) * 1000.

LOCAL STANDARD
14.8m² water space per 1,000 population

9.48 The demand model indicates that **10.5m² of water space per 1,000 population** is required to meet current demand.

SECTION 9 – INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

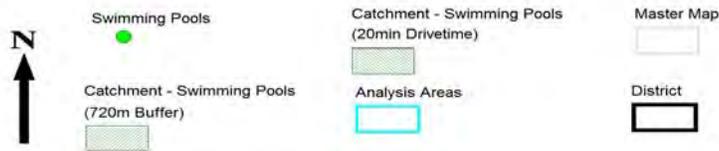
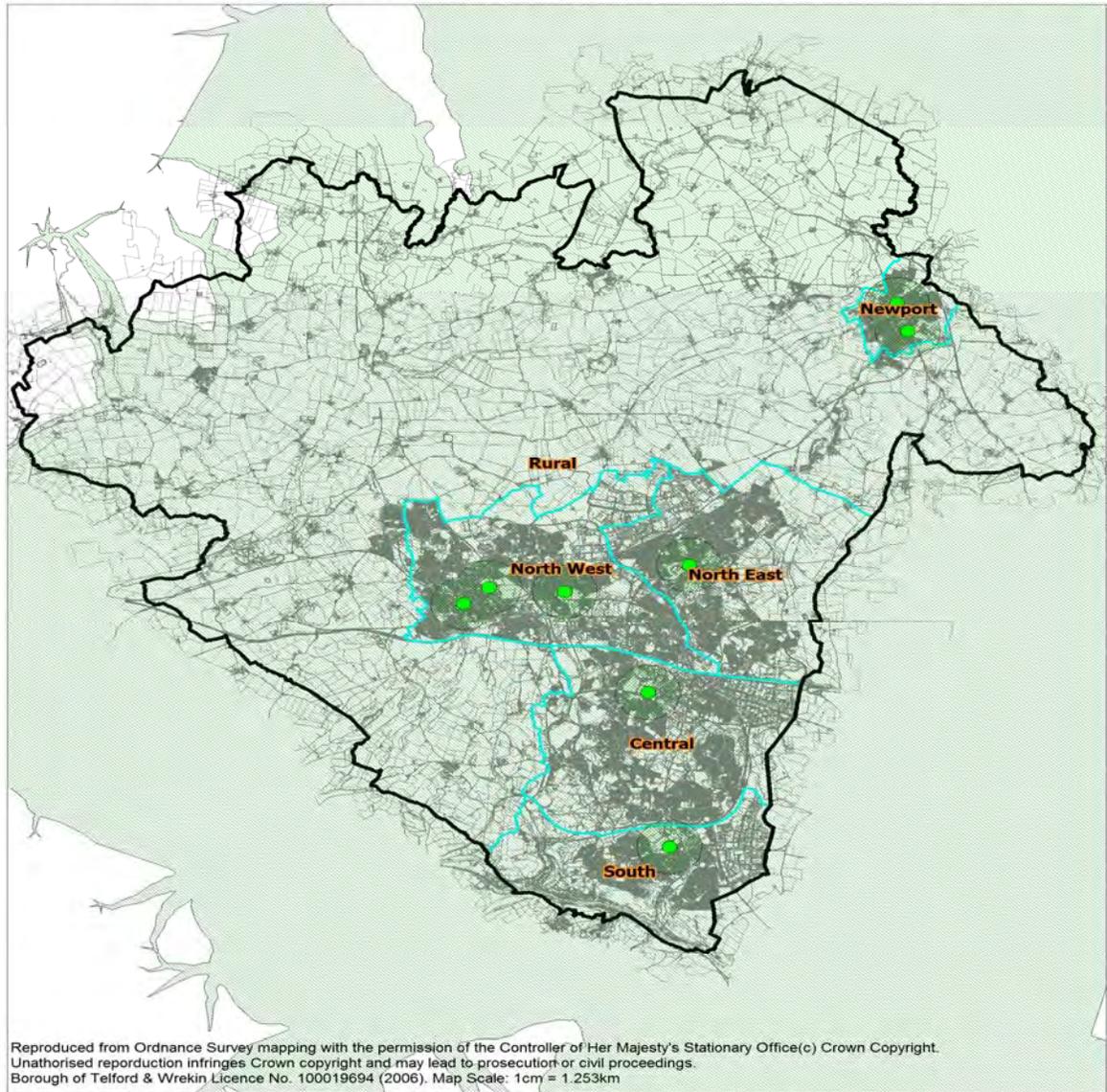
- 9.49 Given that the current level of provision is above the equivalent figure for the West Midlands, the emphasis on provision being about right through consultation and the focus on improving quality shown by residents, it is recommended that a standard equivalent to the current level of provision be pursued. This will ensure that locational deficiencies are identified (through the application of accessibility standards) and will ensure that future provision continues to meet the needs of the population.

Accessibility

- 9.50 With regards to accessibility, Sport England research indicates that all residents should be within a 20-minute drive time of a swimming pool. In terms of the CPA accessibility target, 52.7% of residents in Telford and Wrekin are within 20 minutes travel time (urban areas – by walk; rural areas – by car) of a range of 3 different sports facility types of which one has achieved a quality assured standard (standard suggests between 30% and 50%).
- 9.51 In line with the CPA indicator, Telford and Wrekin has been split into a rural and urban area, as such, different modes of transport to access indoor facilities have been established. Within the rural areas, in line with the 75% threshold, of those respondents who suggested that they would drive to an indoor swimming pool (55%), it is recommended that the local accessibility standard should be set at a 20 minute drive time.
- 9.52 Within the urban areas, in line with the 75% threshold, of those respondents who suggested that they would walk to swimming pools (33%), it is recommended that the local accessibility standard should be set at a 15 minute walk time. While this is more challenging than the national indicator, it is representative of the expectations and aspirations of local residents within Telford and Wrekin.
- 9.53 Map 9.2 overleaf summarises the provision of swimming pools within Telford and Wrekin and illustrates any existing deficiencies based on the standards that have been set. It can be seen that while all residents within the rural area can access facilities within the recommended distance threshold, there are significant deficiencies in the urban area, where residents expect to access pools on foot.
- 9.54 These findings are reflected in the indoor facility strategy, which highlights that there is an uneven distribution of swimming pools. While overall, the strategy states that supply is greater than demand, there remain some residents without access to facilities and there are some facilities with very limited community access. The strategy recommends the redistribution of some facilities and appears to focus on the redevelopment / relocation of facilities to better meet community need, rather than the development of new facilities.
- 9.55 The findings of the application of the recommended local standards should therefore be used to drive forward the actions emerging from the indoor facility strategy.

Map 9.2 – Provision of swimming pools in Telford and Wrekin

Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments, Swimming Pools



Summary – swimming pools

- 9.56 The quantity standard for swimming pools is 14.8m² of water space per 1000 population, a level that is in line with the current level of provision and above the amount required by the Sport England Facility Calculator. This will ensure that locational deficiencies are identified (through the application of accessibility standards) and will ensure that future provision continues to meet the needs of the population.

Indoor bowls

- 9.57 Telford and Wrekin currently has no indoor bowls centre.
- 9.58 Based on the current population (171,730), the Sport England Facility Calculator reveals a requirement for 9.09 rinks (1.52 centres). Based on a future population of 178,730, the Sport England Facility Calculator reveals that the requirement will grow to 9.45 rinks (1.58 centres).

Sport England facility calculator demand	Current supply	Surplus/deficiency
9.09 rinks	0 rinks	Shortfall of 9.09 rinks

Setting a quantity standard

- 9.59 Sport England has published a good practice tool kit on their website to assist Local Authorities in devising appropriate contributions to open space and sport/leisure provision. A facility calculator has been set up, providing an indication of the expected level of provision based on the population within the local authority boundary.
- 9.60 Provision standards per 1000 population can be calculated by:
 - current population of Telford and Wrekin – 171,730
 - therefore demand per 1000 people = $(9.09 \text{ rinks} / 171,730) * 1000$
 - demand per 1000 population = 0.05 rinks.

- 9.61 Analysis of Active Places Power reveals that the level of provision (0.05 rinks per 1000 population) will be above that for England (0.04) and the West Midlands (0.02).

LOCAL QUANTITY STANDARD

0.02 rinks per 1,000 population

- 9.62 Setting a standard in line with the figure for the West Midlands will help to highlight the need for an indoor facility for the Borough but will also represent a realistic target as some residents may make use of facilities located outside of the Borough.

Accessibility

- 9.63 With regards to accessibility, Sport England research indicates that all residents should be within a 15-minute drive time of a bowls hall. In terms of the CPA accessibility target, 52.7% of residents in Telford and Wrekin are within 20 minutes travel time (urban areas – by walk; rural areas – by car) of a range of three different sports facility types of which one has achieved a quality assured standard (standard suggests between 30% and 50%).

SECTION 9 – INDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

- 9.64 The local consultation undertaken reveals that 56% of respondents would expect to drive to an indoor bowls rink. The 75% threshold level Borough wide was a 20 minute drive time.
- 9.65 In line with the 75% threshold level and national indoor bowls guidance, the standard is set at a 20 minutes drive time.
- 9.66 It should be noted that there is currently no provision within Telford and Wrekin and therefore residents currently have to travel to neighbouring local authorities to access provision. In setting a drive time standard, a large proportion of residents within Telford and Wrekin are able to access the Sundorne Bowls Rink facility (located in Shrewsbury) within the recommended catchment time, thus negating the need for provision within Telford

**LOCAL
ACCESSIBILITY
STANDARD**

***20 minute drive
time***

Summary – indoor bowls

- 9.67 There is currently no provision of indoor bowls facilities in Telford and Wrekin.
- 9.68 A local quantity standard of 0.02 rinks per 1000 population has been set to highlight the need for an indoor facility and provide a realistic target for the majority of the population who wish to make use of an indoor bowls facility within the Borough.
- 9.69 Although there is currently a deficiency in terms of indoor bowls provision in Telford and Wrekin, the Sundorne Bowls Rink Development has a positive impact on sub regional needs. In currently serving the requirements of a large proportion of residents within Telford and Wrekin, alongside other current provision such as short mat bowls, the number of residents falling outside of the accessibility catchment do not justify the development of a new indoor facility.

Indoor Tennis

- 9.70 Telford and Wrekin currently does not have any indoor tennis facilities within the Borough. There are only two clubs registered to the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA): Wrekin Tennis Club which is based at Ercall Wood School and Boughey Gardens which is based in Newport.
- 9.71 According to the indoor facilities strategy the nearest indoor tennis facility is at Welti Tennis and Leisure Centre in Shrewsbury. The development of an indoor facility in Telford and Wrekin is a priority for Shropshire LTA. It has had initial discussions with the Council/CSP (in relation to the Sports Village concept) with regard to the development of an indoor tennis facility in conjunction with netball. The LTA has also had discussions with The Phoenix School for the potential to develop an indoor facility on the school site.
- 9.72 Active Places Power provides a measure of the number of courts per 1000 population. Findings reveal that the level of provision in the West Midlands is equivalent to 0.01 courts per 1000 population, with the national figure at 0.02.
- 9.73 The Sport England Facility Calculator does not consider indoor tennis facilities.

Setting a quantitative standard

- 9.74 It is recommended that a standard equivalent to the current level of provision in the West Midlands be pursued. This will help to highlight the current deficiency within the Borough both now and over the LDF period in line with the population growth.

LOCAL QUANTITY STANDARD

0.01 courts per 1,000 population

- 9.75 As recommended by the indoor facilities strategy, new provision is most likely to be achieved through on school provision or in partnership with a new netball facility.

Accessibility

- 9.76 With regards to accessibility, Sport England research indicates that all residents should be within a 15 minute drive time of an indoor tennis facility. In terms of the CPA accessibility target, 52.7% of residents in Telford and Wrekin are within 20 minutes travel time (urban areas – by walk; rural areas – by car) of a range of three different sports facility types of which one has achieved a quality assured standard (standard suggests between 30% and 50%).

- 9.77 The local consultation undertaken reveals that 55% of respondents would expect to drive to an indoor tennis facility. The 75% threshold level Borough wide was a 20 minutes drive time.

LOCAL ACCESSIBILITY STANDARD

20 minute drive time

- 9.78 In line with the 75% threshold and taking into consideration the Sport England guidelines, the standard is set at a 20 minute drive time. This standard reflects the fact that there is currently no provision for this type of facility within the Borough.

- 9.79 In setting this accessibility standard, the Welti Tennis Centre serves the needs of a large proportion of residents within Telford and Wrekin as it is located within the drive time catchment.

Overall summary – indoor tennis

- 9.80 There are currently no indoor tennis facilities in Telford and Wrekin, however, the Welti Tennis Centre serves the needs of a large proportion of residents.
- 9.81 A local standard of 0.01 courts per 1000 population has been set to highlight the need for facilities in areas of the Borough. This is most likely to be achieved through a partnership approach or through school provision.

Summary and recommendations

- 9.82 An analysis of the provision of sports halls, swimming pool, indoor tennis and indoor bowls provision within Telford and Wrekin has been undertaken and current provision has been measured against identified demand, enabling an understanding of any additional provision required.
- 9.83 An overarching quality vision has been set in line with local community need, Quest and Best Value principles.

A clean and well-maintained indoor sports facility that is easily accessible by public transport and is available to all. It should contain adequate changing facilities, cycle and car parking. It should cater for a wide range of sports and leisure activities that are affordable to the local communities it serves.

- 9.84 The development and application of the local quantity and accessibility standards should be considered a basis for the future strategic planning of indoor sports facilities in Telford and Wrekin. Further detailed user consultation at key centres across the Borough and detailed analysis into the size and characteristics of the resident population that each centre is serving should be conducted. This information should then be supplemented with the local standards.
- 9.85 To meet the needs of an increasing population focus should be placed on the community use of school suites. Programmes such as Building Schools for the Future and the extended schools programme offer significant opportunities.

SECTION 10
ALLOTMENTS

Allotments

Introduction and definition

- 10.1 This typology includes all forms of allotments with a primary purpose of providing opportunities for people to grow their own produce as part of the long-term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion. This type of open space may also include urban farms.
- 10.2 Like other open space types, allotments can provide a number of wider benefits to the community in addition to their primary purpose. These include:
- bringing together different cultural backgrounds
 - improving physical and mental health
 - providing a source of recreation
 - making a wider contribution to the green and open space network.
- 10.3 Allotments are becoming increasingly popular nationally, following the recognition of the role that they can play in encouraging all sectors of the community to participate in active recreation. Of those residents who do use an allotment in Telford, many people commented on how they enjoy the tranquillity of the site and the social element of working on an allotment.
- 10.4 Changing trends in house building, with an increasing focus on flats and apartments, may also generate an upturn in the demand for allotments, as residents without access to private gardens seek alternatives.
- 10.5 The quality, quantity and accessibility of allotments in Telford and Wrekin is discussed in this section, alongside the key issues relating to the quality and quantity of provision.

Quantity of provision

10.6 The provision of allotments across Telford and Wrekin is summarised in Table 10.1 below.

Table 10.1 – Provision of allotments across Telford and Wrekin

Analysis areas	Current provision	Number of sites	Smallest site (hectares)	Largest site (hectares)	LDF population (2016)	Provision (ha) per 1000 population (2016)
Telford north west	3	2	1.17	1.83	48,739	0.06
Telford north east	0.47	1	0.47	0.47	35,661	0.01
Telford central	2.18	3	0.62	0.94	45,755	0.05
Telford south	2.92	3	0.11	2.03	23,439	0.12
Newport	0.97	2	0.14	0.83	12,648	0.08
Rural	1.06	1	1.06	1.06	15,855	0.07
Overall	10.6	12	0.11	2.03	182,097	0.06

10.7 The key issues emerging from Table 10.1 and consultations relating to the quantity of provision of allotments include:

- results from the household survey show 47% of respondents feel the provision of allotments in Telford and Wrekin is insufficient, suggesting a shortfall in provision. This dissatisfaction is even more apparent considering the proportion of residents who have no opinion and this level is also significantly in excess of that demonstrated in other authorities
- the highest level of dissatisfaction was located in Newport, where 53% of residents felt that the level of provision was nearly enough/not enough. This is further evident in the amount of vacancies available at allotments, with 33% of allotments having no vacancies and waiting lists. Despite the dissatisfaction shown, Newport contains the second highest level of provision per 1000 population over the LDF period (0.08ha)
- the greatest satisfaction with the provision of allotments is found in Telford south, where 45% of respondents indicated provision was about right. The findings from the consultation are reflected in table 10.1, with Telford south containing the highest level of provision per 1000 population moving through to 2016 (0.12ha)

SECTION 10 – ALLOTMENTS

- the level of provision varies significantly across the analysis areas, with Telford north east having the least provision (0.47 hectares) and Telford north west having the most (3 hectares).
- 10.8 There are currently 12 allotments sites situated within Telford and Wrekin. Of these, seven currently have waiting lists. The site that currently has the highest demand is Admaston allotments (site ID 156) situated in the rural analysis area, with a two-year waiting list.
- 10.9 Parish councils and allotment associations play an important role in the provision of allotments in Telford, with nine of the 12 sites run or owned by a Parish Council or allotment association. This highlights the importance of the ongoing partnership between the Council and other providers in the provision of allotments across the Borough.

Setting provision standards – quantity

- 10.10 The recommended local quantity standard for allotments has been derived from the local needs consultation and audit of provision and is summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix F.

Quantity Standard (see Appendices E and F – standards and justification, worksheet and calculator)

Existing level of provision	Recommended standard
0.06ha per 1000 population	0.07ha per 1000 population
Justification	
The clear message from consultation findings is that there is an overall perception that the quantity of allotments is insufficient (currently 0.06ha per 1000 population). This is also supported by the presence of waiting lists at sites across the Borough. It is therefore suggested that a standard above the existing level of provision is set.	
This standard would ensure that deficiencies in the quantity of allotments and access to allotments can be addressed across the Borough. Setting a standard at this level would equate to the requirement for an additional 76 allotment plots across the LDF period. This would go some way to offsetting the existing and future unmet demand.	

Current provision - quality

- 10.11 The quality of existing allotments in the Borough was assessed through site visits and is set out in Table 10.2. It is important to note that site assessments are conducted as a snapshot in time and are therefore reflective of the quality of the site on one specific day.
- 10.12 The quality scores are weighted according to the findings of the local consultation. Those elements that were highlighted through consultation as being a particularly important determinant of the quality of allotments have been weighted higher to ensure that they have a greater influence on the overall quality score that each site achieves. The full rationale behind this approach is set out in Appendix G.

Table 10.2 – Quality of Allotments across Telford and Wrekin

Geographical area	Number of sites	Range of quality scores (%)	Average quality scores (%)	Lowest quality sites	Highest quality sites
Telford north west	2	66%-77.1%	71.5%	Millstream Way allotments – site ID 326	Wrekin Road allotments – site ID 187
Telford north east	1	72%	72%		Stanmore Drive allotments – site ID 939
Telford central	3	62%-82.2%	70%	Brookside allotments – site ID 566	Stirchley allotments – site ID 551
Telford south	3	56%-72%	66.6%	West View allotments – site ID 594	Sutton Hill allotments – site ID 634
Newport	2	70%-73.3%	71.6%	Meadow View Road allotments – site ID 74	Sandiford Crescent allotments – site ID 64
Rural	1	58%	58%		Ringers Lane allotments – site ID 156
Overall	12	56%-82.2%	68.8%	West View allotments – site ID 594	Stirchley allotments – site ID 551

SECTION 10 – ALLOTMENTS

10.13 The key issues emerging from Table 10.2 and the consultation relating to the quality of allotments include:

- residents who currently use an allotment indicated that toilets, security, access and good quality paths were of particular importance to them
- the majority of respondents (42%) consider the quality of allotments to be average. 23% regard their quality as good and 21% poor
- the individual analysis areas mirror the Borough-wide results and the greatest dissatisfaction is located in Telford south, where 47% of residents state the quality of allotments is poor/very poor
- the average quality score of allotments (69%) reflects the varying opinions expressed by respondents to the household survey
- residents perceived that ancillary facilities were particularly important in the provision of allotments
- the top quality allotment site is Stichley allotments, which achieved a quality score of 82%. All allotments should attempt to achieve the same quality standard as this site
- no allotment site scored below 56%, reflecting an average quality of allotments in Telford and Wrekin. The Council should therefore look to focus upon increasing the provision of allotments whilst also slightly enhancing the quality of lower scoring sites.

Setting provision standards – quality

10.14 The recommended local quality standard for allotments is summarised overleaf. Full justifications and consultation relating to the quality of provision for the local standard is provided within Appendix G.

Quality Standard (see Appendix G)

Recommended standard – ALLOTMENTS		
Local consultation, national guidance and best practice suggest that the following features are essential and desirable to local residents:		
Essential	Desirable	
Toilets	Footpaths	
Security	Clean/litter free	
Good access	Maintenance	
Detailed analysis of the local consultation suggests that with regards to allotments, the relative importance of the key components is as follows:		
Component of quality	Proportion of possible total responses received	Weighting
Security and Safety	40%	4
Cleanliness and maintenance	20%	2
Vegetation	7%	1
Ancillary accommodation	33%	3

Setting provision standards – accessibility

- 10.15 The accessibility of sites is paramount in maximising usage as well as providing opportunities for all people to use the sites. The recommended local standard is set in the form of a distance threshold and is derived directly from the findings of the local consultations.
- 10.16 Site-specific accessibility issues were also analysed as part of the site visits and information and signage, transport and general accessibility issues were assessed.
- 10.17 Consultation and analysis highlights that the key issues with regards accessibility include that walking (53%) would be the most popular travel method when visiting allotments, with 36% preferring to travel by car. This was also reflected in the drop in sessions, with residents suggesting that allotments should be accessible on foot.
- 10.18 Site assessment ratings shows the majority of allotments are either average or good in terms of transport links and general access. Information and signage has been highlighted as a potential issue, with modal ratings of poor and very poor.
- 10.19 The recommended local accessibility standard for allotments is summarised overleaf. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

Accessibility Standard (see Appendix H)

Recommended standard
15 MINUTE (720 METRE) WALK TIME
Justification
<p>The provision of allotments is very much a demand led typology and this should be reflected in the application of the accessibility and quantity standards. As such any deficiencies that are highlighted through the application of the study should be assessed further to indicate if there is genuine demand in that area.</p> <p>However, as a guide, a standard has been set at 15 minutes (720 metre) walk time. Although a challenging standard, this reflects the findings of the household survey as 35% of respondents stated there are not enough allotments. Residents responding to the household survey also indicated that they would expect to walk to allotments and a walk time has therefore been used in line with living a healthy lifestyle and targets to reduce the reliance on private transport. Given the 75% threshold level is for a 15 minute (720 metre) walk, setting a standard at this level is in accordance with the PPG17 Companion Guide. This expected level of provision was also consistent across the analysis areas, with the exception of the rural areas, where expectations were higher. By setting the standard at a 15 minute walk time, this will encompass the expectations of most users and potential users of this type of open space.</p>

*a straight-line distance of 720m has been used rather than the pedestrian distance of 1200m. This is based on average walking distances reduced by a factor of 40% to account for the fact that people do not walk in straight lines. The 40% factoring is based on the approach set out in the NPFA Six Acre Standard.

Applying provision standards

- 10.20 The application of the recommended quality, quantity and accessibility standards is essential in understanding the existing distribution of open space sport and recreation facilities and identifying areas where provision is insufficient to meet local need.
- 10.21 The quantity standards enable the identification of areas that do not meet the minimum provision standards, while the accessibility standards will help determine where those deficiencies are of high importance. Applying the standards together is a more meaningful method of analysis than applying the standards separately.
- 10.22 Table 10.3 overleaf sets out the results of the application of the quantity standard to the current distribution of facilities.

Table 10.3 – Application of quantity standard

Analysis areas	Future provision (2016) in hectares balanced against the local standard (0.07 hectares per 1000 population)
Telford north west	-0.41
Telford north east	-2.03
Telford central	-1.02
Telford south	1.28
Newport	0.08
Rural	-0.05
Overall	-2.15

Green = above the minimum standard, Red = below the minimum standard.

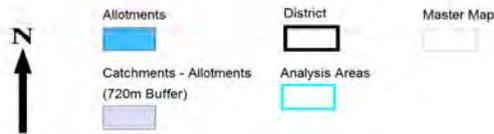
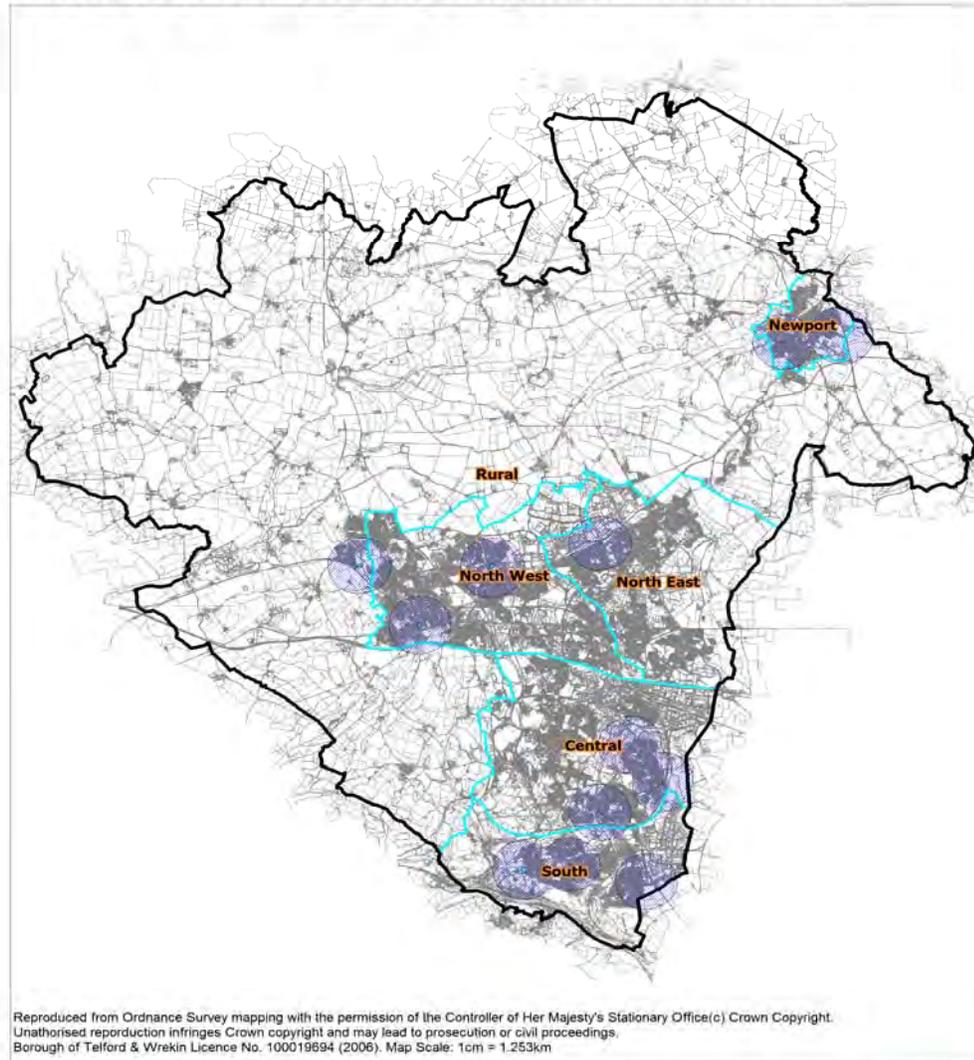
10.23 Key issues arising from Table 10.3 include:

- based on the local standard of 0.07 hectares per 1000 population, all areas are predicted to have a quantitative deficiency by 2016 with the exception of Telford south and Newport. Overall, this results in the need for further provision.
- the overall deficiency Borough wide will be –2.15 hectares (against the local standard).

10.24 The application of the local accessibility and quality standards for allotments is set out overleaf.

Map 10.1 – Provision of allotments in Telford and Wrekin

Telford and Wrekin OSS - Open Space Type Catchments, Allotments



SECTION 10 – ALLOTMENTS

10.25 The key issues arising from the accessibility mapping regarding the distribution of sites include:

- there is limited provision in allotments in the rural areas, with the only site, Ringers Lane Allotments (site ID 156) , falling on the periphery of the Telford north west analysis area. However, it is important to note that allotments tend to be situated within urban areas, specifically where there is a lack of private land, thus enabling residents to use allotments to grow vegetables for instance.
- the largest deficiencies can be found to the north of Telford central analysis area and to the south of Telford north west and Telford north east.

Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas

10.26 In order to identify geographical areas of importance and those areas where there is potential unmet demand we apply both the quantity and accessibility standards together. The quantity standards identify whether areas are quantitatively above or below the recommended minimum standard and the accessibility standards will help to determine where those deficiencies are of high importance.

10.27 In light of the demand led nature of allotments, application of the quantity, quality and accessibility standards should be treated as a started point only, and detailed research and monitoring should be undertaken prior to the development of new allotments.

ALL 1	Regularly review, investigate and monitor demand for allotment provision and look for opportunities where demand is increasing. Ensure new housing developments allow for any increase in demand as necessary.
--------------	--

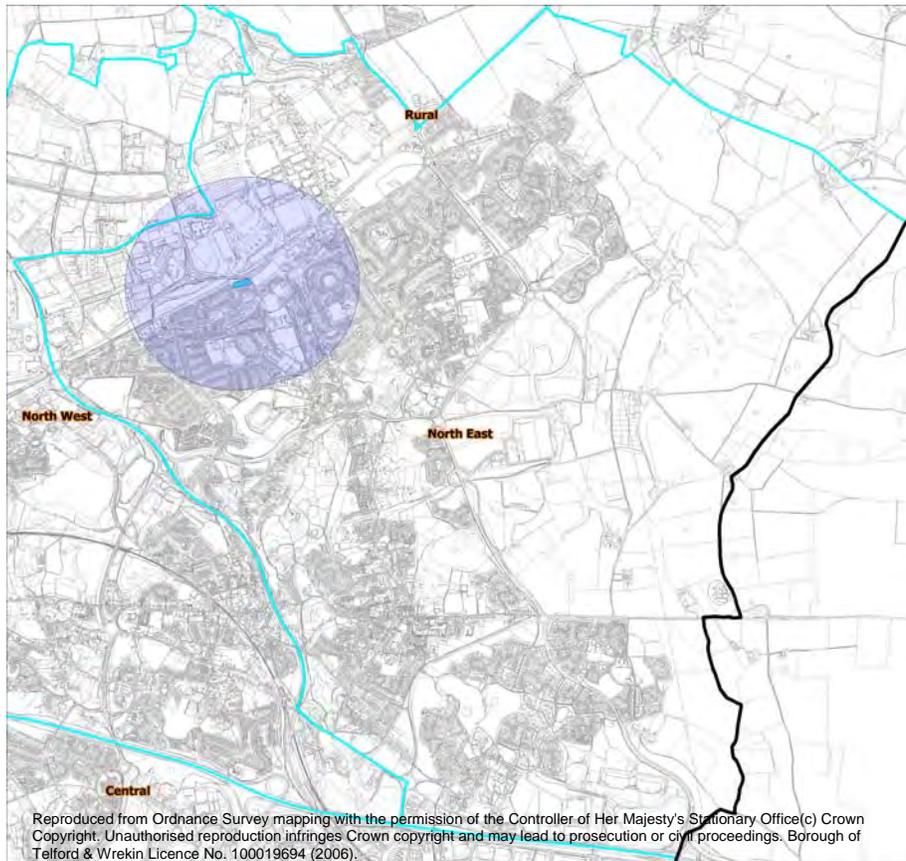
10.28 The breakdown of provision by analysis areas had previously revealed that Telford north west, Telford north east, Telford central and rural analysis areas are predicted to have a quantitative shortfall for allotments up to 2016. This indicates that there is likely to be insufficient capacity within the existing sites to adequately meet the needs of local residents.

10.29 In light of the shortfalls of allotments across the Borough, the good distribution of facilities (where all allotments serve unique catchment areas) and the high levels of use at all allotments sites, all provision should be protected from development.

ALL 2	Ensure continued support to allotment providers and associations across Telford and Wrekin and protect these sites from development.
--------------	--

10.30 The largest quantitative deficiency is found to the north east of Telford town centre (as shown overleaf in Figure 10.1). This is reinforced by the application of the accessibility standards, which highlights that residents of Muxton, Donnington, Shawbirch and Priorslee are outside of the recommended distance threshold for allotments. Only Stanmore Drive allotments, owned by the Parish Council, are located to the east of the town and this site contains only 26 plots. Consideration should therefore be given to further provision in this area. Application of the quantity standard suggests that by 2016, there will be demand for a further 79 allotment plots within this area of the town (assuming that plots are of standard size (250m²). Provision of allotments in the Donnington area of the Borough may be of particular importance in light of the type of housing (and smaller gardens) found in this area.

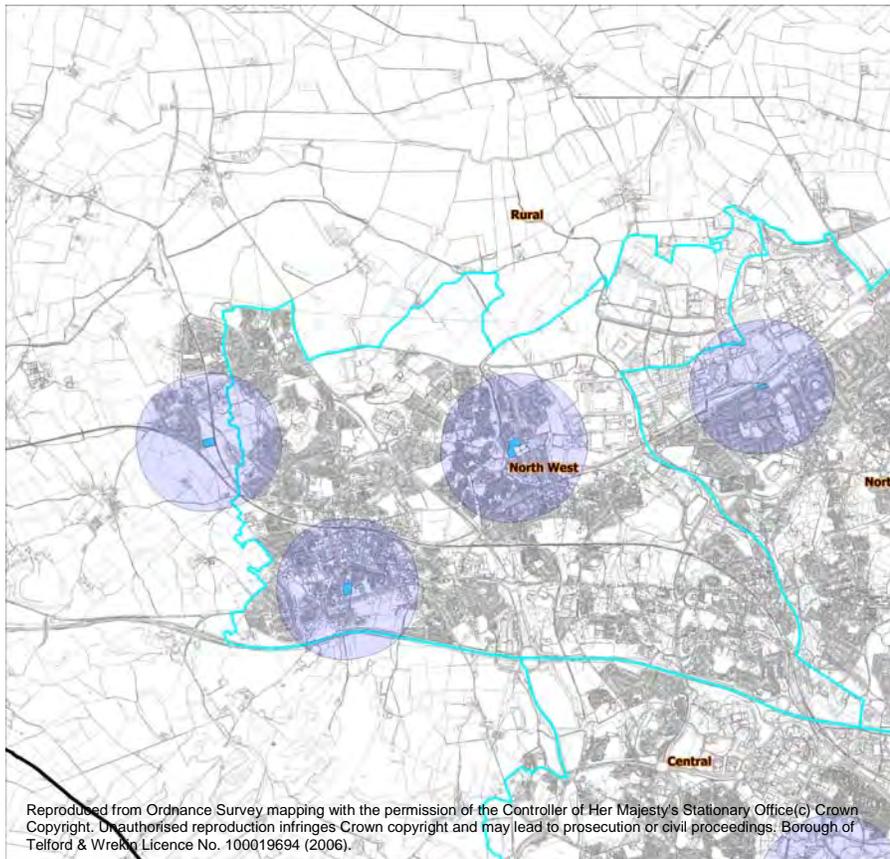
Figure 10.1



ALL3	Investigate the demand for the provision of allotments to the north east of Telford and consider the development of new sites.
-------------	--

10.31 Similar to the north east of Telford, residents living in the north west also have limited access to allotments (Figure 10.2). Although there are two sites falling within the area (Wrekin Road Allotments and Leegomery allotments) there are large proportions of residents who are outside of the distance threshold, particularly those living in the Ketley, Oakengates and Apley Castle areas of the town. This is confirmed through the application of the quantity standards, which suggests that shortfalls equate to almost 39 plots. There is a long waiting list at the Wrekin Road allotments, providing further confirmation of the shortfalls in this area.

Figure 10.2



10.32 Leegomery allotments were also considered to be of poorer quality and would therefore benefit from future investment.

ALL4	Investigate the demand for the provision of allotments to the north west of Telford and consider the development of new sites.
-------------	--

10.33 Shortfalls in the quantity of provision are also confirmed by the application of the accessibility standards in the central Telford area. Although quantitative deficiencies are lower, applications of local standards suggest that there is a deficiency of approximately 14 allotment plots. Application of the accessibility standards suggests that any new allotments in this area should be positioned within the Lawley and Overdale/Horsehay and Lightmoor areas of the Borough.

ALL5	Any new provision of allotments within the central area should be located in the Lawley and Overdale/Horsehay and Lightmoor areas.
-------------	--

10.34 Whilst the application of the quantity standards suggests that there is adequate provision within the Telford south and Newport analysis areas, it is clear from the application of the local accessibility standard that there are some deficiencies to the north of Newport and to the east and south of Telford south analysis area.

SECTION 10 – ALLOTMENTS

- 10.35 Moreover, despite reasonable access to allotments in these areas, the three existing allotment sites within the Telford south analysis area currently have waiting lists, and the area may therefore benefit from further provision of allotment plots should the opportunity arise.

ALL6	In light of the presence of waiting lists within the Southern area of Telford, seize any opportunities to provide new allotments within the local area.
-------------	---

- 10.36 Allotments can play a key role in increasing levels of physical activity across the Borough, providing an alternative to formal sporting activities. In light of the recognised need for additional provision of allotments across Telford, innovative approaches to the provision of allotments should be considered, including links and partnerships with schools. The value of allotments to local residents as a social opportunity and alternative option for exercise was emphasised through consultation.

ALL7	Explore alternative opportunities for the provision of allotments including co-location at school sites.
-------------	--

Summary and recommendations

- 10.37 There are currently 12 allotment sites across Telford and Wrekin, totalling 10.6 hectares, equating to an overall level of provision of 0.06 hectares per 1000 population. Seven sites have waiting lists and it is evident that demand for allotments is increasing.
- 10.38 Results from the household survey show 47.3% of respondents consider the provision of allotments in Telford and Wrekin to be insufficient (the remainder have no opinion). This is reflected in the recommended quantity standard. In comparison to other areas, the proportion of residents with an opinion on the provision of allotments in Telford and Wrekin is high, reflecting the overall demand in the Borough.
- 10.39 The majority of residents indicated that they would expect to walk to an allotment and hence an accessibility standard equivalent to a 15 minute walk has been set. This reflects the expectation for local provision and highlights areas of deficiency.
- 10.40 Toilets, security and good access were perceived to be key for high quality allotments and ancillary accommodation and safety were perceived to be the key areas where sites could be improved.
- 10.41 Application of the recommended local standards highlights a number of deficiencies, particularly focusing to the north of Telford.

SECTION 11

CEMETERIES AND CHURCHYARDS

Cemeteries and churchyards

Introduction

- 11.1 This typology encompasses both churchyards contained within the walled boundary of a church and cemeteries outside the confines of a church. These include private burial grounds, local authority burial grounds and disused churchyards. Although the primary purpose of this type of open space is for burial of the dead and quiet contemplation, these sites frequently also have considerable value for the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.
- 11.2 Some churchyards retain areas of unimproved grasslands and various other habitats. They can make a significant contribution to the provision of urban greenspace sometimes providing a sanctuary for wildlife in the urban settlements and often providing historic value to the more rural landscapes.
- 11.3 Cemeteries and churchyards can be a significant open space provider in rural areas. In urban areas they can represent a relatively minor resource in terms of the land, but can be important for nature conservation. In some instances, cemeteries and churchyards may be the only open space within a settlement.

Consultation

- 11.4 Consultation on the provision of churchyards and cemeteries in Telford and Wrekin highlighted that:
- 49% of respondents to the household survey do not use churchyards and cemeteries. However, 10% of respondents use this typology weekly
 - 45% of respondents rate the quality of cemeteries and churchyards to be of average quality. However, a significant amount of respondents also rate their quality to be good (23%)
 - of those residents who use cemeteries and churchyards more frequently than any other open space the majority currently walk, with a journey taking 11 – 15 minutes. The ideal features of this open space identified by these respondents were well kept grass, clean and litter free, flowers and trees.

Current position

- 11.5 There are currently 59 cemeteries and churchyards in Telford and Wrekin. The distribution of sites across the Borough is shown in Table 11.1 overleaf.

Table 11.1 – Provision of churchyards and cemeteries in Telford and Wrekin

Analysis areas	Current provision	Number of sites	Smallest site (hectares)	Largest site (hectares)	LDF population (2016)	Provision (ha) per 1000 population (2016)
Telford north west	11.63	12	0.09	4.54	48,739	0.23
Telford north east	11.19	7	0.23	6.58	35,661	0.31
Telford central	2.9	5	0.18	1.32	45,755	0.06
Telford south	4.73	5	0.16	1.87	23,439	0.20
Newport	3.06	2	0.28	2.78	12,648	0.24
Rural	8.81	28	0.03	1.02	15,855	0.55
Overall	42.32	59	0.03	6.58	182,097	0.23

11.6 It can be seen from Table 11.1 that:

- the overall level of provision is 42.32 hectares, producing an average site size of 0.7 hectares . The size of sites varies significantly, ranging from 0.03 hectares to 6.58 hectares
- in terms of number of sites, current provision is predominantly located in the rural analysis area. However Telford north west and Telford north east currently contain the highest amount in actual hectares terms with 11.63 and 11.19 respectively
- Telford central has the lowest level of provision.

Setting provision standards

Quantity standard

11.7 No quantity standards have been set for cemeteries and churchyards. PPG17 Annex states: *"many historic churchyards provide important places for quiet contemplation, especially in busy urban areas, and often support biodiversity and interesting geological features. As such many can also be viewed as amenity greenspaces. Unfortunately, many are also run-down and therefore it may be desirable to enhance them. As churchyards can only exist where there is a church, the only form of provision standard which will be required is a qualitative one."*

11.8 For cemeteries, PPG 17 Annex states *"every individual cemetery has a finite capacity and therefore there is steady need for more of them. Indeed, many areas face a shortage of ground for burials. The need for graves, for all religious faiths, can be calculated from population estimates, coupled with details of the average proportion of deaths which result in a burial, and converted into a quantitative population-based provision standard."* This does not relate to a quantitative hectare per 1,000 population requirement.

Quality

11.9 The quality of each site has been assessed through a detailed site visit and the completion of a detailed pro forma described in section 2. This is provided in detail in Appendix G. It is important to note that the quality score represents a snapshot in time and records only the quality of the site at the time of the site visit. The quality of cemeteries across the Borough is set out in Table 11.2 below:

Table 11.2 – The quality of cemeteries and churchyards in Telford and Wrekin

Geographical area	Number of sites	Range of quality scores (%)	Average quality scores (%)	Lowest quality sites	Highest quality sites
Telford north west	12	58%-90%	74.3%	Elim church – site ID 394	All Saints church – site ID 373
Telford north east	7	52%-80%	65.1%	St Georges parish church – site ID 309	Donnington Way church – site ID 129
Telford central	5	52%-76%	66.4%	Baptist cemetery – site ID 440	St James church, Stirchley -site ID 535
Telford south	5	60%-82%	73.6%	St Luke church of Ironbridge – site ID 651	Catholic church of St Mary – site ID 605
Newport	2	98%-100%	99%	Newport general cemetery – site ID 75	St Nicholas church – site ID 56
Rural	28	54%-88%	71.4%	Talbot chapel Longford – site ID 50	St Catherine's church – site ID 115
Overall	59	52%-100%	71.9% %	St Georges parish church – site ID 309	St Nicholas church – site ID 56

11.10 Analysis of the quality of cemeteries and churchyards highlights that:

- there is a large variation in the quality scoring of cemeteries and churchyards, with scores ranging from 52% - 100%
- the average quality score of sites in each individual area is similar with the exception of Newport, where the average score is 99%
- the two highest quality scoring sites within the Borough are located within Newport.

Quality standards

11.11 In setting local standards for churchyards and cemeteries, it is only appropriate to set a quality standard and take into account any national or local standards. Full indication of consultation and justifications for the recommended local standard is provided within Appendix G. The recommended local standard, derived directly from consultation across Telford and Wrekin has been summarised below:

Quality Standard (see Appendix G)

Recommended standard – CEMETERIES AND CHURCHYARDS		
Local consultation, national guidance and best practice suggest that the following features are essential and desirable to local residents:		
Essential	Desirable	
Seating	Well kept grass	
Footpaths	Flowers/trees	
Clean/litter free	Litter bins	
Detailed analysis of the local consultation suggests that with regards to cemeteries and churchyards, the relative importance of the key components is as follows:		
Component of quality	Proportion of possible total responses received	Weighting
Security and safety	33%	1
Cleanliness and maintenance	50%	4
Vegetation	44%	3
Ancillary accommodation	33%	2

Accessibility standards

11.12 With regards to accessibility there are no definitive national or local standards for cemeteries and churchyards. There is no realistic requirement to set catchments for such typologies as they cannot easily be influenced through planning policy and implementation.

Applying provision standards – identifying geographical areas

11.13 Given that it is not appropriate to set any local quantity or accessibility standards it is also not appropriate to state areas of deficiency or need or examine the spatial analysis of these sites.

11.14 It is however important to consider the quality of the provision of cemeteries and churchyards and the value of the current provision and to strive to achieve the quality criteria set for all churchyards and cemetery sites.

11.15 Sites scoring well in terms of quality should be considered examples of good practice.

CC1	Stakeholders should recognise and promote the nature conservation value of closed cemeteries and churchyards and consider working towards developing more awareness of ecological management of cemeteries and churchyards.
------------	---

11.16 In areas of limited open space provision (or where churchyards are the only open space type), churchyard and cemetery sites are of particular importance. In these areas, enhancement is particularly important to ensure local residents value them. This is particularly the case in the rural area where the provision of other types of open space is limited.

11.17 In terms of biodiversity and ecology, improvements to closed churchyards can provide a valuable resource and benefit local wildlife.

CC2	In areas of limited open space provision, churchyard and cemetery sites are of particular importance. Enhancements to the accessibility and quality should be prioritised in these areas.
------------	---

Summary

11.18 Cemeteries and churchyards can be a significant open space provider in some areas, particularly in rural areas. In other areas they can represent a relatively minor resource in terms of the land required, but are important for nature conservation .

11.19 Local standards for accessibility and quantity have not been set. Despite this, it remains important to consider the future delivery of cemeteries and churchyards anticipating future demand as well as assessing the current level of provision.

11.20 The essential and desirable features set out in the quality standards should guide the future development and improvement of cemeteries and churchyards across the Borough. The quality of cemeteries and churchyards in the Borough is currently average. This is reflected in the findings of the household survey, with 45% of respondents thinking that the quality of sites is average. 23% of respondents also felt that the quality was good.

SECTION 11 – CEMETERIES AND CHURCHYARDS

- 11.21 In some instances cemeteries and churchyards are the only type of open space within a village, making them a particularly valuable element of the rural green space network. The enhancement to the accessibility and quality should be prioritised in these areas.
- 11.22 The wider benefits of churchyards are key and it is wrong to place a value on churchyards and cemeteries focusing solely on quality and accessibility. In addition to offering a functional value, many cemeteries and churchyards have wider benefits including heritage, cultural and landscape values.

SECTION 12

CIVIC SPACES

Civic spaces

Definition

- 12.1 Civic spaces include civic and market squares and other hard surfaced community areas designed for pedestrians with the primary purpose of providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events.

Strategic context and consultation

- 12.2 Civic spaces can be important open space in some areas particularly in urban areas and town centres.
- 12.3 As PPG 17 states *‘the purpose of civic spaces, mainly in town and city centres, is to provide a setting for civic buildings, and opportunities for open air markets, demonstrations and civic events. They are normally provided on an opportunistic and urban design led basis. Accordingly it is for planning authorities to promote urban design frameworks for their town and city centre areas’.*
- 12.4 Civic spaces need to be considered as an important asset as an area of open space for the residents in towns and settlements across Telford and Wrekin. It is the only open space type that is not considered as green space.
- 12.5 36% of respondents from the household survey stated that they visit a civic space at least once a month. However only 2% of respondents identified this type of open space as the type they use most frequently. This does not necessarily suggest that residents do not use these open spaces, just that they visit other types on a more frequent basis.

Setting provision standards

Quantity standard

- 12.6 19 civic spaces have been identified throughout the audit, including:

- Oakengates Shopping Centre – Site ID 278
- Leegomery Local Centre – Site ID 334
- Hadley Local Centre CS – Site ID 395
- Wellington Town Centre – Site ID 685
- Shawbirch Local Centre – Site ID 703
- Priorslee Avenue CS – Site ID 339
- Telford Square – Site ID 457
- Telford Park CS – Site ID 461
- M & S Square – Site ID 465
- Central Square – Site ID 466
- Ironmasters Way Walkthrough – Site ID 467

SECTION 12 – CIVIC SPACES

- Hollinswood Local Centre– Site ID 470
- High Street Local Centre – Site ID 490
- Randlay Avenue Local Centre – Site ID 506
- Stirchley Local Centre– Site ID 540
- Brookside Local Centre – Site ID 572
- Madeley Shopping Centre – Site ID 607
- Sutton Hill Local Centre – Site ID 632
- Ironbridge Civic Space – Site ID 650.

12.7 There are no definitive national or local standards for civic spaces. However, the Wrekin Local Plan does make specific references to the provision of community facilities (Policy LR1) and Telford town centre is discussed in some detail, looking at:

- the importance of improving the quality and image of the town centre by public art, landscaping and building design
- policy TC4 looks at the secure enhancement of the public spaces surrounding any proposed developments within the town centre
- in creating areas with a mix of leisure uses, it is important that proposals enhance the pedestrian environment.

12.8 The consultation suggests that the majority of residents considers there to be enough civic space provision (53%) compared to those implying there is nearly enough or not enough (27%). 20% of residents stating no opinion.

12.9 The more qualitative consultation for the household questionnaire showed that people value the use of civic spaces as meeting places and suggest they provide a “sense of belonging” to a place. It is not possible to make a reasoned judgement in setting provision standards for civic spaces across the local authority area due to the limited amount of civic space provision. Furthermore, PPG17 suggests that it is not realistic to set a quantity standard for civic spaces.

12.10 Therefore from the analysis we recommend that **no provision standard** is set. However, PPG17 adds that it is desirable for planning authorities to promote urban design frameworks for their town and city centres.

**RECOMMENDED
LOCAL STANDARD**

**No local standard to be
set**

Quality standard

12.11 The quality of each site has been assessed through a detailed site visit and the completion of a detailed pro forma described in section 2. More detail is provided in Appendix G. It is important to note that the quality score represents a snapshot in time and records only the quality of the site at the time of the site visit. The quality of civic spaces across the Borough is set out in Table 12.1 overleaf.

Table 12.1 – The quality of civic spaces in Telford and Wrekin

Geographical area	Number of sites	Range of quality scores (%)	Average quality scores (%)	Lowest quality sites	Highest quality sites
Telford north west	5	66.7%-82%	74.7 %	Leegomery local centre – site ID 334	Oakengates shopping centre – site ID 278
Telford north east	1	60%	60%		Priorslee Avenue CS – site ID 339
Telford central	10	42%-98%	63.8 %	Randlay Avenue local centre – site ID 506	M & S square – site ID 465
Telford south	3	54%88%	71%	Sutton Hill local centre – site ID 632	Ironbridge civic space – site ID 650
Newport	0				
Rural	0				
Overall	19	42%-98%	67.4 %	Randlay Avenue local centre – site ID 506	M & S square – site ID 465

12.12 The key issues emerging from Table 12.1 and consultations relating to the quality of provision of civic spaces include:

- consultation from the household survey indicates a large proportion of respondents (45%) view civic spaces to be of average quality. However, 23% rate this typology as good quality and 20% poor quality
- residents attending the drop in sessions discussed the aesthetic importance of this typology, particularly as both residents and tourists use civic spaces
- there is a large variation in the quality scoring of civic spaces, with scores ranging from 42% - 98%. This reflects the varying responses derived from the household survey
- the highest scoring quality site is located in the Telford central analysis area. Telford central also contains the lowest scoring quality site
- the average quality score of sites in each individual area is similar with the exception of Newport and the rural analysis area, which do not contain any civic spaces.

12.13 In setting local standards for civic spaces, it is only appropriate to set a quality standard, taking into account any national or local standards. Full details of the consultation and justifications for the recommended local standard are provided within Appendix G. The recommended local standard, derived directly from consultation across Telford and Wrekin has been summarised below:

Quality Standard (see Appendix G)

Recommended standard – CIVIC SPACES		
Local consultation, national guidance and best practice suggest that the following features are essential and desirable to local residents:		
Essential	Desirable	
Information boards	Clean/litter free	
Good access	Seating	
Parking facilities	Flowers/trees	
Detailed analysis of the local consultation suggests that with regards to civic spaces, the relative importance of the key components is as follows:		
Component of quality	Proportion of possible total responses received	Weighting
Security and safety	33%	2
Cleanliness and maintenance	38%	3
Vegetation	19%	1
Ancillary accommodation	46%	4

Accessibility standard

12.14 PPG17 states that there is no realistic requirement to set catchments for such a typology as it cannot be easily influenced through planning policy and implementation. However, it is recommended that the council consider the accessibility of civic spaces, as a standard can be used for broad planning need.

12.15 The accessibility of sites is paramount in maximising usage as well as providing an opportunity for all people to use the site. The recommended local standard is set in the form of a distance threshold and is derived directly from the findings of the local consultations.

12.16 Site-specific accessibility issues were also analysed as part of the programme of site visits and information and signage, transport and general issues were assessed.

12.17 Responses to the household questionnaire showed that a more people would expect to walk to civic spaces as opposed to drive (50% walk compared to 36% drive). This suggests that there are improvements that could be made to the accessibility of civic spaces in order to promote walking as a preferred travel method.

SECTION 12 – CIVIC SPACES

- 12.18 Site assessment ratings shows the majority of civic spaces are either good or average in terms of transport links and general site access. Information and signage has been highlighted as a potential issue, as ratings varied between good, average and poor.
- 12.19 Existing civic spaces tend to be in town or local centres whereas new spaces are sometime provided through regeneration projects. In rural areas, it is unlikely that civic spaces would be located in close proximity. Separate accessibility standards for urban and rural areas have therefore been set to reflect this.
- 12.20 The recommended local accessibility standard for civic spaces is summarised below. Full justification for the local standard is provided within Appendix H.

Accessibility standard (see Appendix H)

Recommended standard
15 MINUTE (720 METRE) WALK TIME (URBAN) 15 MINUTE DRIVE TIME (RURAL)
Justification
PPG17 states that there is no realistic requirement to set catchments for civic spaces as it cannot be easily influenced through planning policy and implementation. Therefore strict adherence to an accessibility standard (in terms of highlighting area inside and outside the catchment of existing provision) would be counterproductive. However, it is recommended that the Council consider the accessibility of civic spaces in terms of a 15 minute walk time for the urban area and a 15 minute drive time or the rural area.
These standards are consistent with the 75% threshold level as advocated in PPG17. Whilst the accessibility standard can be used for broad planning need, it should not be adopted as policy to influence future civic space provision

*a straight-line distance of 720m has been used rather than the pedestrian distance of 1200m. This is based on average walking distances reduced by a factor of 40% to account for the fact that people do not walk in straight lines. The 40% factoring is based on the approach set out in the NPFA Six Acre Standard.

Summary

- 12.21 There are 19 civic spaces across the Borough of Telford and Wrekin, located in four of the six analysis areas. Throughout the consultation the aesthetic importance of civic spaces was discussed, as both residents and tourists use them.
- 12.22 The nature of this typology means that they are very specific to their locality. Whilst no quantity standard has been set, careful consideration should be given when new developments are designed to the opportunity for providing appropriate civic spaces.
- 12.23 An accessibility and quality standard has been set as a benchmark for new areas of civic space and the maintenance of existing areas across the Borough.

SECTION 13
GREEN CORRIDORS

Green corridors

Definition

- 13.1 This open space type includes towpaths along canals and riverbanks, cycleways, rights of way and disused railway lines. The primary purpose is to provide opportunities for walking, cycling and horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel, and opportunities for wildlife migration.

PPG17 – the role of green corridors

- 13.2 With regards to green corridors the emphasis of PPG17 is on urban areas. It uses the typology from the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce Report which is an 'urban typology'.
- 13.3 PPG17 suggests that all green corridors, including those in remote rural settlements should be included, whereas the Companion Guide suggests that unless a green corridor is used as a transport link between facilities ie home and school, town and sports facility etc, it should not be included within an audit.
- 13.4 Although the role that all green corridors play in the provision of open space and recreation within local authority areas is recognised, the focus in this study is on important urban corridors and public rights of way (PROW).

Strategic context and consultation

- 13.5 In addition to improving sustainability and linking urban areas with nearby rural countryside, green corridors represent an important chance to promote sustainable transport by cycle and on foot. Provision and use of green corridors will be a key determinant in the achievement of targets for participation in sport and active recreation.
- 13.6 The latest government plan published by the Department for Transport and entitled "Walking and Cycling: an action plan" states:
- 13.7 *"Walking and cycling are good for our health, good for getting us around, good for our public spaces and good for our society, for all these reasons we need to persuade more people to choose to walk and cycle more often"*
- 13.8 Therefore it is important to address any qualitative deficiencies of green corridors and capitalise on any opportunities to increase and enhance the network. Providing a high quality infrastructure will not only increase use of green corridors, but linkages between sites will increase use of individual open space sites and remove barriers to access.
- 13.9 The rural nature of Telford and Wrekin lends itself to the provision of linear open spaces which link open spaces together. As a unitary authority Telford and Wrekin is responsible for all public rights of way in the Borough. The rights of way network consists of over 900 individual routes totalling over 360 kilometres of path.
- 13.10 As a Highway Authority, Telford and Wrekin Borough Council has a duty to assert and protect the rights of way network. However the responsibility for ensuring the paths are safe and convenient for the public to use is shared between a number of others including landowners and users.

13.11 Telford and Wrekin Borough Council's responsibilities include:

- ensuring that rights of way are free from obstruction and that they can be used by the public safely and conveniently
- clearing the surface vegetation from rights of way and ensuring that the surface is in a fit condition for its intended use
- the maintenance of some, but not all, bridges
- signposting and, where appropriate, waymarking rights of way
- authorising stiles and gates on rights of way
- ensuring that the definitive map is kept up to date.

13.12 Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, Telford and Wrekin Borough Council must produce a Rights of Way Improvement Plan by 2007, outlining countryside access improvements over the next five years.

13.13 Telford and Wrekin Council's commitment to the provision of green corridors is emphasised in Council documents including the Wrekin Local Plan, Community Strategy and the Sport and Recreation Strategy:

- to improve the health of local people by the services and activities available through sport and physical recreation
- key actions include the introduction of quality cycle and walking routes, and sustained investment to improve the rights of way network.

Consultation

13.14 Consultation on the provision of green corridors in Telford and Wrekin was undertaken through a variety of methods. The findings showed:

- green corridors are the third most frequented types of open space in the Borough (the other two being parks and gardens and natural and semi natural). 68% of residents use green corridors once an month or more
- a perception that the maintenance of these open spaces is not as rigorous as other typologies. This has led to poor footpaths and litter issues
- residents commented on the important role the green corridors play within the community, not only acting as a link to different amenities but also contributing to the visual quality of the area
- parish council questionnaires reinforced these comments, stating that the green corridors and footpaths provide an essential link to other open spaces. The large number of green corridors has led to maintenance issues, in particular litter
- a theme running through all the consultation has been the concern surrounding housing developments and the impact this will have on the amount of all open spaces across the Borough.

Current position

- 13.15 The linear nature of green corridors means it is inappropriate to measure the area and assess these spaces. Nevertheless their importance within the Borough should not be undermined as they provide an essential linkage between open spaces and increase the accessibility of other sites.

Setting provision standards

- 13.16 In setting local standards for green corridors, it is only appropriate to set quality features and take into account any national or local standards. Full indication of consultation and justifications for the recommended local standards are provided within Appendix I. The recommended local standard has been summarised below in context with the green corridors in Telford and Wrekin.

Quality Standard (see appendix I)

Recommended standard – Green Corridors		
Local consultation, national guidance and best practice suggest that the following features are essential and desirable to local residents:		
Essential	Desirable	
Flowers and trees	Good access	
Nature features	Clean/litter free	
Footpaths		
Detailed analysis of the local consultation suggests that with regards to green corridors, the relative importance of the key components is as follows:		
Component of quality	Proportion of possible total responses received	Weighting
Security and safety	25%	1
Cleanliness and maintenance	26%	2
Vegetation	56%	4
Ancillary accommodation	27%	3

Quantity standard

13.17 The Annex A of PPG17 – Open Space Typology states:

*“the need for Green Corridors arises from the need to promote environmentally sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling within urban areas. This means that **there is no sensible way of stating a provision standard**, just as there is no way of having a standard for the proportion of land in an area which it will be desirable to allocate for roads”.*

13.18 It is therefore recommended that no provision standard should be set. PPG17 goes onto to state that:

“Instead planning policies should promote the use of green corridors to link housing areas to the Sustrans national cycle network, town and city centres, places of employment and community facilities such as schools, shops, community centres and sports facilities. In this sense green corridors are demand-led. However, planning authorities should also take opportunities to use established linear routes, such as disused railway lines, roads or canal and river banks, as green corridors, and supplement them by proposals to ‘plug in’ access to them from as wide an area as possible”.

13.19 National route 81 of the National Cycle Network runs through Telford, with National route 55 connecting Telford to Stafford. Opportunities should be sought to link the existing green corridor network to the National Cycle Network.

Accessibility standard

13.20 There is no requirement to set catchments for green corridors as they cannot be easily influenced through planning policy and implementation.

Applying provision standards

13.21 Given that it is not appropriate to set any local quantity or accessibility standards, it is also not appropriate to state areas of deficiency or need.

13.22 The aim is to provide an integrated network of high quality green corridors linking open spaces together and opportunities for informal recreation and alternative means of transport. Consideration should also be given to the provision of effective wildlife corridors, enabling the migration of species across the Borough.

Summary and recommendations

13.23 Green corridors provide opportunities close to peoples home's for informal recreation, particularly walking and cycling, as part of every day activities, for example, travel to work or shops. The development of a linked green corridor network will help to provide opportunities for informal recreation and improve the health and well-being of the local community. In this way, green corridors can be integral to the achievement of targets for increased active recreation.

13.24 There are already a large number of footpaths and green corridor networks within the study area and consultation indicates that they are well-used.

13.25 Future development needs to encompass linkages between large areas of open space, create opportunities to develop the green corridor network and utilise potential development sites. Development should consider both the needs of wildlife and humans.

SECTION 13 – GREEN CORRIDORS

- 13.26 Given increasing pressure from development and environmental change, corridors between different open spaces will become increasingly important and valuable.
- 13.27 A network of multi-functional greenspace will contribute to the high quality natural and built environment required for existing and new sustainable communities in the future. An integrated network of high quality green corridors will link open spaces, helping to alleviate other open space deficiencies and provide opportunities for informal recreation and alternative means of transport.

GC1	Telford and Wrekin Council should work in tandem with the Primary Care Trust to maximise the use of green corridors in the Borough.
GC2	Actions arising from the Community and Sport and Recreation Strategies regarding the use of green corridors should be implemented in conjunction with recommendations from the open space study. In particular there should be a focus on involving community groups to help contribute to, enhance and maximise the provision of green corridors.
GC3	Linking existing green corridors with open spaces in the Borough should be a key priority for the Council. This will provide opportunities for informal recreation and alternative means of transport, using all types of open spaces.
GC4	Prepare a green infrastructure study to maximise the linkages of open spaces with green corridors and help create a network of multi-functional greenspace in Telford and Wrekin. This should serve as an extension to this PPG17 Study and could be developed as a stand-alone study or as part of a DPD. A green infrastructure study should also give consideration to the need for ecological corridors or stepping-stones.
GC5	Seek opportunities to link the existing green corridor network to the National Cycle Network.
GC6	Providers of green corridors in Telford and Wrekin should aspire to the essential and desirable quality features.

SECTION 14

PLANNING OVERVIEW

Overview of open space, sport and recreation provision in Telford and Wrekin

- 14.1 This study has been completed in accordance with the requirements of the latest Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 and its Companion Guide.
- 14.2 This section summarises the local standards set and the application of the local standards for each typology, in each area of the Borough. The extent to which provision is adequate to meet local needs is then discussed. Consideration is then given to the implementation of the study in a planning policy and development control context.

Current position

- 14.3 The current provision of all open space, sport and recreation facilities in Telford and Wrekin is summarised in Table 14.1 overleaf. Further information on this can be found throughout the individual sections and in Appendix E.

SECTION 14 – SUMMARY AND PLANNING OVERVIEW

Table 14.1 - Current total provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities in Telford and Wrekin (hectares)

Area	Parks and gardens	Natural and semi natural open space	Amenity space	Provision for children	Provision for young people	Outdoor sports facilities	Allotments
Telford central	3.05	229.38	30.43	5.14	1.52	66.08	2.18
Telford north west	0.89	223.50	69.25	3	1.44	79.69	3
Telford north east	0	172.66	24.93	2.23	0.31	59.11	0.47
Telford south	4.56	139.80	3.52	2.1	0.46	45.8	2.92
Newport	1.46	22.08	2.60	1.35	0.19	27.05	0.97
Rural	0	224.1	12.33	2.04	0.52	31.79	1.06
COMMENTS (Borough wide)	Existing provision below recommended standard	Existing provision meets recommended standard	Existing provision meets recommended standard	Existing provision below recommended standard	Existing provision below recommended standard	Existing provision meets recommended standard	Existing provision below recommended standard

Current provision – quality

14.4 Analysis of the quality of open spaces across the Borough indicates that:

- the quality of parks is consistently good across the Borough. Telford Town Park is an example of good practice both regionally and locally. Parks in the Borough are considered to be inviting and attractive
- the quality of natural and semi natural open spaces is lower than some other typologies. Improvements to the quality of natural sites were considered to be of particular importance. Natural and semi natural open space is perceived to be the defining characteristic of the whole Borough
- while the quality of some amenity space is good, many were perceived by local residents to be lacking in function and formal facilities. There are also some examples of poor quality amenity green spaces where enhancement is a priority
- quantity was considered to be a greater issue than quality for children and young people, however quality also emerged as a key issue. Analysis of existing sites highlighted significant variations in the quality of existing facilities and this was also reflected through the findings of the local consultation, where the need for challenging and innovative play areas was raised
- the quality of outdoor sports facilities is perhaps the most varied of all typologies, with some excellent examples and some poorer facilities. Improvements to the quality were perceived to be particular importance over the LDF period
- local residents recognised quantitative issues as more important than qualitative issues, with regards to allotments in Telford and Wrekin. The quality of allotments in the Borough was variable and consultation highlighted the need for investment in ancillary accommodation.

Current provision – accessibility

14.5 The accessibility of all open space sites is highlighted throughout the report. In summary, the key issues emerging from the analysis of accessibility are:

- while all residents of the rural areas are able to access parks and gardens, there are shortfalls within the urban areas. New provision should be considered in Newport and South and East Telford
- the distribution of natural and semi natural open spaces is even and there are few residents outside of the recommended catchment area
- distribution of amenity green space is variable and there is an abundance of sites to the west of the Borough. The relationship between amenity green space, parks and provision for children was highlighted. Although improvements to the quality of provision should be prioritised, opportunities for new provision should be seized in some areas
- reflecting the findings of the quantity standards, there are large clusters of residents who are unable to access facilities for children and young people and several priorities for new provision were identified

- the distribution of outdoor sports facilities is even and there are few deficiencies across the Borough
 - the distribution of allotments is mainly focused around the urban areas of the Borough. There is limited provision in the rural areas and the largest deficiencies are found to the north of Telford central analysis area and to the south of Telford north west and Telford north east.
- 14.6 In addition to considering the findings of the application of local standards for each typology, in light of the multifaceted nature of each type of open space and the importance of open space to the character of the Borough, it is essential to assess the provision of open space as an entire network, and consider the adequacy of that network for each geographical area of the Borough.
- 14.7 As highlighted earlier in this section, there is extensive provision of open space across the Borough. The majority of recommended enhancements to the network focus on improvements to the quality of open spaces, ensuring that provision better meets the needs of local residents, without compromising the overall character of the town.
- 14.8 As highlighted, the provision of appropriate high quality green space results in an array of benefits that far exceed the recreational value that these sites offer to residents. Linkages between green spaces further enhance the benefits that can be achieved ensuring that the interrelationship between biodiversity and recreational use is balanced.
- 14.9 The key issues for each area of the Borough are summarised below:

Telford North East

- Telford North East is characterised by an abundance of amenity space which is central to the landscape of the area. Much of the network of open space is closely managed and there is less natural open space than in other areas of the Borough. Despite the vast quantity of amenity space, some residents are without access to parks and spaces offer fewer amenities and / or facilities. This is exacerbated by the lack of facilities for children and young people in the area. Enhancing the quality of existing amenity areas and upgrading facilities provided at existing sites will increase the overall role of green spaces in this area.

Telford North West

- like the North East, there are high levels of amenity space in the North West although provision of parks, facilities for children and young people and natural open space is lower than in some other areas. Enhancement of the quality of sites, alongside the provision of a wider range of facilities and opportunities (for example incorporation of natural areas within sites) will provide a greater variety for local residents. The distribution of amenity spaces is uneven, and in some instances, greater benefit may be achieved from the redesignation of some sites in order to invest in others.

Telford Central

- there are few deficiencies of open space in the central area of Telford Town, indicating that the overall distribution of all sites is good and that there is an even range of facilities. Improvements to the quality of sites would further enhance resources in this area.

Telford South

- the open space network in some areas of Telford South is perhaps less extensive than other areas of the Borough. While the southern areas of Telford Town contain large quantities of amenity space, these are frequently of lower quality and would benefit from qualitative enhancements. In contrast, the more rural southern extremes of the Borough including Ironbridge suffer from a lack of formal open space, and fewer formal areas of provision. While new provision should be targeted in these areas, the lack of formal space emphasises the importance of maximising linkages between this area and the town centre.

Newport

- provision of open space in Newport is uneven and some areas are deficient in many types of open space. Provision of a new park in the area would ensure access to a wider variety of facilities for residents and also offer the opportunity for the provision of facilities for young people. In light of the lack of open space in some areas of Newport, links between the town and the nearby countryside should be maximised and natural resources (including waterways) should be promoted for recreational use.

Rural

- provision in rural settlements of the Borough is varying, although most residents have access to at least some informal open space. Provision of a full range of open space is a particular challenge in rural areas and in many instances is impractical. While it should be ensured that all residents have access to some local formal open space, linkages between settlements, to the countryside and to Telford Town will be of particular importance.

- 14.10 The overall conclusions of the report should be used to guide future planning policy and to inform development control decisions relating to the network of open spaces in the Borough. The remainder of this section therefore provides guidance on the use of this PPG17 study in the determination of developer contributions and identification of strategic priorities for open space.

Planning strategic context and overview

Planning Policy Guidance Note 17: Planning for open spaces, sport and recreation

- 14.11 PPG17 emphasises the importance of undertaking robust assessments of the existing and future needs of local communities for open space, sport and recreational facilities.
- 14.12 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.

- 14.13 Assessments of need undertaken in relation to PPG17 should drive the future provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities. Planning contributions can be a key source of funding to ensure that provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities meets the aims and objectives of current and future residents.
- 14.14 With regards the use of planning obligations, paragraph 33 of PPG17 states; "Planning obligations should be used as a means to remedy local deficiencies in the quantity or quality of open space, sports and recreation provision. Local Authorities will be justified in seeking planning obligations where the quantity or quality of provision is inadequate or under threat, or where new development increases local needs. It is essential that local authorities have undertaken detailed assessments of needs and audits of existing facilities, and set appropriate local standards in order to justify planning obligations."

Assessing needs and opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17

- 14.15 Whilst the advice within the Companion Guide was written at a time when the guidance on developer contributions was contained within Circular 1/97, its recommendations on the implementation of developer contributions are still highly relevant.
- 14.16 Diagram 1 of the Companion Guide shows how to deal with the redevelopment of an existing open space or sports/recreation facility, using developer contributions and planning conditions.
- 14.17 Crucially, paragraph 9.1 states that provided authorities have undertaken assessments of need and audits of existing facilities compliant with PPG17, locally determined provision standards will meet the tests of reasonableness set out in paragraph 7 of Department of the Environment Circular 1/97, Planning Obligations. Whilst Circular 05/2005 has superseded this circular, the reference to "reasonableness" remains.
- 14.18 The Companion Guide states that additional provision will be needed when the total amount of provision within the appropriate distance threshold of the site is or will be below the amount required in the area following the development. The decision as to whether on-site provision or a contribution to off-site provision is more appropriate depends primarily on whether the total quantity of each form of new provision required as a result of the proposed development is above the minimum acceptable size in the adopted provision standards. If it is, then new provision should normally be on-site; if not, the developer should be required to contribute to off-site provision.
- 14.19 Before seeking contributions to off-site provision, authorities should be satisfied that they will be able to use them within the distance threshold of the proposed development site. If they do not use them within an agreed time frame, developers are able to submit a s106 application for their return. This underlines the importance of ensuring planning obligations are implemented or enforced in an efficient and transparent way, in order to ensure that contributions are spent on their intended purposes and that the associated development contributes to the sustainability of the areas. This will require monitoring by the local planning authority.
- 14.20 Whilst the Council will be justified in seeking contributions for the full range of open space, sport and recreation facilities for which they have adopted provision standards, in practice they will have to be realistic and in many instances prioritise within the findings of the local needs and audit assessment. This will vary dependent on the location of the planning application.

Circular 05/2005: Planning obligations

- 14.21 This Circular replaces the Department of the Environment Circular 1/97, with the changes only concerning the negotiation of planning obligations. This Circular will act in the interim period before further reforms are brought forward.
- 14.22 Planning obligations are intended to make acceptable development that would otherwise be unacceptable in planning terms. They may be used to:
- prescribe the nature of a development (eg proportion of affordable housing)
 - compensate for loss or damage created by a development (eg loss of open space)
 - mitigate a developments impact (eg through increased public transport provision).
- 14.23 Planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:
- relevant to planning
 - necessary to make the proposed development acceptable in planning terms
 - directly related to the proposed development
 - fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the proposed development
 - reasonable in all other aspects.

Planning obligations: practice guidance (July 2006)

- 14.24 This Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) practice guidance aims to provide local planning authorities and developers with practical tools and methods to help the development, negotiation and implementation of planning obligations. It is accompanied by a model s106 agreement prepared by the Law Society. The guidance relates directly to sections of Circular 05/05 Planning Obligations. It covers the following issues:
- types of contribution, including maintenance payments and pooled contributions
 - policies in Regional Spatial Strategies, Local Development Frameworks, and the roles of Supplementary Planning Documents
 - improving processes of negotiation, by the use of applicant/stakeholder guides and setting local authority service standards
 - developing formulae and standard charges, and the need to assess the impact and costs of proposals in order to inform such charging
 - the Law Society model agreement, which is intended to form a template from which authorities can select relevant sections
 - the use of third parties to validate and mediate agreements
 - the role of community involvement, and responsibilities of authorities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000

- unilateral undertakings
- improvements to ways of managing and implementation of planning obligations, including the use of performance bonds.

14.25 Planning obligations are typically agreements negotiated between local authorities and developers in the context of granting planning consent. They provide a means to ensure that a proposed development contributes to the creation of sustainable communities, particularly by securing contributions towards the provision of necessary infrastructure and facilities required by local and national planning policies.

Integrating the findings of this PPG17 study within the Telford BC planning context

14.26 Section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that for the purposes of any area in England other than Greater London, the development plan is:

- the regional spatial strategy for the region in which it is situated, and
- the development plan documents (taken as a whole) which have been adopted or approved in relation to that area.

14.27 The Wrekin Local Plan has an end date of 2006., however, parts of the plan and its policies have been saved beyond September 2007 and continue to form part of the Development Plan for the Borough, together with the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS11) until it is superseded by the new plan for the Borough, the Telford and Wrekin Local Development Framework. The key policies relating to the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities within the existing Wrekin Local Plan include:

- LR4 – outdoor recreational open space
- LR6 – developer contributions to outdoor recreational open space provision within new residential developments
- LR7 – recreational open space on employment developments
- OL6 – open land
- OL11 – woodland and trees
- OL12 – open land and landscape – contributions from new development
- OL13 – maintenance of open space.

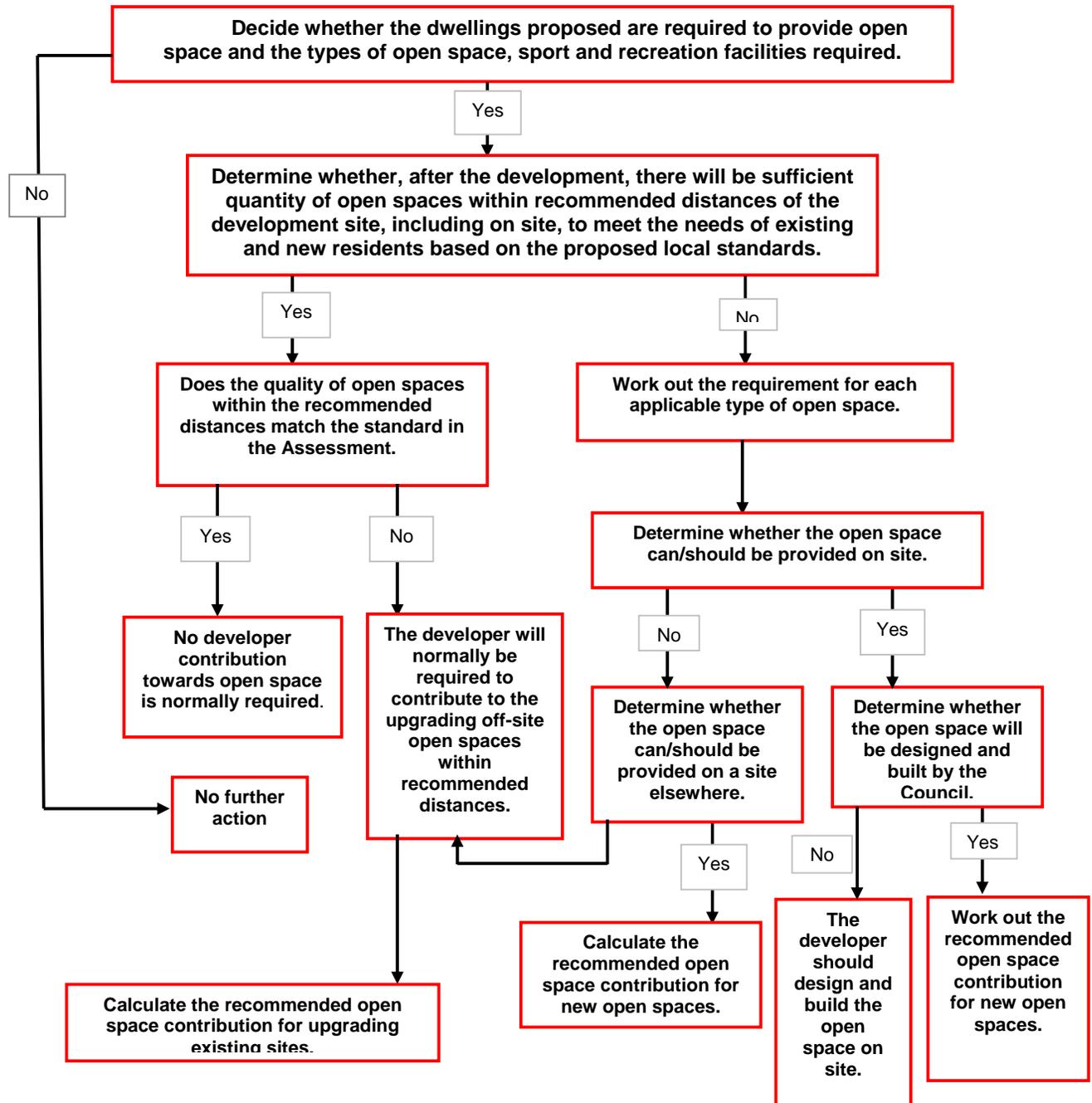
14.28 These will be discussed in the context of the findings of this PPG17 assessment and a review of national good practice on developer contributions.

14.29 These policies have been saved until the production of the Local Development Framework for Telford and Wrekin. This Local Development Framework will provide the long term development vision for the Borough and will be made up of a series of development plan documents and supplementary planning documents.

The plan led system

- 14.30 The plan led system ensures that local planning authorities clearly define requirements for contributions and the type of development that will be permissible.
- 14.31 This PPG17 study should be used as a supporting evidence base for Local Development Documents and the policies within them.
- 14.32 Development Plan Documents (DPDs) should include general policies open space, sport and recreation facilities that are supported by the findings of this study and other relevant documents.
- 14.33 DPDs should also consider the principles and use of planning obligations. For example, matters to be covered by planning obligations and factors to take into account when considering the scale and form of contributions.
- 14.34 Planning obligations can be in kind or in the form of financial contributions. Policies on the types of payment, including pooling and maintenance payments, should be set out within Local Development Frameworks and developers should be able to predict as accurately as possible the likely contributions they will be asked to pay. Many local authorities now include a S106 contributions calculator on their website ensuring that the system is transparent to all developers.
- 14.35 More detailed policies applying the principles set out in the Development Plan Document, for example, specific localities and likely quantum of contributions, ought to then be included in Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD). Dependent of the scope of the SPD, the Council may wish to also consider the development of codes of practice in negotiating planning obligations, so as to make clear the level of service a developer can expect. The Council currently has two enforcement officers, whose role is to ensure that planning conditions are properly completed.
- 14.36 The flow diagram below provides more detail on the process for determining developer contributions using the local standards recommended as part of this study. It is based on a review of best practice and national guidance. A worked example is also provided later in this Section.
- 14.37 It is intended as a guide for Telford and Wrekin Borough to develop a process for determining developer contributions and ensuring that they are spent in areas of high need and forms the structure of the rest of this Section.
- 14.38 This recommended methodology differs from that outlined in the Planning Obligations SPD but provides an alternative approach to be considered in future revisions of Local Development Framework documents.

Figure 14.1 - Proposed process for determining open space requirements (adapted from Swindon Borough adopted SPG: 2004)



1. Determine whether the dwellings proposed are required to provide open space

- 14.39 The first stage in the flow diagram is to determine whether the dwellings proposed are required to provide open space and which types of open space, sport and recreation facilities will require developer contributions.
- 14.40 Policies LR4, LR6 and LR7 within the Wrekin Local Plan currently consider the provision of open space within residential and employment development. These policies use national standards to determine the required contributions and indicate that contributions/on site provision will be required as part of new development. Policy LR6 specifically indicates that developments resulting in over 75 child bedspaces will be required to contribute towards on site provision. It is not clear whether any contributions are required if the number of dwellings created by the development is below this number.
- 14.41 The Table 14.2 provides a summary of the approach taken by other authorities to determine whether contributions are required from a new development:

Table 14.2 – A summary of approaches in other local authorities

Number and type of dwellings	
Tynedale Council	Applied to all new dwellings. Requirements for outdoor sports are only applied to three dwelling developments and above.
Mid Devon Borough Council	All new developments to contribute to the provision of open space including single dwellings, tied accommodation, elderly persons units, conversions, flats, maisonettes and permanent mobile homes. Exceptions to this are replacement dwellings, extensions, wardened accommodation, nursing homes or similar institutional developments and temporary mobile homes. Affordable housing schemes can be unviable if required to contribute to open space provision but still incur a demand. The onus is on the developer to demonstrate that open space contributions would make the scheme unviable.
Fareham Borough Council	Most types of residential development are considered to generate demand for all categories of open space. This includes market housing, new build dwellings, affordable housing, permanent permissions for mobile homes. This excludes one for one replacement dwellings, extensions and annexes. Only specific types of open space are required for elderly accommodation (active/less active/least active) and a case by case basis is applied to specialist accommodations eg hostels and conversions or sub-division of dwellings.

SECTION 14 – PLANNING OVERVIEW

Number and type of dwellings	
Milton Keynes Council	Applied to 10 dwellings or more Most types of residential development will generate additional demand on open space. The SPG includes a table to assess whether open space is required for each type of dwelling. Open Market housing/flats and affordable housing are required to contribute to all types of open space. Housing for active elderly excludes a requirement for playing fields, local play areas and neighbourhood play areas. Excludes extensions, replacement dwellings, nursing homes and substitute house types.
Leicester City Council	Applies to all new residential development including flats, maisonettes, student accommodation
Cambridge City Council	Open space required for developments of 10 and above dwellings and open space requirement is applied to all new build self-contained residential units and conversions or change of use
Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council	Requires provision of some form of open space for all residential dwellings. Non-residential development may have an impact on existing open space and a financial contribution may be sought for facilities such as footpath lighting.

- 14.42 In general the approach taken to affordable housing is to include a statement within the guidance stating that affordable housing schemes will require the same level of open space provision as open market housing but where it can be demonstrated that this would lead to the scheme being unviable, the level of provision required can be reduced.
- 14.43 Based on the review of existing guidance, it is recommended that the following approach be taken:
- continue to base the nature and scale of obligations sought from development on the size of development and the impact on open space, sport and recreation provision. Ensure that all developments make a contribution, regardless of the number of dwellings that are created.
 - devising a matrix approach to clearly state the types of housing mix that will be required to contribute to open space. This can be broken down to indicate the types of open space different housing types will be required to contribute to. This builds in the flexibility that is currently left to negotiation, but ensures a clear implementation of the policy. The example below is taken from the Sport England/Milton Keynes Council/English Partnerships, Joint Pilot Project, and Draft SPG on Open Space, Sport and Recreation.

Table 14.3 – Approach adopted in Milton Keynes

Category	Open market housing/flats	Affordable housing	Housing for the active elderly
Playing fields	✓	✓	X
Local play areas	✓	✓	X
Neighbourhood play areas	✓	✓	X
Community centres/meeting halls	✓	✓	✓
Local parks	✓	✓	✓
District parks	✓	✓	✓

Category	Open market housing/flats	Affordable housing	Housing for the active elderly
Swimming pools	✓	✓	✓
Sports halls	✓	✓	✓
Allotments	✓	✓	✓

- including a statement to clearly set out the approach to affordable housing.

14.44 The fact that industrial development of a strategic scale is included is in line with paragraph 20 of PPG17, which states that in identifying where to locate new areas of open space, sport and recreational facilities, local authorities should “look to provide areas of open space in commercial and industrial areas”. As such, this inclusion is supported although it may be difficult to administer the times when open space provision is appropriate.

PLAN1	Ensure developer contributions are required from all development where required by local policies.
PLAN2	Devise a matrix approach to clearly state the types of housing that will be required to contribute to open space.
PLAN3	Include a statement to clearly set out the approach to affordable housing.
PLAN4	Ensure that any policy relating to the need for developers to contribute to the need for open space also relates to commercial development.

2. Determine whether, after the development, there will be sufficient quantity of open spaces within the recommended distances of the development site, including on site, to meet the needs of existing and new residents based on the proposed local standards. Does the quality of open spaces within the recommended distances match the standard in the assessment?

14.45 The determination of shortfalls/surplus relies on the use and application of appropriate standards of provision.

14.46 The existing Wrekin Local Plan relies on national standards within existing policies on sport and recreation facilities.

SECTION 14 – PLANNING OVERVIEW

- 14.47 These national standards should be replaced by the local standards set out within this PPG17 report. The Council should determine for which types of open space they would like to receive contributions and should set out these local standards within the Local Development Framework. This should include quantity, quality and accessibility standards.
- 14.48 The use of these locally derived standards ensures that contributions requested are directly in line with proven local need and that there is full justification and rationale for the standards set.
- 14.49 These standards should then be used to determine the contributions required. In order to ensure that the requirement on developers is fair and consistent, contributions should be applied based on the increased level of demand only. This ensures that the developer is paying directly for the associated impact of the development rather than it being dependent on what open space happens to be around the development. It is still essential to consider the existing provision within the area in order to understand the impact that the new development will have.
- 14.50 If there is no quantitative or accessibility deficiency there may be a qualitative deficiency that needs to be addressed.
- 14.51 A detailed worked example is set out at the end of this section.
- 14.52 To identify the level of quantitative, qualitative and accessibility deficiency within the area of the development, the PPG17 study should be applied for each of the types of open space. In simple terms, this is as follows:
- estimate the number of residents living in the proposed development (being explicit about assumed occupation rates)
 - calculate the existing amount of open space within the agreed accessibility threshold of the new development. For example, there may be an existing quantitative undersupply of parks and gardens, provision for young people and children and allotments in the area of the development site
 - estimate the existing population within the relevant accessibility threshold and combine this with the estimated population of the new development
 - compare the existing amount of open space and the total population with the quantity standards developed for that typology in the PPG17 study to decide if after the development there will be sufficient quantity within recommended distances of the development site to meet local needs.
- 14.53 If when assessed against the relevant PPG17 quantity standards, there is a sufficient amount of that type of open space in the local area to meet the needs of the total population, the Council may expect developer contributions to enhance the quality of open spaces within that accessibility threshold.
- 14.54 Where it has been decided that a contribution is required to improve provision locally, reference should be made to the quality standards for each typology and the assessment against these standards. Contributions should only be considered necessary where the quality of local provision is considered below the quality standard as outlined in the PPG17 assessment.

PLAN5	Set out the local standards produced within the PPG17 document within the LDF. These should be used as a basis for determining the contributions required.
--------------	--

PLAN6	Apply these local standards to decide whether the development creates a need for new open space or a need to improve the quality of existing open space in the local area
--------------	---

3. Determine whether the open space can/should be provided on site.

14.55 In instances where a quantitative deficiency has been identified, it is necessary to determine whether the open space should be provided on site. A new area of open space should be required where the existing amount of open space is insufficient to cater for the needs of the total population. The requirement should only cover the needs of the people who will be living in the new housing development.

14.56 If a housing development generates a need for new open space then wherever possible this should be provided on-site. However, in many circumstances it will not be possible to achieve this. It is recommended that minimum size standards for each typology are developed to ensure that provision is useable and can be viably maintained. If the quantitative need for a type of open space is equivalent to or above the minimum size threshold then new provision should be required on site.

PLAN7	Identify appropriate minimum size thresholds for on-site provision for each typology. Develop a matrix approach to determine the threshold of dwellings for on-site versus off-site provision as a guide only. A case-by-case approach will still be required.
--------------	--

14.57 If it is not possible to provide the open space required on site, then contributions should be sought towards the new provision or enhancement of that type of open space within the accessibility threshold. It must be proven that the contribution will be used to improve or provide new provision that is directly related to the development in question.

Pooled contributions

14.58 Where the combined impact of a number of developments creates the need for infrastructure, it may be reasonable for the associated developer contributions to be pooled. In addition, where individual development will have some impact but is not sufficient to justify the need for a discrete piece of infrastructure, local planning authorities may seek contributions to specific future provision. This can be determined through the application of the quantity standards and the agreed accessibility thresholds developed in the study (see para 14.47). However, a degree of certainty is needed that cumulatively sufficient developments will come forward in that locality within an agreed time frame or else the contributions will need to be returned to the developer. This should be closely linked to emerging Local Development Framework work on site specific allocations and knowledge of areas of significant development.

14.59 Alternatively, in cases where an item of infrastructure necessitated by the cumulative impact of a series of developments is provided by a local authority before all the developments have come forward, the later developers may still be required to contribute the relevant proportion of costs.

4. Calculate the recommended open space contribution for new open spaces.

14.60 The level of developer contributions for off-site provision will depend on whether it includes the costs of land acquisition. Standards costs towards the enhancement of existing open space and provision of new open spaces (across all typologies) should be clearly identified and revised annually. They should be based on local circumstances.

14.61 The cost of open space can be difficult to determine based on what elements of open space provision to include within the costing. For example, whether the cost of a facility should include site preparation, eg levelling, drainage, special surfaces and what ancillary facilities to include within costings, what level of equipment and land costs. A guide can be found on the Sport England website: http://www.sportengland.org/kitbag_fac_costs.doc and the NPFA Cost Guides for Play and Sport.

Worked Example – Calculating the Requirement for New Provision from a development in Telford and Wrekin

14.62 A worked example, contribution towards amenity green space, is provided as follows. The costs used in this example are for illustrative purposes only and do not reflect the cost that should be associated with the provision of new open space in Telford and Wrekin Borough:

- a housing development for 70 dwellings has been submitted to the Council. The development consists of 30 four-bed dwellings, 30 three-bed dwellings and 10 two-bed dwellings. This will result in 230 additional residents living in the locality
- the agreed accessibility catchment for amenity green space is a 10 minute walk time or 480 metres. Within this distance of the housing development there is currently 0.83 hectares of provision
- the estimated population within 480 metres of the housing development is 800 people. Combined with the estimated population from the new development (230), this gives a total population of 1030
- the quantity standard for amenity green space is 0.83 hectares per 1000 population. Multiplied by the total population (1030) produced a requirement for 0.854 hectares of amenity greenspace. The existing amount of amenity greenspace is 0.83 hectares
- 0.83 hectares of amenity green space within 480 metres is a lower level of provision than the required 0.854. The developer will therefore be required to provide further provision
- the size requirement can be calculated by multiplying the quantity standard per person by the population of the new development. In this example this represents 0.00083 hectares per person multiplied by 230 people, producing a requirement for 0.1909 hectares. Given the shortfall in provision is 0.1909 hectares, in order to meet the needs of the people who will be living in the new housing development; the full quantity provision should be secured

SECTION 14 – PLANNING OVERVIEW

- reference should be made to the agreed minimum size standards to determine whether the requirement should be on site or off site. In this example the minimum acceptable size is 0.2 hectares, so either there should be on site provision of a single piece of land at least 0.2ha in area, or a contribution towards off site provision should be sought.
- 14.63 It is unreasonable to ask the developer to fund the entire shortfall in the area, and the contribution can only seek to obtain a contribution for the impact of the additional housing.
- if the open space were to be provided off-site, the estimated cost for the provision of amenity greenspace is £8,200 on the basis of a site being 0.2ha (2000m²) in size and the cost per hectare being £41,000
 - the agreed local standard for provision is 0.83 ha per 1000 population, or 0.00083 ha per person
 - using the formula set out above, the contribution required for a 70 dwelling development is:
 - 230 (number of people in development in terms of increased demand over capacity within accessibility catchment of the development) X 0.00083 (requirement per person) X £41,000 (cost of provision per hectare)
 - the contribution required towards amenity greenspace is **£7826.90**.
- 14.64 The application of this formula ensures that the level of provision required from developments is worked out proportionally as to the level of increased demand the development incurs.
- 14.65 This PPG17 study can be used to determine the level of open space and indoor sport and recreation facilities required in major new urban extensions as well as within smaller new housing developments. The above methodology should be repeated for each type of open space for which contributions are required.

PLAN8	Use a formula for the calculation of the provision of open space requirement. Update costings regularly.
--------------	--

PLAN9	Utilise the methodology above to assess the impact of major growth against agreed quantity standards to proactively plan for emerging open space, sport and recreation needs.
--------------	---

- 14.66 Maintenance sums are also an important element of any Section 106 process. Policy OL13 within the Wrekin Local Plan sets out the current policy for maintenance, stating that the Council will seek a legal agreement to ensure that provision is made for the long term maintenance of open space or landscaping that is provided principally for the benefit of the new development.
- 14.67 Where appropriate new developments should therefore make contributions towards the capital expenditure required to provide/enhance areas of open space and for its on going maintenance. Statements regarding this policy should be included within the LDF.

SECTION 14 – PLANNING OVERVIEW

14.68 Where facilities for open space are to be provided by the developer and will be adopted by the Council:

- the Council should normally adopt and maintain properly laid out open space within residential areas subject to the payment, by the developer, of a commuted sum to cover the cost of future maintenance
- it is anticipated that the developer will be required to maintain the open space for 12 months, or other reasonable period for 'establishment'
- a commuted sum payment is payable on transfer of the land covering cost of maintenance for a defined period. From the review of existing supplementary planning policy maintenance periods are normally between five and 25 years
- the commuted maintenance sum should be calculated using current maintenance prices to manage open space, multiplied to allow for inflation of prices and the interest received on the diminishing average annual balance of the sum.

PLAN10	Set out maintenance (commuted sums) required and update these regularly.
---------------	--

PLAN11	Detailing the approach towards open space developer contributions in an SPD, ensuring that the system is fair, transparent and consistent.
---------------	--

14.69 In addition to the use of the recommended local standards for determining the required level of developer contributions, these standards should also be used to determine the recreational value of an open space site and inform decisions on individual planning applications and priorities for investment.

Revisions to the Developer Contributions system

14.70 Government policy about developer contributions has been under review in recent years, with a view to speeding up the process, improving transparency and reducing uncertainty. The Government has been considering the possibility of augmenting site-specific agreements with tariffs where developers can opt to pay a prescribed contribution (optional planning charge) set out in a plan as an alternative to negotiating obligations.

14.71 Planning obligations have become a prominent feature of land use policy because they enable local authorities to agree significant benefits from developers that go beyond compensating third parties for the negative externalities. They have become something of an informal tax on land betterment. In a review of housing supply for the Government, economist Kate Barker recommended that as a solution, planning obligations should be scaled back and restricted to dealing with the mitigation of development impact and to agree affordable housing contributions. A tax – planning gain supplement – would be used to extract some of the windfall gain and the majority of the money returned to local authorities to finance strategic infrastructure requirements.

14.72 Recent developments (October 07) indicate that PGS will not be introduced.

Summary and recommendations

- 14.73 The open space, sport and recreation study is an invaluable tool in the formulation and implementation of planning policies. This relates to both the protection and enhancement of existing open space and the framework for developing planning obligations.
- 14.74 The study provides the tools in which the value of an open space can be assessed on a site-by-site basis, as and when a development proposal is submitted for an existing piece of open space. Similarly, this approach can be the basis for determining what type of open space provision is appropriate to be provided within a housing development and for pre-empting growth implications as part of the LDF.
- 14.75 The use of a standard formula for open space provision in new housing developments based on the cost of provision will greatly aid the negotiation process and provide a transparent approach in line with Circular 05/2005. This formula should be based on the recommended local standards contained within this report.
- 14.76 There are many other factors to consider in administering planning obligations such as determining occupancy rates, costings and on versus off site provision. The Council's approach should be set out clearly within a Supplementary Planning Document.
- 14.77 Maintenance sums are an important element of open space provision. It is not considered reasonable to expect maintenance in perpetuity, however the authorities reviewed are typically securing maintenance for up to 20 years.
- 14.78 More generally, it is important to note that the provision standards are only the starting point in negotiations with developments. High quality environments will not result simply from applying them in a mechanical way. This is why it is desirable also to complement provision standards with design guidance that concentrates on effective place making.