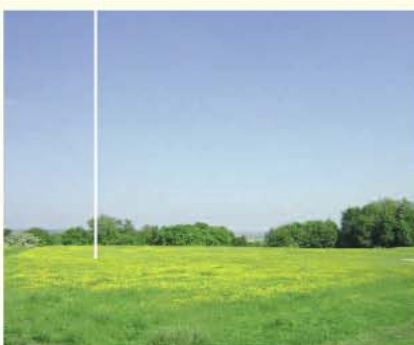
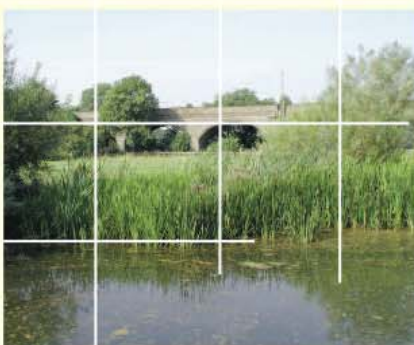


Open Spaces Strategy 2006 - 2011



Thurrock Greengrid Strategy

Putting residents first

THURROCK COUNCIL
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Acknowledgement: Thurrock Council would like to Thank CABE (Commission for Architecture & the Built Environment) Space’s Enabling Programme for their support throughout the research and Strategy formulation.



Photo 2: Grays Beach

1. Introduction

Through its Sustainable Communities Plan, the Government has identified the Thames Gateway as a key growth area seeking significant improvements to the quality of life for present and future communities. Thurrock lies at the heart of the Thames Gateway. The introduction of Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation together with the Government's liveability agenda provide a significant drive to making Thurrock a place where people make a positive choice to live and work. Providing open space is a key element in achieving a change in perception of Thurrock by making a positive contribution to sense of place, providing opportunities for a variety of sporting and leisure experiences in a range of safe and attractive settings and helping to engender a sense of community pride which will help to encourage investment and generate vitality.

To deliver a network of high quality open space that will serve the whole community now and in the future, a new co-ordinated approach to the planning, design, delivery, maintenance and management is required. The Open Spaces Strategy is the first document in Thurrock to strategically plan for accessible open spaces that meet community aspirations. The recommendations in the Strategy will help Thurrock Council and external partners deliver the first phase of a 20 to 30 year process to deliver a network of attractive, vibrant, well maintained and accessible multifunctional open spaces.

Thurrock's Cultural Strategy identified that aspirations and priorities for open spaces needed to be developed in consultation with the community. Considerable research was therefore undertaken in the preparation of this strategy. This revealed that 84% of residents agree that parks and other open space contribute to the quality of the local environment. This feedback, from users and non-users of open space in Thurrock, means that the majority of the community value the environment in which they live.

Strategic Planning of Open Space – Chattanooga, Tennessee.

In the 1980's the city was experiencing industrial decline and unemployment, crime and air pollution. To address the deteriorating quality of life in the city local government, businesses and community groups emphasised the need for a cleaner, greener and safer environment. Planned open spaces with connecting greenways has opened up the city for pedestrians and brought the city back to life. Conversion of an area for pedestrian use has resulted in economic revival on both sides of the river that the bridge crossed. Other benefits from placing the environment at the heart of regeneration include:

- Doubling the number of businesses and jobs in the district in eight years.
- Recognition of the city as one of America's best walking towns.
- Increases in tax revenues.
- Increases in Property values.
- A more diversified economic base that includes tourism, recreation and agricultural industries.
- A network of spaces that can help to reduce the risk of flooding.

(The Trust for public Land, 1999. *Open space investment pay big returns*. www.tpl.org)

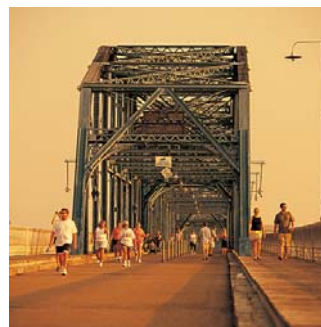


Photo 3: Pedestrian bridge.

1.1 Scope of the Strategy

The Strategy has been carried out in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation (PPG17). The open spaces identified within the scope of the Strategy are part of the larger cross boundary green infrastructure network that incorporates the Thames Gateway South Essex Greengrid, Thames Chase and the Green Arc.

Open spaces covered in the Strategy:

- Parks and gardens
- Amenity greenspace
- Provision for children and young people (Children's play spaces)
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Natural and semi-natural greenspaces (including urban woodland)
- Allotments
- Churchyards and cemeteries

Open spaces not covered by the Strategy:

- Water based green space
- Common land
- Civic spaces
- Green corridors

This Strategy is one document that contributes towards Thurrock's Greengrid Strategy. The Open Spaces Strategy should be read in conjunction with the Green Infrastructure Framework Plan and Biodiversity Study. Thurrock's Greengrid Strategy will provide a co-ordinated approach to the environment and landscape helping to create a sustainable network of multi-functional green space and links in Thurrock's town and countryside.

The Open Spaces Strategy does not evaluate the role of open spaces beyond Thurrock's boundaries that residents visit and this will need to be addressed in future strategies.

The Open Spaces Strategy is supported by background research that has also been undertaken in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation (PPG17). Details of the supporting evidence are shown in Appendix 1. Information on Planning Obligations can be obtained from the Planning Guidance on Open Spaces.

1.2 National Agenda for Higher Quality Open Spaces

“Over 2.5 billion visits are made to parks each year by over half the UK population”¹

Lord Rogers identified the relationship between open spaces and urban living in his Urban White Paper, which was published in 1999. This report confirmed that parks and green spaces are essential to sustainable urban living and resulted in the establishment of the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce in 2001. The final report produced by the Taskforce was Green Spaces, Better Places that has set the agenda for improving green spaces and reversing the decline in the quality of these spaces. The government has reacted proactively to this report by establishing a national agency for well designed and managed public spaces (CABE Space) and has launched the

Cleaner, Safer, Greener initiative to tackle the problems that face today's communities. The main message emerging from the Government's agenda is that **'now is the time for an urban renaissance with parks and diverse green spaces'**.

1.2.1 CABI Space

CABI Space is part of the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, the Government's advisor on urban design issues. CABI Space was set up to promote excellence in the design and management of public spaces. By demonstrating the economic, environmental and social benefits of public spaces, CABI Space hope to initiate reinvestment into parks and green spaces to help deliver sustainable communities. They recognise the contribution open spaces make to people's quality of life and have liased with other organisations and councils across the country to develop strategic approaches to the delivery of high quality public spaces.

1.2.2 Cleaner, Safer, Greener

Cleaner, Safer, Greener is a Government initiative to tackle anti-social behaviour that affects our neighbourhoods. In order to deliver sustainable communities the Government wants to ensure that public spaces are fit for their purpose. Research by MORI has informed the Government that people are more concerned about the quality of their local environment than anything else. Uncared for, degraded open space reflects negatively upon a community.

To initiate change the Government has made various sources of funding available through the Cleaner, Safer, Greener initiative to local government, community groups and charities so they can deliver projects that will:

- Create attractive and welcoming parks, play areas and public spaces.
- Improve the physical fabric and infrastructure of neighbourhoods.
- Manage services more efficiently and allow for better delivery of service.
- Improve people's perception of the quality of their local environment.

1.3 Policy Context

National

Planning Policy Guidance 17: Planning for open space, sport and recreation

PPG17 advises that local authorities develop strategies for delivering open spaces that meet the needs of local communities. The planning system can deliver open spaces close to communities and ensure that people have access to all types of open space. Through implementation of open space strategies the Government will ensure that local authorities create high quality networks of open spaces in both rural and urban areas that are fit for their purpose.

Regional

The draft East of England Plan, the regional spatial strategy for the East of England (RSS14) encourages a strategic approach to environmental infrastructure across the region. At the sub regional level this is expressed through the Thames Gateway South Essex Greengrid Strategy and Thames Strategy East. They identify strategic routes, key environmental and physical resources, and opportunities that will enable a

network of open spaces to be created across the region.

DCLG – Creating sustainable communities: Greening the Gateway

The DCLG Greening the Gateway document encourages the development of open space Strategies as they allow for green space infrastructure to be planned at the spatial level and therefore incorporated into the Local Development Framework. This allows for economic, social and environmental priorities to emerge through the planning system to enable delivery of balanced multifunctional communities. Improvements to the green infrastructure in the Gateway will raise the profile of the area and trigger inward investment from new businesses and developers.

Local

Our Sustainable Community Strategy for Thurrock

The Community Strategy is the overarching strategy for Thurrock. It has been produced by ‘Shaping Thurrock’, the Local Strategic Partnership in consultation with the community. It sets out the road map for achieving our long term vision to create a location of choice – a place where people thrive and prosper; where you can access services that will make a difference; and where development is sustainable and supports our new and existing communities as they regenerate and grow.

The Open Spaces Strategy will help to deliver on the following key objectives and will contribute towards implementing the community strategy.

- Conserve and improve our environment.
- Enable a strong and diverse community voice in Thurrock so that development and improvements are best informed and targeted appropriately.
- Create a safe environment where surroundings are clean and inviting, where Thurrock residents and workers will choose to locate themselves.
- Promote Thurrock's culture and heritage and improve access to sports and leisure.
- Promote healthy living lifestyles and reduce the health inequalities that exist between different parts of our community.
- Improve access to and use of alternative and sustainable modes of transport.
- Build well-planned quality housing as part of developments that are sustainable.



Photo 4: Children's art project at London Hills Country Park

The Open Space Strategy is a Local Development Document that will inform the Local Development Framework of Thurrock Council and the Regeneration Framework of the Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation. The study has been developed alongside the Landscape Capacity Study and the Urban Capacity Study to ensure that we plan sustainable for the future.

Thurrock Council Local Development Framework (LDF) –The LDF is a new statutory development plan being produced that will supersede the Thurrock Borough Local Plan. The LDF is a range of documents that will set out the spatial strategy, policies and proposals to guide the future development and use of land in Thurrock until 2021.

Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation (TTGDC): Regeneration Framework - Spatial plans and policies are being produced to shape the TTGDC'S regeneration activities in Thurrock. The regeneration framework will identify issues and priority areas in which the TTGDC should intervene to help create sustainable communities.

1.4 Summary: Strategic planning for open space is recommended at the National, Regional and Local level to enable environmental infrastructure to be embedded within existing and future communities.

2. Profile of Thurrock

Thurrock is an area that is changing because of regeneration within the borough and throughout the Thames Gateway. There is an opportunity to improve Thurrock and enhance the resources that already exist. Open spaces can address the economic and social deprivation problems that exist in some parts of Thurrock and should be an integral part of the regeneration process.

2.1 Natural Environment

Geology

The geology of Thurrock is made up of areas of clay, alluvium, sand and gravels and chalk. The exploitation of geological resources in Thurrock has changed the geography of the area leaving large chalk quarries and sand and gravel pits behind. Thurrock is also an area that contains 18 landfill sites that could contribute to the network of open spaces in the future.

Opportunity:

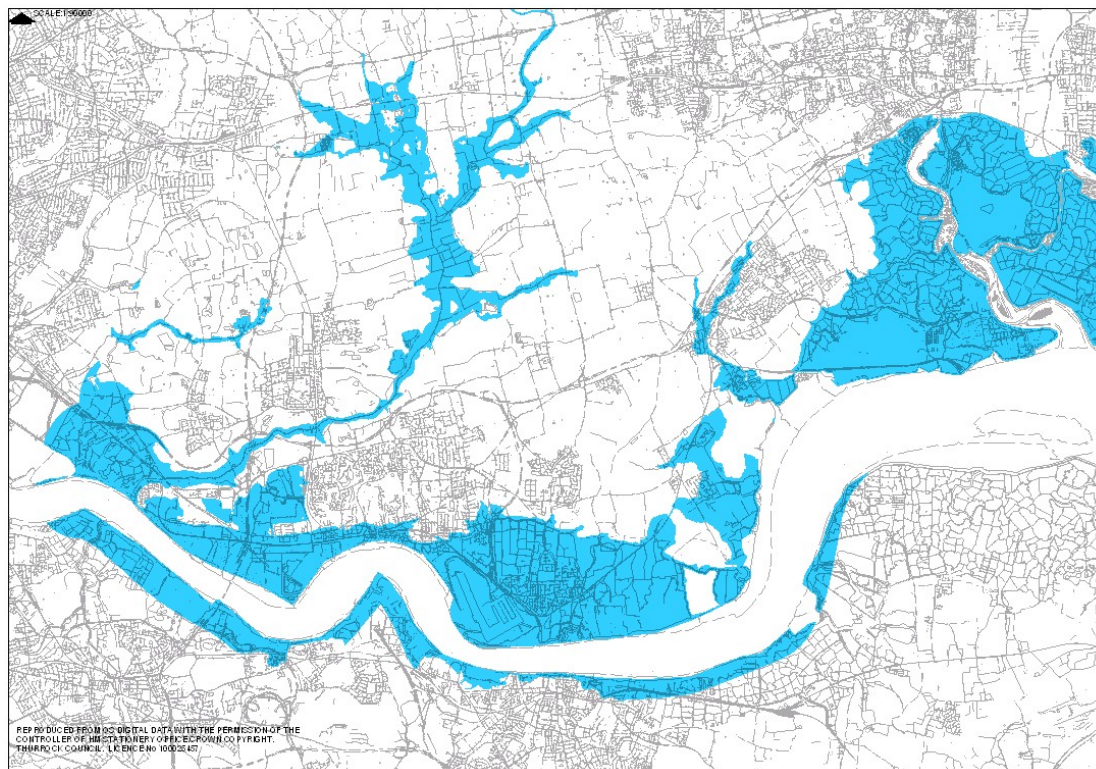
- To pursue the reuse of redundant quarries, sand and gravel pits and landfill sites as new multifunctional open spaces.
- To allow landscapes that have been exploited to regenerate naturally.

Hydrology

Thurrock is generally a low-lying area with the River Thames and the Mardyke River flowing through it. There is a need for strategic approach to flood risk management within Thurrock to protect residents and businesses. Both of the rivers are important destinations for relaxation within the urban areas and open spaces along both watercourses are important destinations.

Opportunity:

- To use the flood risk assessment to identify areas where new and existing open spaces have the potential to offset the impact of flooding through good design.
- To improve the Rivers as recreational resources for the whole community.
- To create vibrant open space destinations along both watercourses.



Map 1: Flood Zones

Landscape

The landscape character of Thurrock is not uniform. The main physical feature is the River Thames. The northern bank of the Thames between Aveley Marshes and Tilbury, and again around Holeheaven Creek is heavily industrialised. The scale of the urban industrialised areas set against the River and rural landscapes create a dramatic landscape where the built and natural environments merge. Thurrock's Landscape character can be divided into five distinct types and areas:

1. Fenland – North Thurrock around Bulphan.
2. Rolling Farmland/Wooded Hills – North Thurrock around Langdon Hills and Horndon on the Hill.
3. Marshland – Located to the east of Thurrock along the Thames estuary.
4. Urban Fringe – Landscape character around the urban areas in Thurrock apart from Stanford-Le-Hope and Corringham.
5. Urban Areas – Aveley, Chadwell St Mary, Corringham, Grays, Purfleet, Stanford-Le-Hope, Tilbury and West Thurrock.

Opportunity:

- Existing open spaces along the River Thames should be utilised and opportunities for new accessible open spaces within the changing industrialised areas should be sought.
- Landscape design in open spaces should complement the local landscape character to reinforce the sense of place and community.
- To preserve landscapes which promote dramatic views of the urban and rural environments.



Photo 5: Tilbury Power Station from Grays Riverside

Biodiversity

Open spaces give people the opportunity to experience nature locally.²

The diverse urban and rural landscape of Thurrock has created areas of nature conservation significance that are protected by International, European, National and local designations (Map 1 shows the nature conservation designations for natural and semi natural open spaces in Thurrock.). The changing urban landscape has also created pockets of Brownfield land (previously developed land) that support plants and wildlife.

The Draft Thurrock Biodiversity Action Plan identifies nine priority habitats that support nature conservation and biodiversity.

Ancient Woodland – There are 14 ancient woodlands in Thurrock covering an area of 86 hectares. They are important habitats for a wide range of plants, animals and fungi. (UK and Essex biodiversity priority habitat)

Calcareous Grassland – The habitat supports a varied vegetation structure, with areas of herbaceous vegetation that supports a large number of nationally rare plant and vegetation species. (UK biodiversity priority habitat)

Coastal Grazing Marsh – The main areas of marshland are located at the eastern and western ends of Thurrock. The ditches that maintain the water level on the marshes are an important microhabitat for particular species of plants and invertebrates. Coastal Grazing Marsh is also important for breeding and wintering birds. (UK and Essex biodiversity priority habitat)

Brownfield Wildlife Land – Brownfield sites can provide habitats that support large numbers of reptiles, rare and scarce plants and invertebrates.

Lowland Heathland – The dwarf shrub and acidic grassland vegetation create dry conditions, ideal for rare reptiles, birds and invertebrates. (UK priority habitat of

European importance and included in the Essex Biodiversity Action Plan)

Reedbeds – Thurrock has 15 ha of reedbeds that support birds and insect species that are dependent on this habitat. (UK and Essex biodiversity priority habitat)

Roadside Verges – In Thurrock roadside verges contain some of the most important Thames Terrace Grassland invertebrate assemblages that support a rich diversity of wildlife.

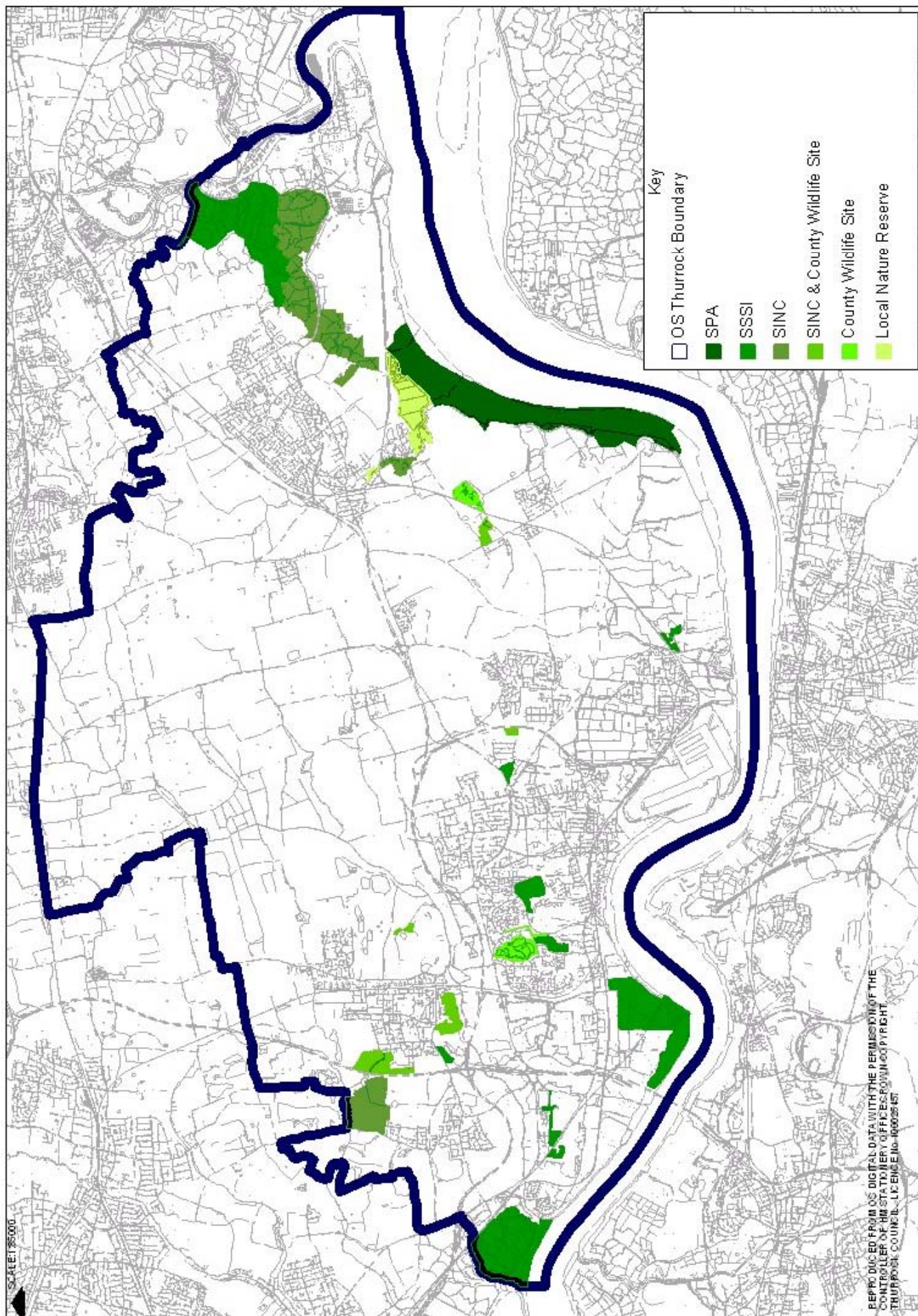
Thames Terrace Grasslands – The Thames Terrace Grasslands support a diverse collection of invertebrate species that have been acknowledged by English Nature to be of National Importance.

Urban Habitats – The open spaces and green infrastructure within Grays/Chafford, Stanford/Corringham and Ockendon provide sites that are valuable for plants and insects. (UK and Essex biodiversity priority habitat)

For more information on biodiversity in Thurrock refer to the Greengrid: Biodiversity Study and Draft Thurrock Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).

Opportunity:

- To protect and enhance existing areas of significance.
- To develop new open spaces that improve nature conservation and biodiversity within urban areas.
- To manage open spaces so a balance between access and protection is achieved.
- To enhance biodiversity in existing open spaces.
- To encourage a design led approach to brownfield sites that set aside areas where plant and wildlife colonisation has occurred.



2.2 Built Environment

Background

The built environment of Thurrock is very varied. The decline of late 19th Century and early 20th Century commercial development in west Thurrock has triggered the renewal and redevelopment of the area. This has mainly resulted in residential developments emerging along the banks of the Thames. Old industrial sites typically used for extracting minerals have now been developed into major new housing areas, such as Chafford Hundred and retail development has emerged at Lakeside. Post-war suburban residential areas have expanded and in some cases merged with other towns and villages. E.g. Grays, Corringham, South Ockendon, Chadwell St Mary. Villages situated in open countryside have not expanded because of Green Belt restrictions and therefore have retained a small scale and rural character. The character and appearance of the built environment is preserved through the designation of seven conservation areas and nearly two hundred and fifty listed buildings.

Future

The regeneration of Thurrock is providing an opportunity to create a network of open spaces within existing and new communities. Enabling Thurrock council and the TTGDC to plan sustainable for the future.

2.3 Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile

There is recognition nationally that areas of social deprivation have a poorer quality environment. If we are to deliver sustainable communities in Thurrock then this trend must be addressed. The formulation of open space standards for every typology of open space enables us to tackle the inequalities that exist.

Thurrock at a Glance (2001 Census)

Total Population	143,128
Male	48.7%
Female	51.3%
Children (0-17)	24%
Adults (18-64)	63%
Elderly (65+)	13%
Ethnic Minorities	4.7%
Long term Illness/Disabled	16.1%
Number of Households	58,485

Table 1: Thurrock at a Glance

Deprivation – Thurrock's ranking has improved from 11th in 2000 to 122nd in 2004. This ranking is derived from education, income, employment, health, housing, crime and environmental statistics. Thurrock's overall position is improving (113th in 2000) as a result of the work the Council, Community groups and other agencies have been undertaking.

“91% of the public strongly agrees or tends to agree that parks and open spaces improve people's quality of life.”³

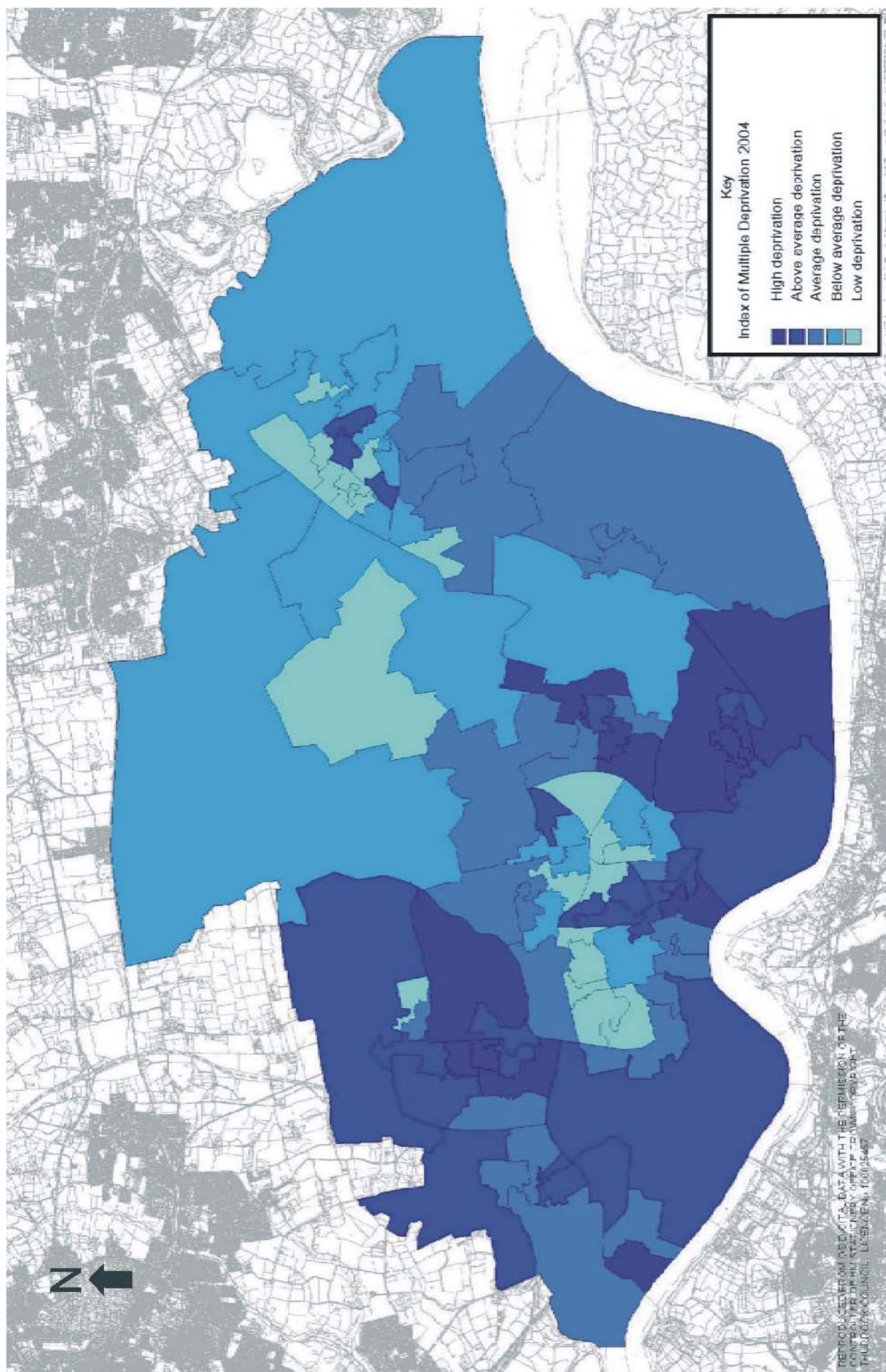
It has been recognised that a network of good quality open spaces is important in that it can help to address deprivation:

- Improving social cohesion
- Providing an environment where children can learn from experiences
- Encouraging investment
- Relieving stress and ill-health
- Creating well used spaces that are designed to reduce opportunities for crime
- Providing a local free facility where residents can exercise.

Age structure – Table 2 highlights the distribution of children and older residents in Thurrock and will help to inform future decisions. Over the five year period of the strategy all open spaces will be improved to a threshold standard. An updated profile of the demographics of Thurrock will need to be maintained as new developments are built.

Table 2: Population demographics (2001 Census)

Area	Percentage of population under 15	Percentage of population over 75
Grays, West Thurrock & Purfleet	21.8%	5.5%
Aveley & Ockendon	21.1%	8.1%
Tilbury & Chadwell St Mary	25.3%	5%
Stanford & Corringham	20%	5.6%
Rural Areas	19	6.8%
Thurrock	22%	6%



3. Research Processes

Two pieces of research were undertaken to support the Open Spaces Strategy. A large scale community consultation (3.3) and audit of provision (3.2) were conducted to provide an evidence base to support the strategic decisions made within the Strategy.

3.1 Why?

The formulation of standards for every type of open space helps the planning system, developers, grounds maintenance staff, community groups and other partners to deliver a service that recognises current and future community aspirations. The audit of provision (3.2) and the community needs assessment (3.3) of open spaces in Thurrock enable standards for **accessibility**, **quality** and **quantity** to be formulated.

Accessibility: Locally defined standards for the catchment of each open space have been formulated to reflect resident's feedback. This primarily concerns how far people are willing to travel to access open spaces and the analysis has identified constraints such as major roads and railways.

Quality: Standards have been formulated to improve the overall condition of open spaces in Thurrock. In order to achieve and deliver the communities aspirations for open spaces a threshold and aspiration standard have been produced.

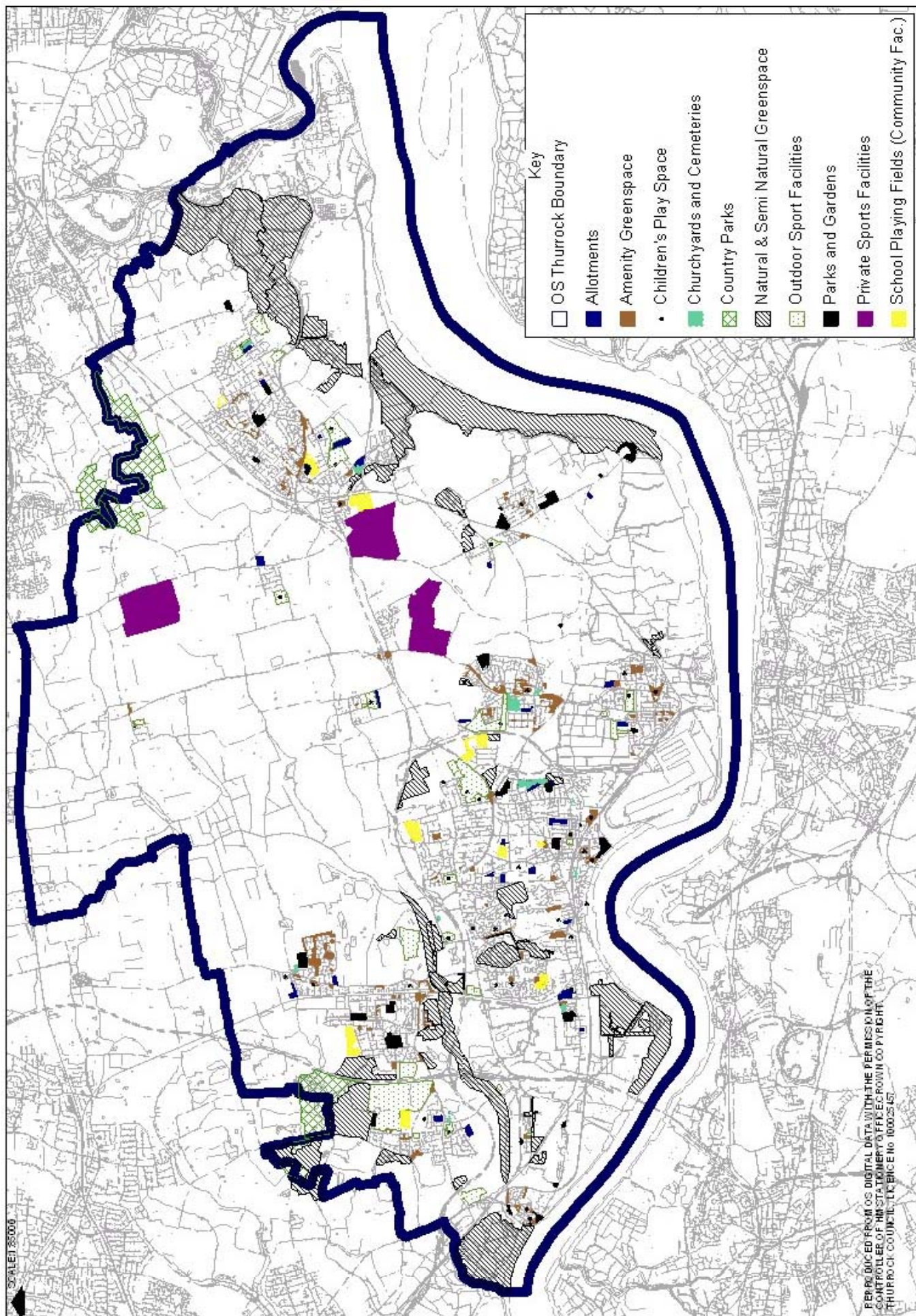
- Threshold standards will enable the overall quality of open spaces in Thurrock to be raised. The standards address the primary purpose of a site and will need to be addressed through upgrading, management and maintenance.
- Aspiration standards that primarily address good design and management enabling high quality multi-functional open spaces to be delivered in the future. Thurrock Council, developers and other partners should meet this standard when delivering, refurbishing/redesigning and improving open spaces.

Quantity: Communities should have adequate provision of open space, play facilities and pitches or allotments. Quantity standards allow Thurrock Council and the TTGDC to plan effectively for the future so residents have enough provision of open space.

3.2 Audit of Provision

A standard format of assessment was used to determine the **value** and **quality** of every open space in Thurrock. Park Rangers, the Planning Department and Consultants covered specific typologies of open space to ensure consistency was achieved during the audit. For example, Park Rangers were used to audit all of the parks because they have established relationships with park users and therefore understand many of the local issues.

Detailed definitions and examples of each type of open space audited are given in section 4. Map 4 (page 15) shows all of the open spaces that were audited in Thurrock.



Value: How does the open space benefit the community? E.g. Level and type of use.

The assessment of value focused on the following key subject areas:

- Amenity - Contribution to the landscape of the area and visual significance.
- Ecology – Is the space of ecological significance and does it support biodiversity?
- Community events – Is the space used regularly for any fairs/cultural shows/arts events or play schemes.
- Education – Do local schools/children visit the open space, formally or informally.

A site with a value score of 100% will be a multi functional open space that is important to local resident's. A summary of findings for each type of open space is provided in section 4.

Quality: What is good and bad about the open space and how does this contribute towards a visitor's experience?

The assessment of quality focused on the following key subject areas:

- General facilities and overall condition
- Entrances
- Access for people with impairments
- Anti social behaviour
- Amenity facilities
- The natural environment

A site with a quality score of 100% will be designed managed and maintained to a standard that enables the space to fulfil its primary purpose. E.g. playing pitches – safe to use, available to all members of the community and has appropriate facilities that are well maintained.

3.3 Community Consultation

The research set out to identify local needs. National standards do exist but community consultation was used to set local standards that are adapted to reflect the local situation and the needs of the community. Therefore:

We asked

“What your opinion was of your local parks and open spaces?”

and

“What your aspirations for your local parks and open spaces are?”

We received 1,200 questionnaire responses, conducted two workshops and peer group sessions and visited open spaces with park users. This has allowed the Council to develop a detailed picture of what local communities think about open spaces in Thurrock. Details on the main issues emerging from consultation are provided in this section with more detailed feedback on each type of open space provided in section 4.

3.4 Community views

“It annoys me that there is all this emphasis placed on increasing housing in the area, yet nothing is being done to protect the landscape”

“They should invest more into parks and open spaces, rather than building new homes and flats which attracts more people and puts a strain on the local parks” (Open spaces Community consultation 2005).

It is clear from presentations and stakeholder workshops undertaken that residents do value open spaces. The public’s perception or fear is that open spaces will be lost to development in the future. This is not the case, the assessment of local needs and provision has identified the most valued open spaces so they are protected through the planning system for future generations to enjoy.

3.4.1 Open spaces for all – What different groups in Thurrock’s Community said

Children & Young People

Children and Young People account for 24% of the population in Thurrock and their needs and aspirations were addressed **through a peer group session**. Children and young people were given disposable cameras to photograph areas of green space that they like or dislike. The photos were used to stimulate discussions around why participants like or dislike specific areas. Their feedback informed us that:

- Open spaces need to be designed so the environment ‘**feels safe**’.
- They have a strong dislike of litter and dog mess.
- They would like to see separate areas created for younger and older children, to reduce potential conflicts.
- They want to see improvements to the play facilities on offer.
- They don’t like, worn out play equipment and graffiti in the parks.
- Opportunities for both formal and informal play need to be maximised.
- Teenagers require more facilities that appeal to their age range. E.g. zip lines, bike tracks and sports equipment.

Elderly

40% of elderly respondents never visit their local park but they do appreciate the contribution that parks make to their local community. The feedback from the elderly told us that:

- The majority of elderly people in Thurrock visit open spaces with their grandchildren.
- Access needs to be improved.
- The elderly would like to see more seating in our parks.

People with Impairments

16 % of the population in Thurrock are classified as disabled. The feedback from people with disabilities told us that:

- Participation in sporting activities is low amongst people with disabilities.
- At least 1 in 3 of the respondents never visit any of the open spaces in Thurrock.
- They are very reliant on private transport.
- They would like to get to the country parks via public transport.

3.4.2 Community Concerns

The community consultation identified three main issues that concern Thurrock's residents.

1. Safety

- Residents feel unsafe within open spaces and along the Thames River frontage after dark. CCTV, fencing and reductions to overgrown vegetation were all suggested as possible solutions.
- Younger residents and older people thought there could be improvements to safety in parks during the day. Both user groups said that more park wardens and better park design would make them feel safer.

Fear of crime rather than “crime it self is a reason” some residents gave for not visiting their local park. Research carried out by the Urban Green Spaces Task Force Report in 2002 highlighted this problem.

‘It is becoming clear that parks are not any more susceptible to crime than other areas accessible to the public. Research is now confirming this view and generally parks are safer than the streets. However, parks and green spaces are often criticised as unsafe places on the basis of prejudice not fact.’⁴

Case Study 1 - Safety

The ‘roboparkie’ is a security officer that rides a motorcycle equipped with an internal radio, intercom system and a mini video. The patrol routes and times vary to ensure all the parks without a park warden on site are covered. Park users can contact the patrol directly to ensure an immediate response if problems arise. The facilities on the bike mean that the police can be contacted if necessary or the incident can be recorded and tackled by the City Council in future.

Green Spaces. ...Safer Spaces, Anti-social behaviour in green space. 2004. Newcastle City Council.

2. Litter & Dog Mess

- Litter was highlighted as a problem that needs to be addressed. Research shows that if litter is a problem, then the park will generally suffer from other forms of anti social behaviour.
- Residents feel that fly tipping is degrading the environment.
- 34% of park users said that the level of dog mess in their local park was unacceptable.

Case Study 2 – Dog Fouling

In Aarhus the City Council have identified the areas where the most complaints concerning dog fouling are. They have tackled the problem by providing easy access to plastic bags. Better information for dog owners has also been made available to change their behaviour and create cleaner parks in the city.

Is the grass greener...? Cabe Space.

3. Graffiti & Vandalism

‘Its annoying, because I like to go to the park, but can’t because the benches are vandalised and have graffiti on them’ (Open spaces community consultation 2005).

We must work with local communities to ensure that a sense of ownership is created when improving open spaces. Groups causing the problems need to be included in the consultation process so that all potential problems are addressed before project implementation.



Photo 6: Anti social behaviour at Davy Down

Case Study 3 – Graffiti & Vandalism

The Zurich Security & Cleanliness project was set up by the City Council after an increase in complaints demanding better maintenance and policing. A multi skilled team was set up that convened on a weekly basis to discuss any issues arising. At an early stage they identified the need to liaise with stakeholders and park users to ensure their work tackled the main areas for improvement.

As a result the cleansing of the parks changed so it took place in the afternoon when the park was at its busiest. This made people aware that the City Council was taking the complaints seriously and addressing the situation. The project has helped to gain community support for decisions regarding green space management.

Is the grass greener...? Cabe Space.

3.5 Identifying open spaces for improvement

Analysis of the quality and value of all of the open spaces in Thurrock has enabled the Council to identify the most important open spaces. Open spaces were audited to establish the *quality* and *value* of the space and have therefore been classified as one of the following:

High quality / High value The open space will be protected through the planning system.	High quality / Low value Opportunities to enhance the value of the space should be explored through developing community involvement or changing the main use of the space to meet demands identified by the local community.
Low quality / High value Spaces should be improved with the help of local communities to delivery an open space that meets their requirements.	Low quality / Low value Opportunities to enhance community involvement or quality improvements will be encouraged.

Figure 1: Quality and Value Assessment (CABE Space, Green space strategies)

Open spaces that have been assessed as low quality and high value will be the Council's priority for improvement over the five-year period of the Strategy.

Open spaces strategically located in areas of regeneration have also been included, to provide a co-ordinated approach to the environment of communities that are experiencing change. Sites that have been identified for improvement based on this criterion are identified separately.

Open spaces identified for improvement are identified in section 4.

4. Strategy Research

An outline of the key issues and themes emerging from the community consultation and audit of provision is provided in this section. This information has been used to justify the open space standards that have been formulated. A more detailed review of the open space standards is provided in Thurrock Councils Community Needs and Open Spaces Study. The strategic priorities for open space planning and provision for each typology of open space are discussed at the end of each section.



Photo 7: Davy Down

4.1 Parks and Gardens

The local park....

A public space in which we enjoy sports, walk the dog and sit at lunchtime. It is somewhere quiet to get away for a moment from the bustle of a busy daily life.²

Parks and gardens are classified as areas of land normally enclosed, designed, constructed, managed and maintained as a public park or garden. They provide accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation. The type of park will influence users experience and can therefore be classified as one of the following:

Community Park – A park with a variety of diverse environments should provide opportunities for active and passive recreation to be undertaken by all users. The design should enhance nature conservation and a range of facilities should compliment the landscape design. E.g. Outdoor sport facilities, children’s play equipment, car parking, toilets and catering facilities should be provided.

Local Park - The park's design should enhance the visual amenity and character of an area. The design of the park should also contribute towards encouraging nature conservation. Appropriate seating areas should be co-ordinated with path networks around the park. Children's play areas and recreational sport facilities should be provided.

Satellite Park - The park should include seating areas and paths. The park should include a small children's playground or opportunities for informal play and the design should maximise connectivity with the surrounding environment.



Photo 8: Good quality parks and gardens



Photo 9: Poor quality parks and gardens

Table 3: Types of park

Type and function	Approx. size	Maximum distance from dwellings	Characteristics
Community Parks Provision that is strategically important in the Thurrock. Weekend and occasional visits mainly by foot but also by car.	Over 4.4 ha	1km Walking time = 15 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse environments. • Provision for active and passive recreation. • Recreational sport facilities, children's play equipment, car parking, toilets and catering facilities.
Local Parks Primarily for pedestrian visits from local residents and workers.	3.5 ha	0.7km Walking time = 10 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance visual amenity. • Encourage nature conservation. • Paths and seating areas. • Children's play areas or recreational sport facilities.
Satellite Parks Pedestrian visits, especially by the elderly and parents with young children. Provision is important in areas of high density housing and employment.	Up to 2.5 ha	0.4km Walking time = 5 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paths and seating areas. • Small children's playground.

Community Consultation

The most popular parks in Thurrock are:

Grays Town Park

Corringham Town Park

Coalhouse Fort &

Grays Beach.



Photo 10: Grays Town Park

Over a third of the population visit their park at least once a week, but a significant proportion of the community (25%) said that they never visited any of the parks. However our research identified that 73% of people who use parks and gardens feel that the open space contributes positively towards their local community. The majority of people use the parks to play with their children or use the space to unwind and relax.

Resident's opinions on quality are varied but have identified the following for improvement:

Toilet Facilities

Play Facilities and equipment

Cleanliness

Enforcement of park rules

Safety

Satisfaction with current provision is greatest in Aveley, Ockendon and in rural areas (current provision equals 0.7 hectares per thousand people). Residents in West Thurrock, Purfleet and Grays have identified that current provision does not meet their needs and is an issue that will need to be addressed.

Audit

There are 28 parks and gardens in Thurrock that cover 62.12 hectares. They have all been audited to determine the quality and value of parks and gardens in Thurrock.

Value - Scores for the value assessment ranged from 22% to 93% with Dilkes Park, emerging as the most valued park. This represents a good example of community involvement. The South Ockendon Community Forum have involved the local community in the decision making process and have created a park which meets the needs of the local community.



Photo 11: Dilkes Park

Quality - The assessment revealed that the quality of parks range from 27% to 72%. The highest quality score was obtained by Grays Beach, which has been awarded the Green Flag award for excellence.

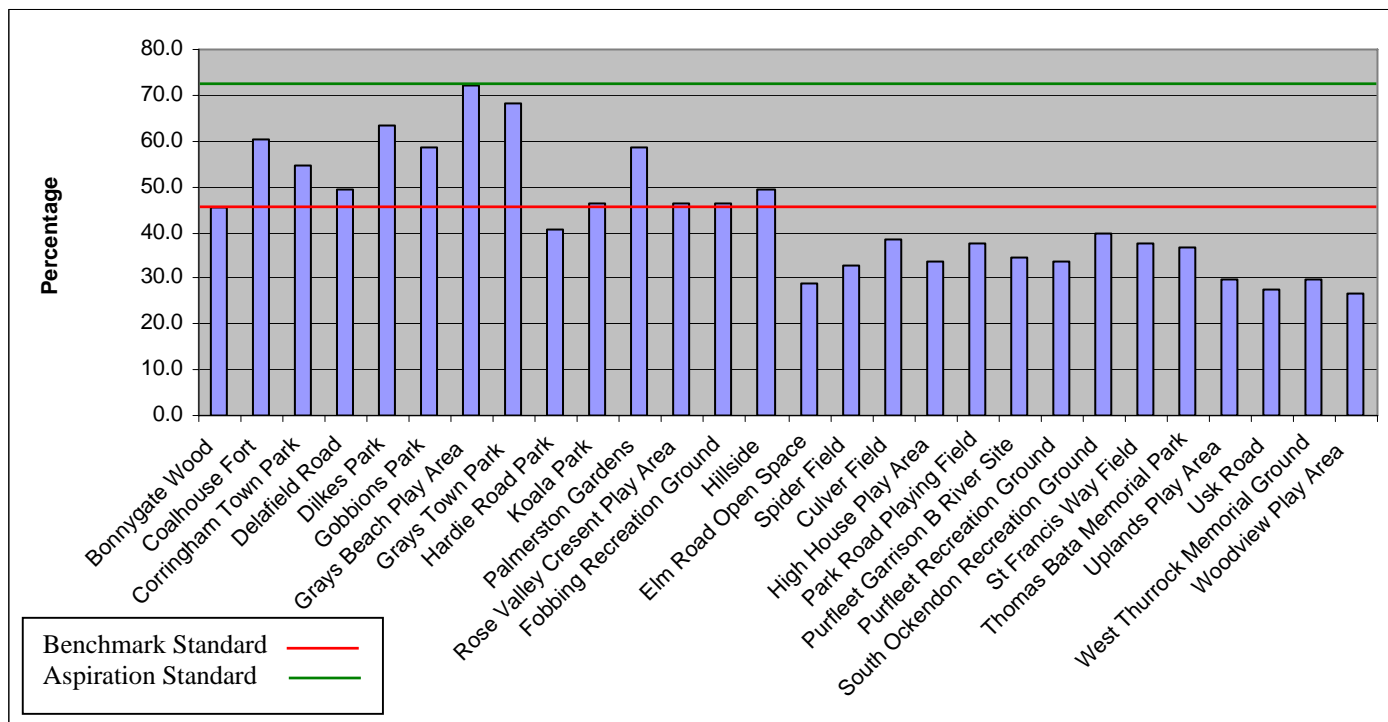


Figure 2: Quality scores for Parks and Gardens

Figure 2 indicates that half of the sites surveyed scored poorly for quality and therefore a change to the park is required. The primary purpose of the park, the design, management and maintenance are all options that should be investigated.

Standards

Quantity	0.7 Ha per 1000 population
Quality	<p>Threshold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There should be no obvious signs of graffiti & vandalism. - All parks should have signage that is specially designed for an individual park or garden. - There should be no facility provided in a park or garden that is deemed to be of poor quality. - The main landscaping feature of a park should be maintained to a good condition. <p>Aspiration: Green Flag award standard</p>
Accessibility	<p>Community Park – 1km</p> <p>Local Park - 0.7km</p> <p>Satellite Park - 0.4km</p>



The Green Flag Award is a prestigious National Scheme that is helping to raise the standard of parks and green spaces. The scheme recognises that every community should have access to good quality green space and local authorities around the UK are striving to achieve at least one Green Flag Award.

There are eight key criteria by which applications for the award are judged:

1. A welcoming park
2. A healthy, safe and secure park
3. A clean and well maintained park
4. Sustainability
5. Conservation and heritage
6. Community involvement
7. Marketing
8. Management

The Award sets clear goals for park managers and community groups throughout the UK providing a benchmark against which parks can be enhanced and then recognized against for their improvements. **There are currently two parks that meet this standard in Thurrock, Grays Beach and Belhus Country Park.**

Improvements

Strategic priority's

The information from the quality and value audit has enabled the Council to identify parks and gardens that need enhancement and issues that must be addressed during the refurbishment or re-design of a park. Parks and gardens selected for improvement are those that were classified as low quality and high value.

1. **Hardie Road Park**
2. **Spider Field**
3. **Elm Road**

West Thurrock Memorial Ground and **Woodview Play Area** should be improved because they received low quality and value scores and are located in strategic regeneration areas.

Improving other Parks & Gardens

The emphasis for improvement will be the five parks and gardens selected above. The Council welcomes proposals to improve other parks and gardens and will make the audit information available to any external group wanting to improve parks and gardens in Thurrock.

Any scheme or proposal made by a third party should address the negative aspects of the park to raise the overall standard of the park.

Deficiencies in provision

The establishment of accessibility standards and recognised geographical barriers to movement has enabled the deficiency area of each type of park and garden to be mapped. The deficiency map for parks and gardens is shown on page 27.

Thurrock Council will explore means of addressing existing deficiencies with partners. New developments in areas of deficiency will be required to provide parks and gardens based on the demand generated by the development.



Photo 12: Coalhouse Fort

Good practice example – Mile End Park, Tower Hamlets

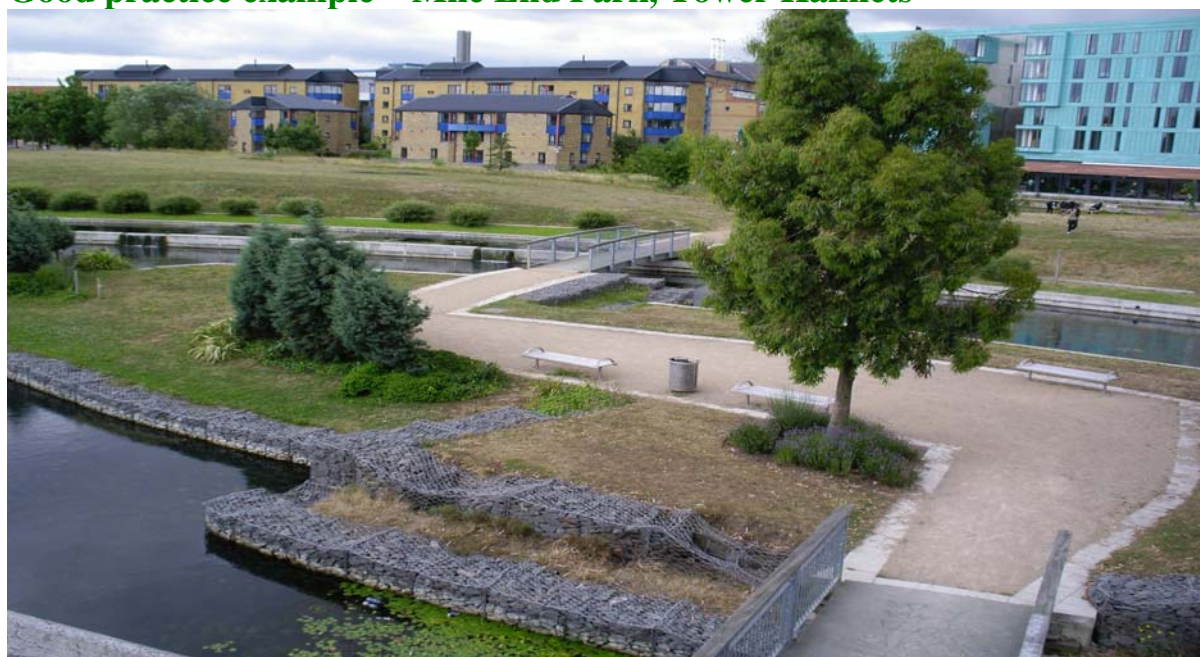
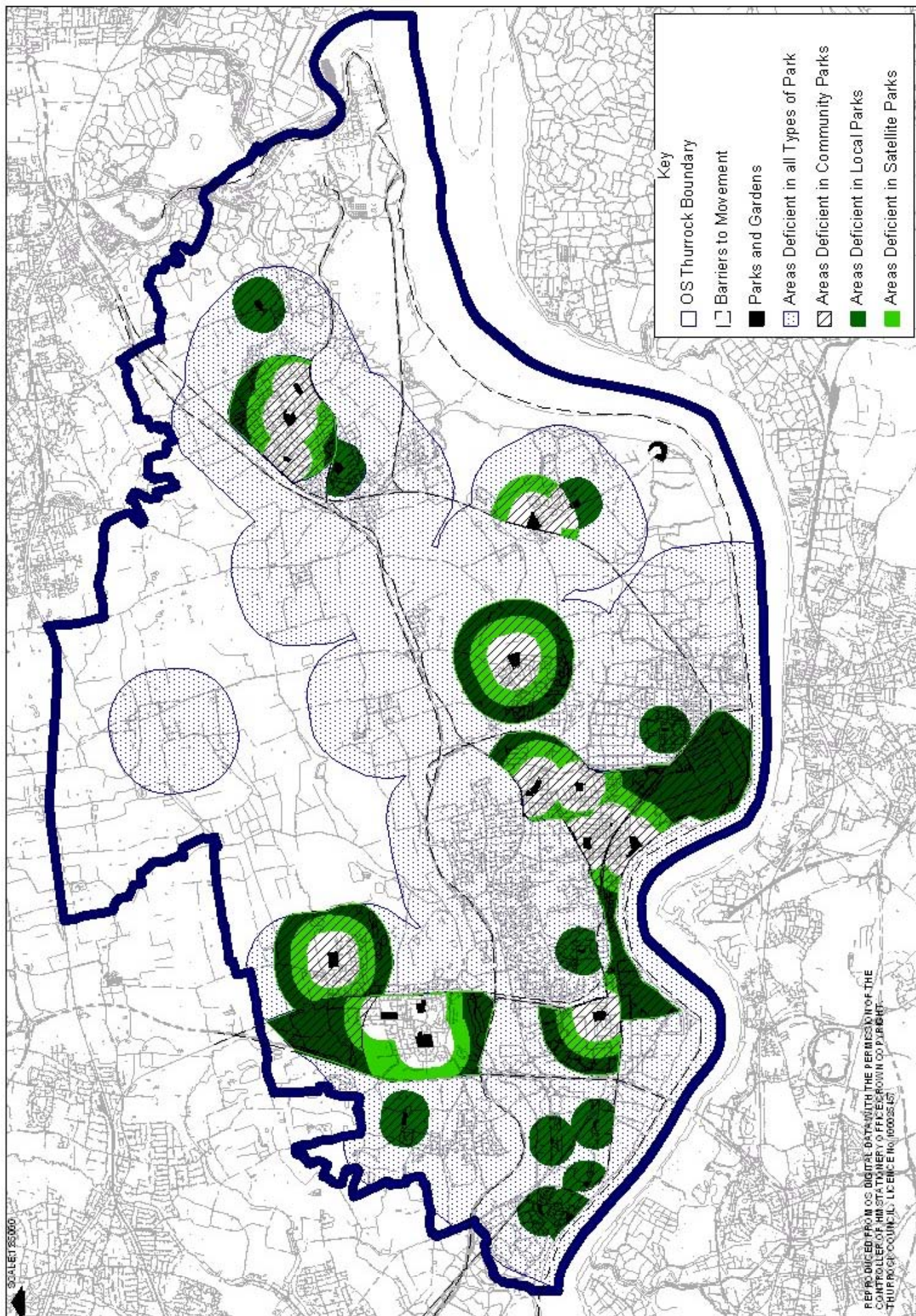


Photo 13: Mile End Park

“Our vision for the Mile End park of the 21st Century is to transform this segmented and under used open space into an active and vibrant regional park – the best in East London.” (www.mileendpark.co.uk)

Mile End Park was an underused park with every problem imaginable. The park was fragmented and did not function in an urban area that was devoid of any quality open space. The London Borough of Tower Hamlets initiated the regeneration of the park in 1995. A series of public participation events proceeded where the local community worked with landscape architects to re-design the park.

The redevelopment scheme commenced in 1999 and the park has now been transformed into a Green Flag Award winning park that boasts a range of facilities that serve a diverse section of the community. The park has been designed to prevent anti social behaviour and opportunities to incorporate income generators into the park have been maximised. The creation of an attractive, functional park in an urban location has attracted considerable inward investment to area, enabling the regeneration of Tower Hamlets to prosper.



4.2 Country Parks

Larger open spaces where residents and visitors can enjoy a natural countryside atmosphere with the benefit of amenities and organised activities not normally available in the countryside.

Community Consultation

Langdon Hills and Belhus Woods are both regarded as high quality parks that are very popular. This can be attributed to the on site staff and the organised events that are scheduled throughout the year. Walking is the most popular activity undertaken in the country parks. This trend is not reflected when considering transport to the parks themselves. There are very few opportunities to get the Country Parks via public transport, the majority of respondents (84%) use a car to get to the parks.

73% of residents say cleanliness is excellent

Audit

Value: The results indicate that both parks are highly valued by the community compared to other typologies of open space in Thurrock. Langdon Hills scored 86% slightly higher than Belhus Woods, which achieved 79%.

Quality: scores range from 50% to 63%. Belhus Woods scored better than Langdon Hills and has achieved a Green Flag Award for excellence.

Improvements:

- Management plans should be constructed to maintain and enhance the quality of both parks.
- Pedestrian and public transport links should be developed to encourage alternatives to the car for visitors.
- Users would like to see shelters and play equipment installed at the parks and more toilet facilities provided.



Photo 14: Langdon Hills Country Park

4.3 Natural and Semi Natural Greenspace

“Land, water and geological features which have been naturally colonised by plants and animals and which are accessible on foot to large numbers of residents.”⁵

Natural and semi natural greenspaces includes woodlands, meadows, marshes, heath land, grassland, riverbanks and disused quarries and gorges. All of which are important sites for wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental awareness.

Enhancing Biodiversity in Thurrock

The urban environment should be designed to provide people with a positive day to day experience of nature. (Biodiversity by Design, 2004)

Green infrastructure should be integrated into new and existing urban areas to create a network of varied landscapes that support nature conservation, recreation and the aesthetics of the borough. The designing of new landscapes should take reference from locally significant ecosystems to incorporate the built and natural environment enabling greater connectivity between open spaces and residential dwellings.

For more information refer to the Essex Biodiversity Project: Integrating Biodiversity into Development.

Community Consultation

Residents view access to the countryside very highly and equestrian groups in particular, highlighted the need for more bridleways in Thurrock. Concerns over misuse and damage to natural ecosystems posed by off-road motorcyclists is an issue that received widespread support and measures to control or prevent motorcycle access to the countryside will need to be investigated.

Audit

Value - The scores ranged from 84% to 28%. The audit was focused on human requirements and sites with amenity facilities that enhance opportunities to interact with nature have generally scored better than sites where nature conservation is the primary purpose.



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Photo 15: Thames Mudflats

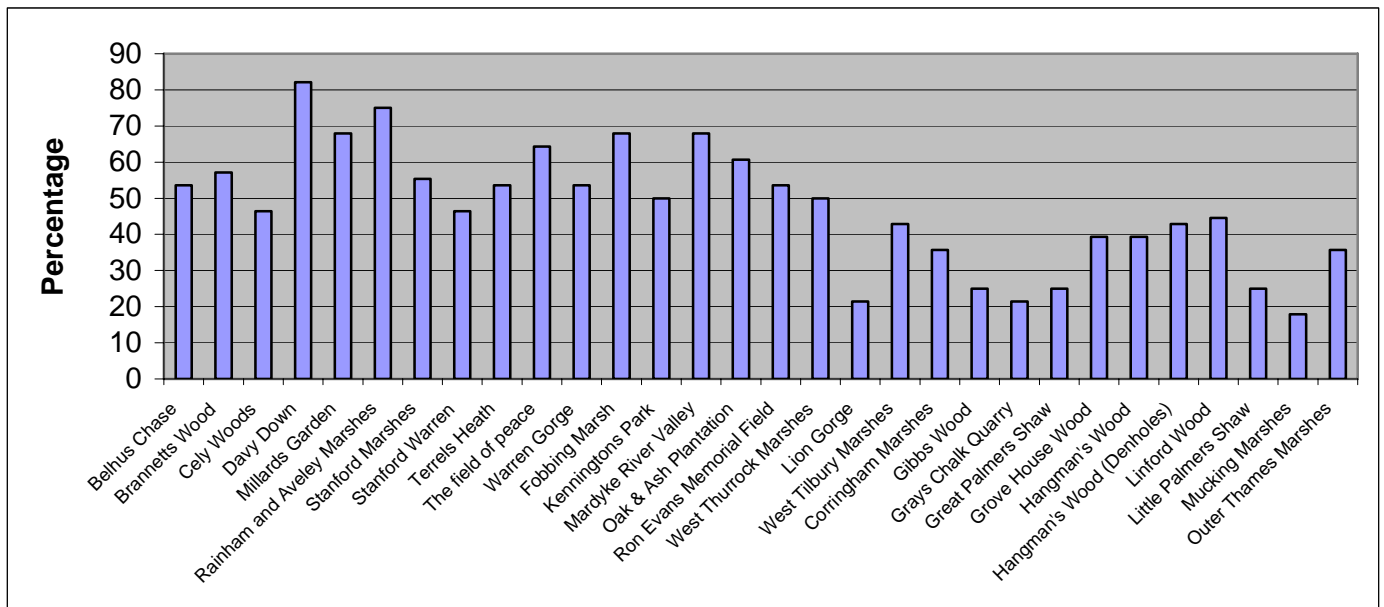


Figure 3: Value scores for Natural and Semi Natural Greenspaces

Quality - The scores for quality ranged from 96% to 42% and overall the majority of sites scored very well with only three sites scoring under 50%. Sites that are accessible and contribute significantly towards the townscape of an area scored well.

It should be noted, that the primary purpose of the majority of sites audited is nature conservation. In these locations facilities may be limited because of threats to nature from human interference. Natural and semi natural sites faced with this predicament would have received lower scores because the audit focused on human requirements.

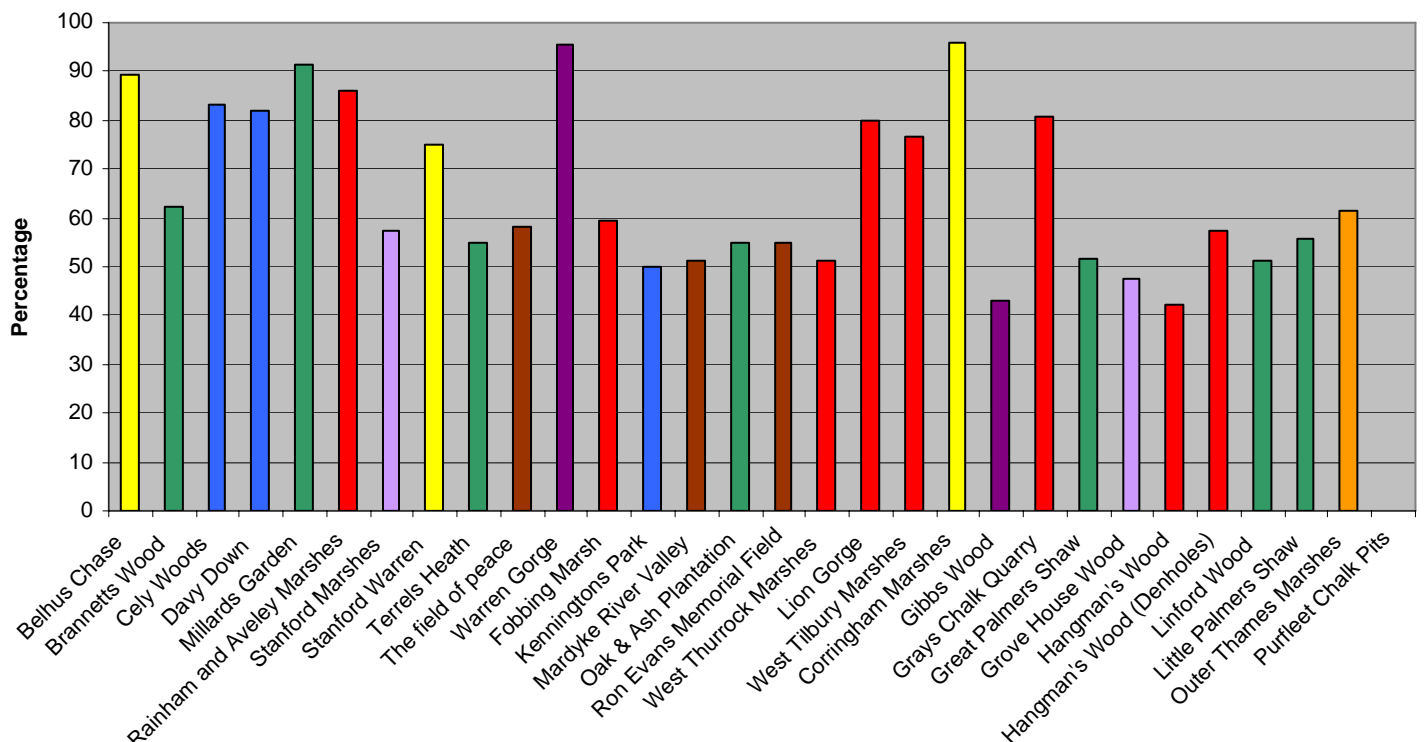


Figure 4: Quality Scores for Natural and Semi Natural Greenspace



Standards

Quantity	2 Ha should per 1000 population
Quality	Threshold: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sites should be maintained to a good condition overall with no vandalism or graffiti.• Sites should be of significant ecological value with amenity facilities.• Signage should be provided at every site, with management contact details and maps of the space.
Accessibility	No resident should live further than 300m from their nearest natural and semi natural greenspace.

Improvements

To determine future management routines that could improve natural and semi natural greenspaces we should build up a portfolio of ecological information for every site. This would help to inform future decision made between Thurrock Council and other partners about sites so a balance between nature conservation and public access is sought.

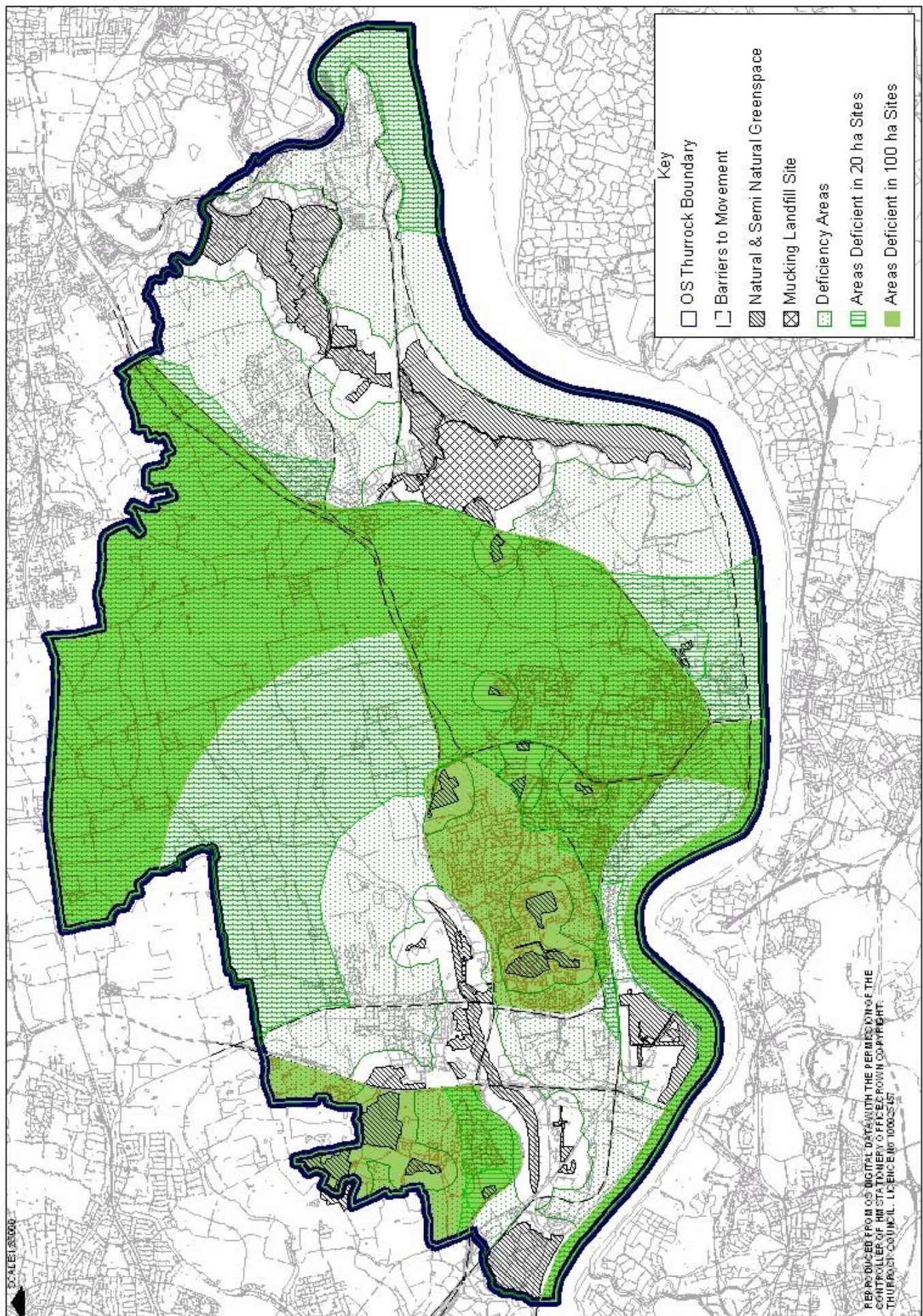
Thurrock Council should continue to work with partners such as Thames Chase, English Nature, RSPB and Essex Wildlife Trust to enhance amenity facilities and the ecological value of sites.

Map 6 (page 32) identifies the deficiencies areas for every size of natural and semi natural greenspace in Thurrock. The deficiencies in provision are concentrated around the existing urban areas. Developments in areas of deficiency should provide new areas of natural and semi natural greenspace to offset the new demand. Opportunities to create smaller natural and semi natural greenspaces within existing open spaces and the urban environment need to be investigated.

Good practice example – Integrating Biodiversity and Development

A former brownfield site in Chelmsford was granted planning permission for a new residential development. The site was deemed to be of least or no ecological significance but a general ecological survey was undertaken to inform the design and layout of the site. This led to the creation of a green area on the site with a good range of habitats including scrub, ponds and open areas that could be managed as a wildlife/nature area. A pathway was also created through the site to link the residential area to other open spaces and residential areas.

Essex Biodiversity Project: Integrating Biodiversity into Development



4.4 Amenity Green Space

Amenity green space provides opportunities for informal activities close to home or work on open spaces, which soften the urban fabric. The typical size for an amenity green is 0.3 hectares (ha).

Why are Amenity Green Spaces Important?

Amenity green spaces help to create an attractive urban landscape and can enhance the character of an area. They connect open spaces enabling residents to experience the natural environment close to their homes and in large developments amenity greens provide opportunities for children to experience informal play close to their home. In new developments amenity greens should be positioned along main pedestrian routes to provide local provision for the community to use.

Community Consultation

The community consultation revealed that amenity greens are important to residents because they provide localised access to open space. Residents in Belhus expressed that they were happy with the current level of provision of amenity greens in the area. Community views on quality were varied but one in four of the respondents indicated that their local area was not well maintained.

Audit

The audit involved surveying 96 sites that were above 0.3 ha in size and a further 37 that were between 0.2 and 0.3 ha.

Value: Scores ranged from 100% to 12.5%, with sites in Brandon Groves obtaining the highest scores for value and quality. Value of amenity greens is dependant on the quality and accessibility of the site.

Quality: The quality of amenity greens varies throughout Thurrock. The majority of the lowest scoring sites are in Purfleet, West Thurrock and Chafford Hundred. The audit identified fly tipping, litter and car parking as the main reasons why sites received poor quality scores.

Standards

Quantity	0.8 hectares per 1000 people (based on residents views on provision in Belhus).
Quality	Threshold: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cleanliness should be excellent on all amenity greens.• The site should be well maintained.• Bins should be provided.• The Amenity green should have clearly defined boundaries.
Accessibility	Within 100 meters of residential dwellings with no roads in between.

Improvements

All amenity greens should be improved and maintained to comply with the threshold standard.

Addressing deficiencies in other typologies of open space

Analysis of the existing amenity greens that were assessed as low quality and value has revealed opportunities to address deficiencies in provision of open space. Table 4 identifies possible options that should be investigated further.

Table 4: Opportunities to address deficiencies

Site Name	Location	Opportunity to create new
Claudian Way/Brentwood Road	Chadwell St Mary	Satellite Park/ Natural & Semi Natural Greenspace
Dickens Avenue	Tilbury	Satellite Park/ Natural & Semi Natural Greenspace
Ruskin Road	Stanford Le Hope	Satellite Park
Gabborns Crescent	Stanford Le Hope	Satellite Park

Good practice example – Brandon Groves

Brandon Groves is a housing development built on the site of the former South Ockendon Hospital. The development was completed in 2000 and 688 houses have been built. The development brief acknowledged that the site would have an impact upon the Green Belt and therefore redevelopment was not allowed to exceed the footprint of the existing buildings. The resulting development provides a good landscape setting with a large amount of amenity space that can be used for informal recreation.



Photo 16: Amenity Greens – Brandon Groves

4.5 Children's Play Space

What is Play?

“Freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated behaviour that actively engages the child.”⁶

“What children and young people do when they follow their own ideas and interests in their own way and for their own reasons”⁷

This Strategy has identified equipped play spaces in Thurrock where there is formal provision for play and will help to deliver the Thurrock Children and Young People Plan by:

- Creating and providing a safe environment in which children can play and learn from interactions and experiences.
- Promoting children and young people's health.
- Ensuring that regeneration initiatives meet the needs of children.
- Including children and young people in the decision making process.
- Supporting children in their social and emotional development.



Photo 17: Grays Beach

Children's play space in Thurrock can be classified as one of the following:

Toddler Play Space – There are currently 19 Toddler play spaces in Thurrock that provide localised play provision for children under 6. The space will be approximately 100 meters squared and will accommodate one to four pieces of play equipment such as a sand pit, interpretive wall panels or play houses. The area should include some green infrastructure and should be approximately 100 meters walk from residential dwellings enabling the site to be accessed within a minute.

Small Equipped Play Space – There are currently 12 small equipped play spaces in Thurrock catering for the needs of children between 4 and 8. The space will be approximately 400 meters squared and will accommodate five to eight pieces of play equipment (e.g. slides or climbing frames). Green infrastructure should be coordinated with the play equipment to integrate the play space into the local environment but design should not compromise safety. The play space should be approximately 400 meters from residential dwellings allowing access after a 5 minute walk.

Large Equipped Play Space – There are currently 36 large equipped play spaces in Thurrock. They should be designed to accommodate a range of facilities such as adventure playgrounds, skate ramps or ball walls and should therefore be approximately 1000 meters squared. The play space should be 1000 meters from residential dwellings allowing access after a 15 minute walk.

Table 5: Types of Children’s Play Space in Thurrock

	Items of Equipment	Size	Accessibility/ Catchment Area	Distance from play space to dwellings
Toddler Play Space	1 - 4	100 sq meters	1 minute walk - 100 meters	15 meters
Small Equipped Play Space	5 - 8	400 sq meters	5 minute walk - 400 meters	25 meters
Large Equipped Play Space	9+	1000 sq meters +	15 minute walk - 1000 meters	50 meters



Photo 18: Playful landscapes.

Complimenting formal provision

To compliment formal provision the Council will encourage the development of Home Zones, streets where children can play and more inclusive public spaces. We also wish to incorporate opportunities for play into landscaping so children have the opportunity to play in an informal natural environment.

Community Consultation

Generally playgrounds were rated as average or above but there are two main aspects that respondents felt needed improving.

1. Cleanliness of the Playgrounds.
2. The condition of the play equipment. 25% of users thought the play equipment was below average.

Provision throughout Thurrock is viewed positively with 54% of residents indicating that they are happy with current provision. This is good at the Borough level but more localised analysis reveals that there are areas where current provision is not adequate. Children that we consulted with identified a demand for a greater variety of play spaces and equipment. The large equipped playgrounds are catering for this demand but this means that playground visits are not any everyday activity. Resident’s responses from rural areas, Grays and West Thurrock indicate that they currently feel underprovided for. Residents identified two main aspects that need improving.



Photo 19: Skate ramps at Blackshots

Children that we consulted with identified a demand for a greater variety of play spaces and equipment. The large equipped playgrounds are catering for this demand but this means that playground visits are not any everyday activity. Our research has indicated that only 14% of users visit a children's play space once a week indicating that there maybe a problem with the quality and accessibility of small and toddler play spaces.

Provision throughout Thurrock is viewed positively with 54% of residents indicating that they are happy with current provision. This is good at the Borough level but more localised analysis reveals that there are areas where current provision is not adequate. Resident's responses from the rural areas, Grays and West Thurrock indicate that they currently feel underprovided for.

Audit

67 children's play spaces in Thurrock have all been audited to determine the quality and value of children's play space.

Value – The scores ranged from 78% to 12%. Quince Tree Close was assessed as the most valued site with the play space at Purfleet Rec scoring the lowest.

Quality – The quality scores range from 13% to 82%. Grays Beach and Koala Park are the highest scoring children's play space for quality. Both sites offer a range of play facilities and are classified as Large Thurrock Play Spaces. A number of sites received poor quality results because the equipment was older and did not conform to European standards.

Standards

Quantity	1.80 m ² per childbed space (See appendix 2).
Quality	<p>Threshold: All play equipment should comply with European Standards BS EN 1176, Playground equipment, and BS EN 1177, Impact absorbing playground surfacing.</p> <p>Aspiration: To achieve a quality score of 22 based on the NPFA assessment criteria. Therefore in future children's play spaces should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasonably close to home. • Within sight of walking or cycling 'desire lines' or main travel routes. • In spaces where there is 'informal oversight' from nearby houses or other well-used public spaces. • In locations identified by children and young people as appropriate. • Capable of being used for a variety of play activities, including sports. • Embedded in the community. • Designed to maximize experiences with the natural environment.
Accessibility	<p>Toddler Play Space - 100 meters</p> <p>Small Equipped Play Space - 400 meters</p> <p>Large Equipped Play Space - 1000 meters</p>

Improvements

Strategic Priority's

The information from the quality and value audit has enabled the Council to identify children's play spaces that need enhancement and issues that must be addressed during the refurbishment or re-design of the park. Children's play spaces that we wish to enhance are sites that have been classified as low quality and high value.

Toddler play space	Small play space	Large play space
Purfleet Garrison B Drake Douglas Cruik	Garrison Shops Spider Filed Aveley Rec	Palmerston Gardens Parker Road Quince Tree Close Dilkes Aluric Close Tilbury Rec Linford Chadwell Rec

Improving other Children's Play Spaces

25% of users thought that the play equipment was below average

Children's play spaces that were assessed as low quality received poor scores because the play equipment did not meet the bench mark standard (European standards for play equipment). A programme of improvements to bring children's play spaces up to the benchmark standard should be produced and implemented over the five year period of the Strategy.

Deficiencies in provision

Map 7 (page 40) shows the deficiency areas for each type of children's play space. Analysis indicates that provision of large play spaces is good apart from in Aveley. The provision of small and toddler play space in areas of deficiencies will need to be addressed through both the planning system and good urban design. Innovative ideas such as play streets, home zones and design improvements to school playgrounds may provide the solution in some locations. Opportunities to deliver sympathetic play spaces in other open spaces and along Greengrid linkages should also be investigated.

In order to create parks and open spaces that serve the whole community we must consult with children and young people to ensure that they're not excluded from the consultation process. Involving them from the start will enable imaginative green spaces to be designed and delivered.

Good practice example – Involving children in design

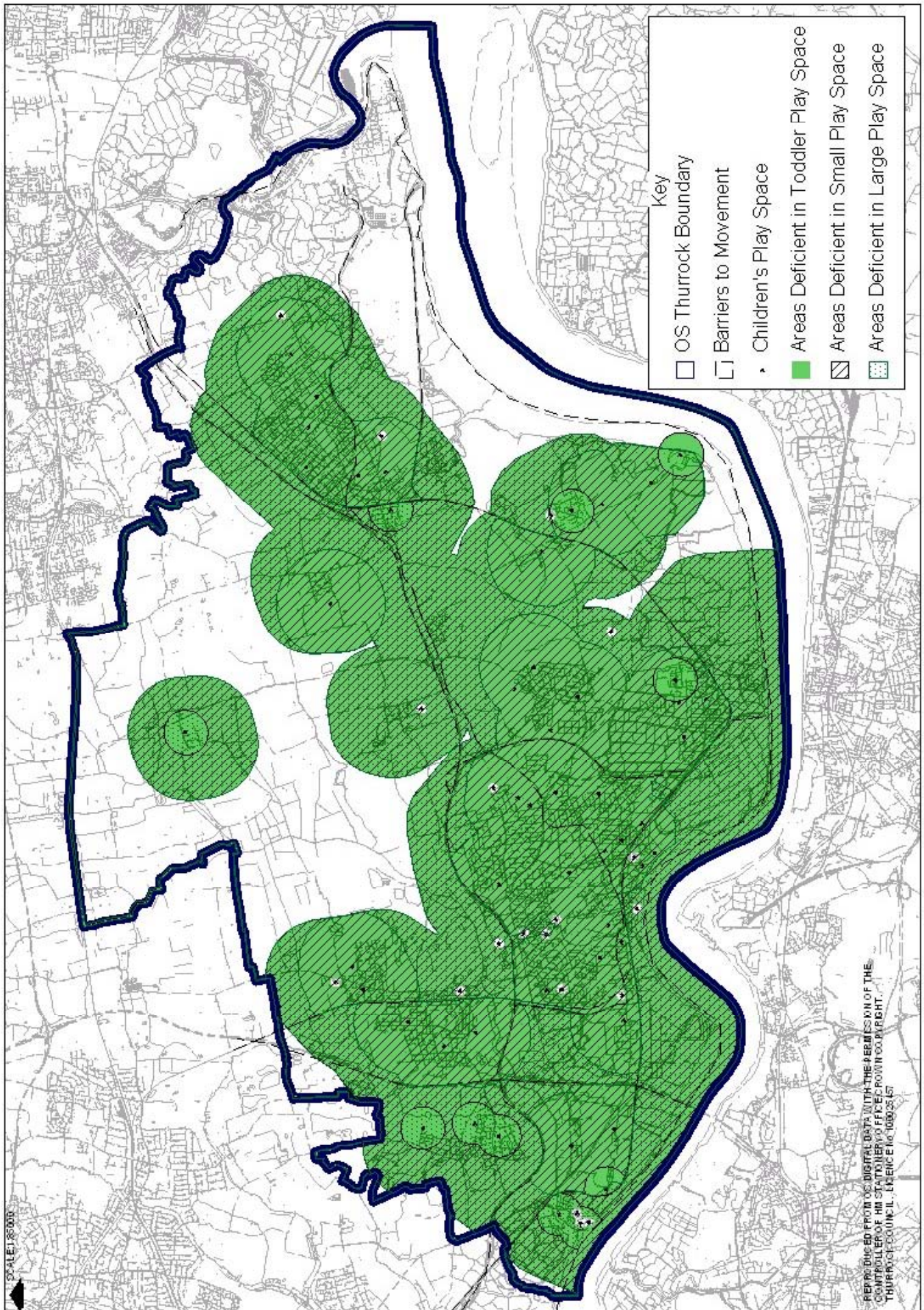
Daubeney School in Hackney Wick, London was experiencing aggressive behaviour in the playground and a lack of co-operation between children from different class backgrounds. They addressed the problem through the learning through landscapes active curriculum project, which involved artists observing children playing with different objects in the playground over a period of a week. They used their observations to influence the design so a creative space was created.

Once the playground had been completed a poet and local dancer held workshops with the children to encourage them to explore the new playground so they learned through their experiences.

Landscape Journal, September 2004.



Photo 20: Daubeney School.



4.6 Outdoor Sport Facilities

Outdoor sport and recreational facilities: Playing pitches (grass and artificial), greens, courts, athletic tracks and other facilities, which provide the opportunity for participation in outdoor sports.

A walk can reduce the risk of:

Heart attacks by 50%

Diabetes by 50%

Colon Cancer by 30% ²

Sport makes an important contribution to many of Thurrock's residents' quality of life. In addition to "sport for sport sake", sport contributes to many wider agendas including social and physical regeneration, the economy, crime and disorder, inclusion and health. A significant proportion of team sports are managed by an army of committed volunteers who work with public, private, educational and charitable sporting organisations and the relevant National Governing Bodies of Sport.

The Open Spaces Strategy and the supporting research has focused on the provision of football, rugby and cricket pitches. It should be noted that a large majority of sports have not been covered within the scope of the strategy and that further work is required to ensure that residents have access to a diverse spectrum of sporting facilities.



Photo 21: Dilkes Park

Community Consultation

A quarter of all respondents are involved in outdoor sport, either as a player or a spectator. The majority of participants in sport are men and therefore football and golf are the most popular sports in Thurrock. Public opinion of the sports facilities is varied and the graph below illustrates the responses that we received.

How would you rate outdoor sports facilities in the area?

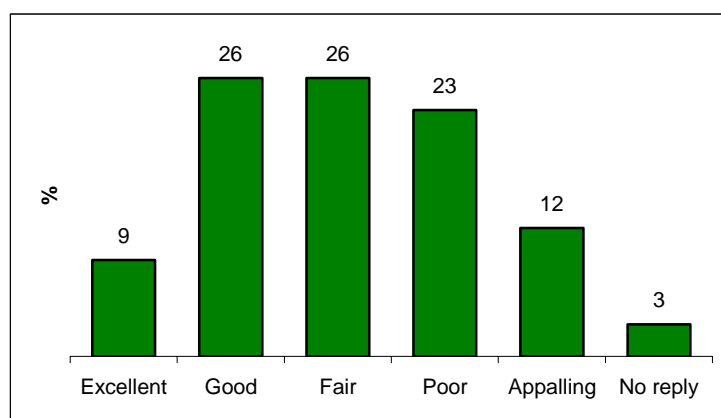


Figure 5: Community Opinion of Outdoor Sports Facilities

Audit

Quality – The quality of playing pitches in Thurrock was ascertained by carrying out surveys using the Sport England pitch quality assessment. This is a non-technical visual assessment of facilities that includes input from users. The scores ranged as follows:

Football: 95% - 52%.

Rugby: 95% - 60%.

Cricket: 95% - 63%.

Mini Soccer: 94% - 73%.

These results provide a distorted picture of sporting facilities in Thurrock. The surveys were undertaken in the winter of 2005, which was a particularly dry winter and does not provide a true reflection of the usual pitch conditions. Pitches are often over used and therefore the quality declines, a need for more synthetic turf pitches in Thurrock has been identified as a solution to this. Information obtained from the Essex Cricket Board contradicts our survey results and highlights that Thurrock's cricket pitches are some of the poorest in Essex.⁸ Investment is required to improve sporting facilities but subsidence issues, vandalism, car parking and the condition of changing facilities must be tackled if higher quality facilities are to be delivered.

Quantity – Table 6 below shows the existing deficiency in playing pitch provision and the future deficiency based on projected population increases.

Table 6: Deficiencies in provision

Pitch type	Deficiency/shortfall of Pitches - 2006	Deficiency/shortfall of Pitches - 2021	Area
Adult Football	7	6	Aveley/Ockendon
Adult Football	3	10	Grays & West Thurrock
Adult Football	3	5	Stanford/Corringham
Junior Football	2	2	Tilbury/Chadwell
Junior Football	1	5	Rural Area
Junior Rugby	11	17	Thurrock

London 2012 Olympics

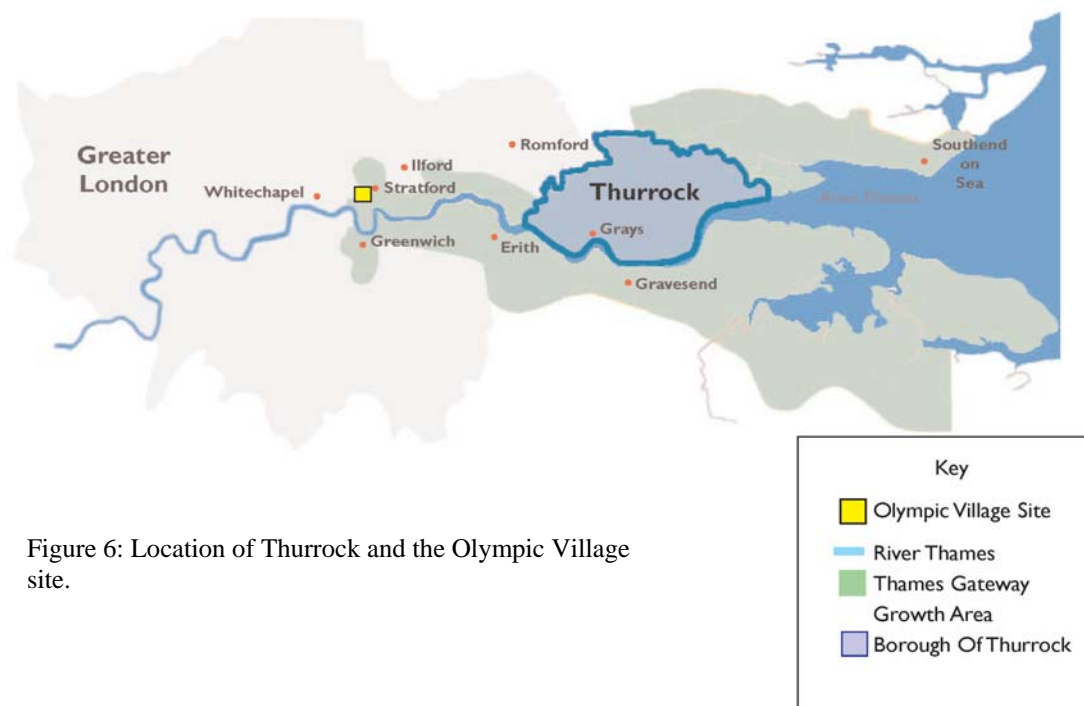


Figure 6: Location of Thurrock and the Olympic Village site.

Thurrock is on the 'doorstep' of the new Olympic Village and Stadium, which will be developed in Stratford and the Lea Valley. The proximity of Thurrock to the Olympic facilities means that we are in an enviable position in the run up to the Games.

The Strategy helps to identify the quality and quantity of open space and sport facilities that Thurrock is aspiring to in the future. Implementation of the Strategy will provide a range of facilities that could be used as pre-Games training facilities. Providing a training base for national teams would bring the Olympic Spirit to Thurrock and act as a major catalyst for increasing and enhancing participation in sport.

Standards

Quality	Threshold: Improvements to new or existing facilities should aim to bring facilities up to standards that comply with design guidance provided by the Governing body of the specified sport.
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Improvements

Strategic sport sites

Sport England and other sporting organisations are encouraging the development of multi use sports hubs so high quality sport facilities can be delivered and maintained in the future.

Thurrock already has two sites of strategic importance, Belhus Park and Blackshots Recreation Ground. There is potential for improvements to the quality, quantity and diversity of facilities at both sites. Master plans should be developed to investigate the potential of both sites as multi use sports hubs.

Improving other outdoor sport facilities

The quality of changing facilities needs to be improved, especially where there are good quality pitches. One poor facility will affect the users experience and measures should be taken to deliver a high quality site. E.g. Stanford Recreation Ground and South Ockendon Recreation Ground.

Management partnerships should be forged with local sports club and grounds maintenance teams to deliver a holistic approach to the management of facilities. Partnerships between users and providers of facilities will help to deliver higher quality sports facilities in the future.

Deficiencies in provision

The Council will secure contributions towards new playing pitches through the planning system. Suitable land uses and locations will need to be identified through the planning system. The planning system will also need to ensure that any new schools delivered with playing pitches are available for community use.

The Council should also work with existing schools and private sports clubs to determine their capacity to develop new facilities. Surplus pitches that are currently not utilised should be converted into junior and mini football pitches to meet the growing demand for junior football.

Good practice example – Salford Sports Village, Manchester

“A sporting future for all” (FA, 2006)



Photo 22: Salford Sports Village Designs

The Salford Sports Village is the first facility of it's kind to be developed in England. Old abandoned playing fields have been transformed through partnership working that has delivered a regeneration project that meets community needs. The new facility boasts the latest synthetic turf pitches and numerous grass pitches as well as other sports, health, education and community facilities. The superb facilities will be home, to Manchester FA and will create an environment that offers the best grass route development opportunities.

4.7 Allotments

Allotments: An area of land in, or on the edge of, a developed area, which can be rented by local people for the growing of vegetables, flowers or fruit. They provide opportunities for those who wish to do so to grow their own produce, and support health, sustainability and social inclusion.

There are currently 21 allotment sites in Thurrock that are self managed by allotment associations. The decision to move to self management of allotments was taken in 2003 and a proactive arrangement has evolved with plot holders, the council and allotment association representatives.



Photo 23: Maycroft Gardens

Community Consultation

There were very few respondents who had an allotment or were waiting for one to be allocated. Those that had an allotment thought the condition of their site was above average.

Currently there are 24 allotment sites in Thurrock providing 995 plots. This equates to 16.7 plots per 1000 households and is above the national average (15). Demand for allotments is hard to ascertain because waiting lists have not been maintained but 9 sites are currently full with a further 3 sites with 4 or fewer vacancies.

Audit

Quality - The scores range from 87% to 38%. The allotments at Orsett Rec received the highest quality score. Lower quality scores were assigned to sites with poor access and parking, lack of a communal shed, a limited range of plot sizes and a lack of recycling facilities.

Standards

Quantity	15 plots per 1000 households = 6.25 plots per 1000 population (see appendix 2)
Quality	Threshold: Allotments should have security fencing, water storage facilities, containers for equipment, good quality soil, good access, parking facilities and pathways through the site. Management practices should also ensure that vacant plots are maintained to a reasonable standard and that provision for clearance/removal of rubbish is made.
Accessibility	Over 100 plots = 1200 meter catchment. 50 to 100 plots = 900 meter catchment. 10 to 49 plots = 600 meter catchment. 1 to 9 plots = 300 meter catchment.

Improvements

Thurrock Council should work with allotment associations to improve the quality of the facilities available. Allotments that have been identified for improvement are sites, which currently fail to meet the threshold standard for quality.

Sites for improvement - Anchor Field, Bull Meadow, Cromwell Road, Thurloe Walk, Whitehall Lane, West Road, Adams Road, Wharf Road & High Road.

Deficiencies in provision

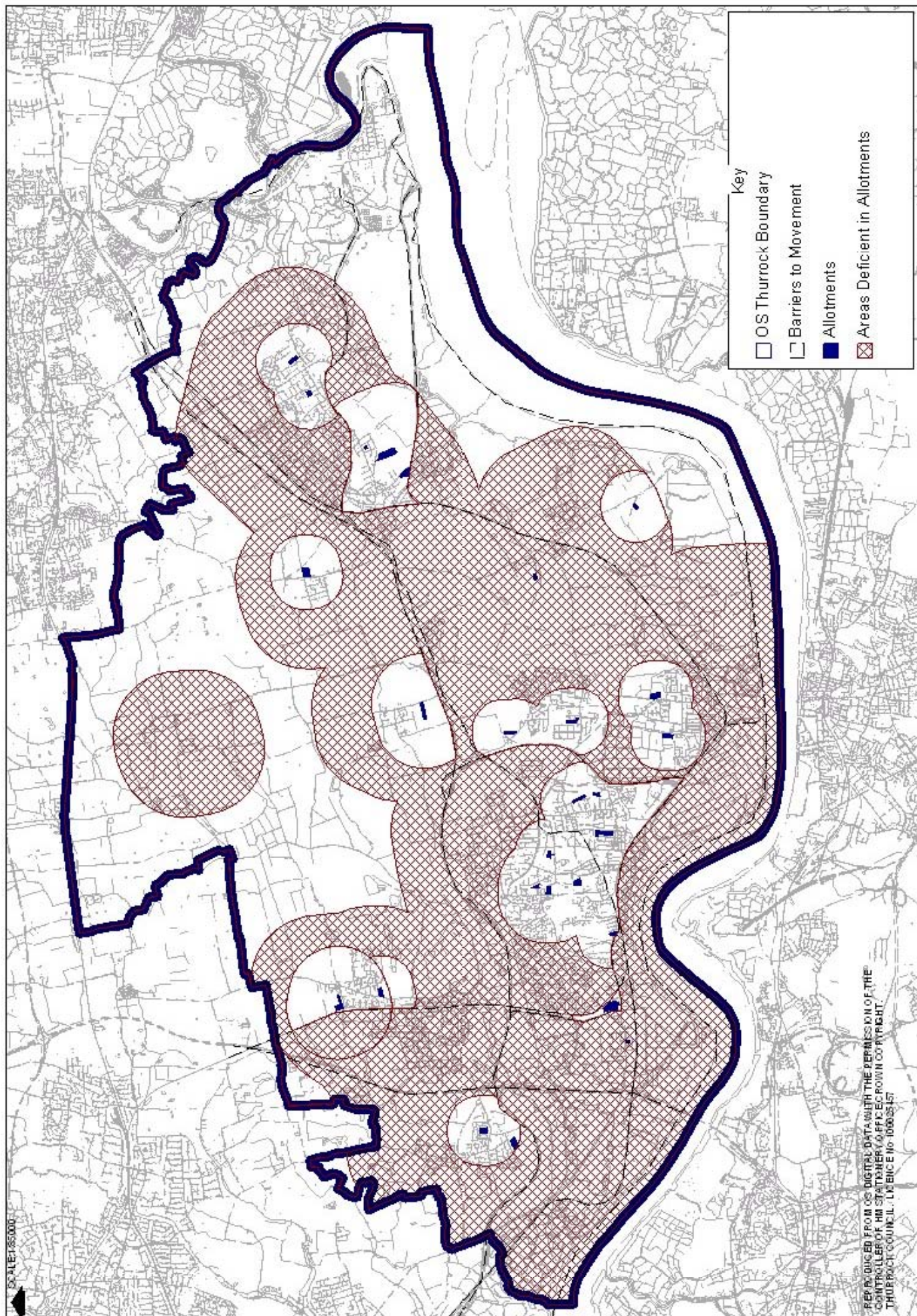
Map 8 (page 47) shows the catchment areas of every allotment in Thurrock based on the accessibility standards. Analysis of the distribution indicates that provision in some areas of Thurrock is insufficient and will need to be addressed through the planning system.

To assess the level of demand for allotments, Thurrock Council should maintain a waiting list that identifies spatially where demand for allotments is greatest. This information should be collated to help inform future decisions over the provision of allotments in Thurrock.

Good practice example – Abbey Allotments, Stoke-on-Trent

A Groundwork Trust project at Abbey Allotments in Stoke-on-Trent has empowered local residents by giving them the skills and confidence to drive regeneration in their local area. The project created a community food growing allotment to educate young people about fruit and vegetables. A classroom has been built at the allotments so local schools can pick fresh produce and cook it on site.

Groundwork Trust



4.8 Churchyards and Cemeteries

Churchyards & Cemeteries: Spaces set aside for the burial of the dead, either through interment of the body or of cremated remains, or for memorials to those who have died. They are important places for quiet contemplation and reflection linked to death. Churchyard are normally around 0.4 hectares in size, where as cemeteries are typically 4 hectares in size.



Photo 24: Cemetery in North Stifford

Quiet spaces for relaxation and stress relief

Churchyards and cemeteries provide a tranquil landscape setting where wildlife conservation and biodiversity can thrive. They support a variety of flora and fauna allowing havens for wildlife within the urban environment providing opportunities for people to relax close to home.

Community Consultation

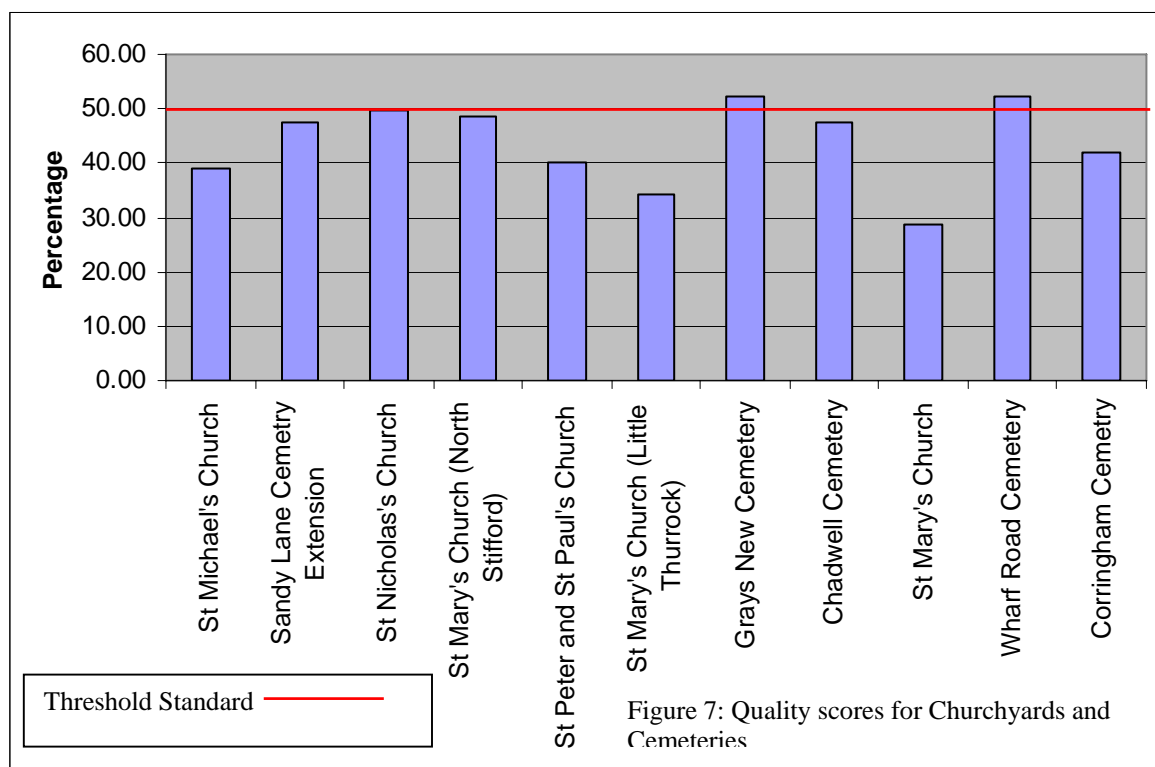
42% of respondents visit a local cemetery or churchyard regularly and view the condition of them as either excellent or good.

Audit

All of the churchyards and cemeteries that Thurrock Council manages have been audited to determine their quality and value.

Value – The scores for value range from 68% to 25%. The Chadwell Cemetery received the highest score and St Mary's Church in Chadwell St Mary received the lowest score.

Quality – The scores range from 30% to 55% and figure 7 below shows the range of audit scores emerging from the assessment.



Standards

Quality	<p>Threshold: The standard has been set at 51.5% meaning that sites must be maintained to a good condition overall with sufficient seating provision available. Sites should have some of the facilities defined in the aspiration standard.</p> <p>Aspiration: Cemeteries and churchyards should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to water sources • Fences or walls for security • Good access to and within the site • Containers for disposal of rubbish • Entrance signage and information at the main entrance • Adequate parking • Toilet facilities on sites still taking new burials • Good landscaping that is maintained throughout the year.
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Improvements

Improving churchyards and cemeteries

The churchyards and cemeteries in Thurrock should be improved to at least the threshold standard and where feasible improvements should be delivered to meet the aspirational standard.

Deficiencies in provision

There will be an ongoing need for new graves. Between 150 to 175 new graves will be required each annum. This extra demand in provision may be able to be offset against the re-use of graves if Government changes legislation. Other options include the identification of new sites through the planning system or the use of allotment sites. If demand for new allotment plots is high then this option should be avoided.

Good practice example – East Ham Nature Reserve



Photo 24: East Ham Nature Reserve

The churchyard at East Ham is one of the largest in Britain at ten acres and still functions as a churchyard. The site has been managed as a nature reserve since 1977 and boasts a rich variety of wildlife and plant life that can be explored by following one of three nature trails that flow through the site. The nature reserve is enjoyed by the local community and has a well equipped classroom that can be used for school trips.

Newham Council – www.newham.gov.uk

4.9 Urban space

Urban space consists of civic spaces, streets, courtyards and other spaces that have not been covered within the scope of the research. Standards cannot be set for these spaces but they are an important part of the network of open spaces within the Greengrid.

People travel through and experience these spaces everyday and their design should contribute towards the creation of a vibrant and safe urban environment containing green infrastructure. Green infrastructure incorporated into urban spaces should compliment the local built and natural environment to improve connectivity throughout the Greengrid network. When improving urban space and in particular civic space, the complimentary relationship between surrounding land uses and the space should be developed to create exciting community spaces.



Photo 25: Bournemouth.

5. Policies

The **community needs assessment** and **audit of provision** have enabled Thurrock Council to establish robust open space standards for **quantity, quality and accessibility**. A detailed summary of the justification for each standard is provided in the background research documents. Standards for each typology of open space will enable the Council to address the quantitative and qualitative deficiencies that exist.

Accessibility: Distance thresholds enable access to different types of open space to be strategic planned so that future provision is delivered in sustainable locations.

Quality: Helps to ensure that open spaces are fit for purpose and can therefore be used as a design, management and maintenance standard. Thurrock Council have produced two quality standards:

- i) Threshold standard: standards for enhancing the overall quality of open spaces.
- ii) Aspiration standard: standards that apply to new open spaces and sites that are strategic priorities.

Quantity: Enables sufficient amounts of provision to be provided based on the population of Thurrock and the predicted growth.



Photo 26: Mile End Park.

5.1 Open Space Standards

Developers should refer to the Planning Guidance on Open Spaces to determine how they can comply with the open space standards. Reference to Thurrock's other Greengrid documents must be made when designing new developments.

Typology	Quantity standard	Quality standard	Accessibility standard
Parks and Gardens	0.7 Ha per 1000 population	<p>Threshold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - There should be no obvious signs of graffiti and vandalism. - All parks should have signage that is specially designed for an individual park or garden. - There should be no facility provided in a park or garden that is deemed to be of poor quality. - The main landscaping feature of a park should be maintained to a good condition. <p>Aspiration: Green Flag award standard.</p>	<p>Satellite park: 0.4Km Local park: 0.7Km Community park: 1Km</p>
Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace	2 Ha per 1000 population	<p>Threshold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sites should be maintained to a good condition overall with no vandalism or graffiti. - Sites should be of significant ecological value with amenity facilities. - Signage should be provided at every site, with management contact details and maps of the space. 	<p>No person should live more than 300m from a natural accessible greenspace.</p> <p>Residents should live no more than 2000m from 20 Ha sites and 5000m from 100 Ha sites.</p>
Amenity Greenspace	0.8 Ha per 1000 population	<p>Threshold:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cleanliness should be excellent on all amenity greens. - The site should be well maintained. - Bins should be provided. - The Amenity green should have clearly defined boundaries. 	<p>Within 100m of residential dwellings with no roads in between.</p>

Children's Playing Space	1.80 m ² per childbed space	<p>Threshold: All play equipment should comply with European Standards BS EN 1176, Playground equipment, and BS EN 1177, Impact absorbing playground surfacing.</p> <p>Aspiration: To achieve a quality score of 22 based on the NPFA assessment criteria. Therefore in future children's play spaces should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reasonably close to home. - Within sight of walking or cycling 'desire lines' or main travel routes. - In spaces where there is 'informal oversight' from nearby houses or other well-used public spaces. - In locations identified by children and young people as appropriate. - Capable of being used for a variety of play activities, including sports. - Embedded in the community. - Designed to maximize experiences with the natural environment. 	<p>Toddler play space: 100 meters</p> <p>Small play space: 400 meters</p> <p>Large play space: 1000 meters</p>
Outdoor Sport Facilities	-	<p>Threshold: Improvements to new or existing facilities should aim to bring facilities up to standards that comply with design guidance provided by the Governing body of the specified sport.</p>	-
Allotments	6.25 plots per 1000 population	<p>Threshold: Allotments should have security fencing, water storage facilities, containers for equipment, good quality soil, good access, parking facilities and pathways through the site. Management practices should also ensure that vacant plots are maintained to a reasonable standard and that provision for clearance/removal of rubbish is made.</p>	<p>Over 100 plots: 1200m</p> <p>50-100 plots: 900m</p> <p>10 – 49 plots: 600m</p> <p>1 – 9 plots: 300m</p>

Churchyards and Cemeteries	Sufficient to meet a demand for 150 to 175 graves per annum	<p>Threshold: The standard has been set at 51.5% meaning that sites must be maintained to a good condition overall with sufficient seating provision available. Sites should have some of the facilities defined in the aspiration standard.</p> <p>Aspiration: Cemeteries and churchyards should have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Access to water sources. - Fences or walls for security. - Good access to and within the site. - Containers for disposal of rubbish. - Entrance signage and information at the main entrance. - Adequate parking. - Toilet facilities on sites still taking new burials. - A good environment that is maintained throughout the year. 	-
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5.2 Policy Recommendations

- Existing open space should be protected within the Local Development Framework. Development that would result in the loss of open space will not be permitted.
- The Local Development Framework needs to include open space standards to inform developers of the required open space provision within new developments.

6. Recommendations

To carry forward the delivery of the strategy over the next five years, a number of recommendations have been carried forward into the **Thurrock Greengrid Action Plan**. This will ensure Thurrock's environment is managed, enhanced and preserved holistically in the future.

A Greengrid Forum has been established to monitor the implementation and delivery of the Greengrid. The Greengrid Forum operates within the framework of the Sustainable Communities Board and reports back to the Environmental Board, a sub group of the Sustainable Communities Board. By reporting back to the Sustainable Communities Board we can ensure that the Greengrid Strategy contributes to achieving the objectives in the Community Strategy.

7. Making it Happen

The formulation of a strategy is just the start. A commitment to change open spaces for the better needs to be embraced by everyone

To create a sustainable network of multi-functional greenspace and links in Thurrock's town and countryside

7.1 Strategic Improvements

Master Plans

To achieve the desired design, management and maintenance quality a master plan for every open space identified for improvement must be produced with the local community before any improvements commence.

The formulation of master plans will help to co-ordinate funding to implement the desired improvements. The redesign of these spaces should address the layout and content of the space to encourage greater diversity of use and sustainability in the future whilst seeking inspiration from the character of the local environment.

Multifunctionality

Open spaces need to appeal to the whole community and should therefore incorporate a range of facilities. The design of open spaces should be aspirational and reflect local circumstances. Opportunities to create good quality habitats in all open spaces should be integral to the design process. Consideration should also be given to the potential for art work to be incorporated into the design of open spaces. Appropriate artwork that enhances local character or promotes alternative ways of interacting with the natural environment can be a key feature within open spaces. Recreation and educational opportunities should also be considered along with how the site connects to the Greengrid network. However the design process should not be too prescriptive so dynamic, interesting and popular spaces are created.

A good example of an approach to multifunctional open spaces is that performed by Thames Chase. The community forest provides a range of educational, nature conservation and recreational activities that can be experienced by everyone.

Parkforce

The presence of on site wardens or park keepers can help to ensure that any improvements

made are preserved over the long term. By addressing issues that concern the community, parks and open spaces can become a more inclusive resource for people to enjoy. Encouraging park staff to liaise with users and the local community can help to address local issues, enabling tailored programmes of funding, events and educational activities to emerge. Information about the staff managing open spaces should be provided to enable users to report problems as they occur.

7.2 Community Involvement

Developing working relationships with local communities will enable the quality of the open space to be improved to meet local needs and will enable the Council to address local issues more effectively.



Photo 28: The Green Festival at Davy Down

The local community should be involved in the decision making, implementation and management of their local open space. This will help to encourage local ownership and table 8 demonstrates some of the mechanisms that can be developed to achieve this.

Table 8: Mechanisms for community involvement

Decision Making	Implementation	Management
Involve communities in the formulation of master plans for the redesign of open spaces.	Involve local people in the implementation of improvements to an open space.	Develop “friends of” and user groups.
Involve community representatives in the development of management plans for each open space.	Provide opportunities for volunteers to undertake projects.	Establish management liaison meetings and management boards with local community representatives.
Inform communities of progress with the strategy through newsletters or other media sources.	Develop a series of cultural, heritage and leisure events with the local community.	Street wardens and park wardens should develop working relationships with local communities.

Good practice example - Tree wardens

Tree wardens can help to protect and enhance green infrastructure that is part of the Greengrid. Tree wardens act as the eyes and ears on the ground and help to improve communications between the public and tree professionals. Warden’s can help to inform local authorities about breaches against preserved trees, trees in conservation areas, hedgerows and other issues such as highlighting areas that would benefit from tree planting. They can also be trained to assist with maintenance to trees that have been damaged, the collection of information on existing trees and with tree planting and aftercare.

Tree Council (www.treecouncil.org.uk)

The example of Tree wardens could be a useful model that is adapted to create voluntary wardens that cover a range of issues such as open space, cycling, rights of way and trees.



Photo 29: Tree wardens.

7.3 Funding

To plan, implement and manage open spaces effectively in the future a range of funding sources need to be harnessed. The Open Spaces Strategy identifies the improvements that are required in the future. All projects, irrespective of the scale and size should be planned to ensure long term sustainability is achieved. This means that capital and revenue funding should be integral to all project development in the future. Improvement plans and master plans for each typology of open space will enable Thurrock Council and external partners to seek funding from a variety of sources.

Improvements to open spaces cannot be achieved if revenue funding is not properly addressed. Funding to at least current levels needs to be identified and secured so a stable financial base is provided for improvements to be made in the future. Alternative management mechanisms should be investigated to determine if there are other financially efficient and viable ways of managing open spaces in the future. This should include exploring potential partnerships and income generating activities that can invest money into open space management enabling delivery in a more effective and integrated way.

Ring fenced income

Income generated from open spaces must be ring fenced and not placed into 'single capital pots'. Ring fencing income generated by open spaces encourages management to think imaginatively about opportunities to increase funding that will benefit the open space and its users.

When redesigning or improving open spaces every opportunity to include external revenue generators or community facilities into the design should be explored.



Photo 29: Thames Barrier Park

Capital funding

The strategic priority's identified within this strategy provide a holistic approach to improving open spaces. Thurrock Council currently works with grant making organisations, management organisations, local and national voluntary groups, local businesses and community groups to access external sources of funding. Thurrock Council will need to continue to work with partners and forge new agreements in the future to ensure the successful delivery of open spaces in Thurrock. Potential funding sources are identified in appendix 3 and in the Green Infrastructure Framework Plan.

Another important source of funding that should be utilised are planning obligations. This Strategy provides open space standards that can be used to offset the impact of new residential development on the quantity and quality of open spaces in Thurrock. Planning guidance for open spaces is included within the Greengrid Strategy and provides information on the mechanisms available to developers for compliance with the standards.

Attracting Funding

Demonstrating the improvements that have been made and the value they add will help to gather support for investment into open spaces in the future. The ability to monitor community views and the number of users will enable a portfolio of evidence to emerge that will help to make the case for additional resources, to a wide range of funders.

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Photos

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- **Cabe Space** – 8, 9, 25 & 26.
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- www.beachhousecapecod.com - 24.
- www.surreytewardens.org.uk - 28.
- www.voyagingonline.com - 3.

Appendix 1 – Background Research Documents

The Open Spaces Strategy is supported by research that was commissioned between September 2004 and March 2006. The background research documents can be downloaded from www.thurrock.gov.uk/greengrid.

- Thurrock Council Community Needs and Open Spaces Study
- Maps referred to in the Thurrock Council Community Needs and Open Spaces Study

Appendix 2 – Converting standards

The Community Needs and Open Spaces Study provides a robust evidence base for the justification of the Open Space standards. Two of the standards formulated in the research have been converted into usable quantity standards. The workings for the conversions are shown below.

1. Children's Play Space

- 712 pieces of play equipment in Thurrock (2005).
- Standard in the open spaces research = 1 piece of equipment per 33 children.

	No. of sites	Size	Total area of play space in Thurrock
Toddler play space	19	100 m ²	1900 m ²
Small play space	12	400 m ²	4800 m ²
Large play space	36	1000 m ²	36000 m ²
Total	67		42700 m²

Table X: Area of play space in Thurrock

Calculation: $42700 \div 712 = 60 \text{ m}^2$ per piece of equipment.
 $60 \div 33 = 1.80 \text{ m}^2$

Area based quantity standard for children's play space = 1.80 m² per childbed space.

2. Allotments

- Standard in the open spaces research = 15 plots per 1000 households.
- Average household size 2001 = 2.4 persons.

Calculation: $15 \div 2.4 = 6.25$

Allotment standard = 6.25 plots per 1000 people

Appendix 3 – Funding Sources

Funding	Funding Organisation	Contact details	Who do they fund?	Projects they support	Size of grants/funding
Lottery	Big Lottery Fund Young People's Fund	1 Plough Place London EX4A 1DE Tel: 0207 211 1800 Fax: 0207 211 1750 Big Advice Line: 0845 4 10 20 30 Website: www.biglotteryfund.org.uk	Voluntary and community sector organisations working in partnership with young people (this can also include partnerships with public bodies).	Fund projects that help disadvantaged young people between 11 and 25.	Small grants - £5,000 (max) to individuals and small groups. Grants between £5,000 to £150,000 for voluntary and community sector organisations.
	Big Lottery Fund Children's Play	As above.		They will create and improve local children's play spaces in areas of greatest need, providing free local play provision.	Budget = £155 million.
	Big Lottery Fund Well being programme	As above.		Will invest in 'healthier and more active people and communities' encouraging healthier lifestyles through community sport, physical activity and healthy eating.	Budget = £165 million.

	Big Lottery Fund Environmental Funding	As above.		Funding to improve rural and urban environments for local communities.	Budget = £90 million.
	Big Lottery Fund People's Places	New Opportunities Fund, Rio Tinto and English Nature through BTCV BTCV People's Places, Howbery Park, Wallingford Oxon OX10 8BA Tel:01491 821621 Email: www.btcv.org/ppawards		This scheme is targeted at communities living in areas of deprivation and at disadvantaged groups. It offers groups a chance to make a difference to their community by creating or improving a "people's place".	
	Heritage Lottery Fund Public Parks Initiative	Kett House, Station Road, Cambridge, CB1 2JT Tel: 01223 224 870 Fax: 01223 224 871 www.hlf.org.uk	Local authorities & Community groups.	This initiative helps with the restoration and regeneration of historic parks and gardens, wherever they are, including urban squares and cemeteries. Projects should also enhance public access and may involve improving facilities. We will continue to make applications, which serve socially and economically deprived communities a priority.	£50,000 or more. No limit assigned.
	Awards For All	Elizabeth House 2nd Floor 1 High Street Chesterton Cambridge CB4 1YW Tel: 01223 449009 www.awardsforall.org.uk	Small community groups, parish/town councils, schools and health bodies.	They fund projects that enable people to take part in art, sport, heritage and community activities, as well as projects that promote education, the environment and health in the local community.	£500 to £5,000.

	Sport England	Tel: 08458 508 508 Www.sportengland.org/	Local authorities, Community groups & Schools.	Funding will be targeted towards projects that increase participation amongst minority society groups and in socially deprived areas.	Grants awarded must have match funding.
European	European Regional Development Fund	Regional Policy Unit Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions Eland House Bressenden Place London SW1E 5DU Tel: 0207 890 4352		Funds environmental work conforming to the relevant single programming document for the area concerned.	

DCLG	Safer and Stronger Communities Fund.	Help Line: 08450 828383	Local authorities, open space providers, community groups & Schools.	These are aimed at tackling crime, reducing the harm caused by illegal drugs, addressing anti-social behaviour, improving the poor condition of streets and other public spaces; in particular for deprived neighbourhoods where these issues are often more prevalent.	N/A
	Single Pot	DTI (www.dti.gov.uk) and ODPM (www.odpm.gov.uk) through the RDAs. Tel: 020 7215 5000		To stimulate job creation, businesses start-ups, brownfield land reclamation and learning opportunities, and may also consider funding regeneration networks and skills development programmes. The Single Pot represents all the money distributed by the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs). The RDAs also fund the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB).	
Landfill Tax Credit	Biffa award	Tel: 0870 036 1000 Email: grants@rswt.org	Local authorities, Community groups & Schools.	The Small Grants Scheme provides funding for projects that enable communities to improve local amenities and to conserve wildlife and habitats. The Main Grants Scheme supports Amenity projects that provide and improve community facilities to act as mechanisms for recreation, sporting achievement, lifelong learning and community involvement. In addition it supports projects that increase or maintain Biodiversity . The Flagship Scheme offers grants for larger projects that support regionally or nationally significant voluntary sector led regeneration or biodiversity projects to make a significant impact on the quality of life of the region.	Small grants scheme = £250 to £5,000. Main grants scheme = £5,001 to £50,000. Flagship scheme = £150,000 to £500,000.

	Waste Recycling Environmental Limited (WREN)	www.wren.org.uk	Local authorities, Community groups & Schools.	Support projects that enhance the social environment, natural conservation and heritage aspects of a community.	Maximum funding £40,000.
	Onyx Environmental Trust	The Onyx Environmental Trust, Ruthdene, Station Road, Four Ashes, Wolverhampton WV10 7DG Tel: 01902 794 600 Fax: 01902 794 646 E mail: info@onyxenvtrust.org		The Trust is committed to supporting the environment through funding community projects. Whether you require assistance for the development of community schemes, restoration projects for buildings of historic or religious importance, or reclaiming land that has been disused and unavailable for public use for many years, then they may be able to help. The Onyx Environmental Trust has granted money to a wide variety of projects, ranging from inner-city nature reserves to educational resources for schools and universities.	
	Hanson Environmental Fund (Royal Society for Nature Conservation)	Hanson Environment Fund RSWT The Kiln Waterside Mather Road Newark Notts NG24 1WT Tel: 0870 036 1000 Fax: 0870 036 0101 Email: grants@rswt.org	Supports environmental and community initiatives from not-for-profit organisations.	Small grants scheme - £250 to £4000 & Large grants scheme - £4001 to £25,000. Funded projects Usk road and Aveley Park. The fund will support projects in the following categories: Creation and improvement of parks and public amenities. Creation, restoration and management of areas specifically to safeguard and/or enhance biodiversity.	Maximum funding £40,000.

National Organisations	Sustrans	Mr N. Brigham Sustrans Environment and Energy Centre 33a West Gate Peterborough PE1 1PZ		Supports projects that encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport.	
	Groundwork	Groundwork UK 85–87 Cornwall Street Birmingham B3 3BY T 0121 236 8565 F 0121 237 3605 www.groundwork.org.uk	Local authorities, community groups & voluntary sector.	They wish to work with a wide range of partners to help contribute towards Greening the Gateway and therefore deliver sustainable communities.	Budget = £3 million.
	Volunteering England	Volunteering England (London) Regents Wharf 8 All Saints Street London N1 9RL United Kingdom Tel: +44 (0) 20 7520 8910 www.volunteering.org.uk	Offers grants to individuals or groups who want to make a difference to their community. Also funds not-for-profit organisations working with volunteers.	Will support projects that allow local people to put their own ideas into action and increase volunteer numbers.	£500 to £1500 for individuals or informal groups. £1000 to £4000 for formal groups, societies and not-for-profit organizations. £6000 for organisations wishing to support individual people organising projects or activities.

	English Woodland Grant Scheme (Forestry Commission)	Forestry Commission (England) National Office Great Eastern House Tenison Road Cambridge CB1 2DU Tel: 01223 314546 Fax:01223 460699 http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/infid-5ztlj9		Six grants are available under the programme: Woodland Creation Grant Woodland Assessment Grant Woodland Management Planning Grant Woodland Management Grant Woodland Regeneration Grant Woodland Improvement Grant	
	Land Restoration Trust	Arpley House 110 Birchwood Boulevard Birchwood Warrington WA3 7QH T. UK: +44 (0) 1925 644831 F. UK: +44 (0) 1925 644692	Will provide assistance to landowners to ensure long-term sustainable management of public spaces.	The trust aims to regenerate communities by providing long-term management of public spaces that were formerly under used or derelict.	-
	Trees For Cities	Prince Consort Lodge Kennington Park Place Kennington Park London SE11 4AS England Tel: +44 (0) 20 7587 1320 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7793 9042 email: info@treesforcities.org		Trees for Cities is an independent charity supporting city-wide tree planting and greening initiatives in urban areas of greatest need; our aim is to stimulate a greening renaissance in cities around the world.	

Other	Bernard's and The Children's Play Council	Tel: 020 8550 8822.	-	Tel: 0161 237 1061	Budget of £155 million.
	Football Foundation	www.footballfoundation.org.uk Telephone (free phone) 0800 027 7766.	General public, football clubs, educational establishments, community groups, youth clubs, local authorities and charities.	The Foundation is playing a key role in revitalising grass roots sport, investing in our parks, schools and playing fields and harnessing the power of the game within our communities, to promote education and social inclusion. Our mission is to improve facilities, create opportunities and build communities.	Funding ranges from £100 to £1m.
	Barclays Spaces for Sports	http://www.barclays.co.uk/spacesforsports/		Aimed at investing money into community sports facilities across the UK.	
	Barclays New Futures (Barclays Community Investment Programme)	www.community.barclays.co.uk/newfutures/contacts.html		To achieve real and lasting mutual benefit both to the community and to Barclays. To build successful partnerships with local communities and charitable groups, which produce lasting and tangible benefits.	£5,000 to £20,000

	Esmee Fairbairn Foundation	Tel:020 7297 4722 Email: info@esmeefairbairn.org.uk .		We particularly welcome applications for Biodiversity projects: Work that links fragmented habitats, provides access corridors for isolated populations of plant or animal species, or which promotes landscape scale management techniques recreating habitat largely lost to intensive agriculture Control of invasive species where they can be shown to have a detrimental impact on native plant or animal populations Work that promotes the creation of marine reserves and 'no take' zones.	
	The Tree Council	The Tree Council 51 Catherine Place London SW1E 6DY Tel: 0207 828 9928	Community groups & projects involving children	The council has two funds, the community grant and the schools grant.	£100 to £700.
	American Forests Global Relief 2000 Campaign	American Forests Attn: Karen Fedor P.O. Box 2000 Washington, DC, 20013 Tel: (202) 955-4500 x224 FAX (202) 955-4588		We are particularly interested in partnering with private and public sector organizations and agencies to plant trees and improve the environment in projects that would otherwise not be feasible. We support projects that plant the right trees in the right places for the right reasons.	

	Dulux Community Projects	Dulux Community Projects, PO Box 343, London WC2E 8RJ		To provide free paint to community groups. Cash awards are also made to twenty projects offering the greatest potential in creativity and benefit to the community.	
	Jenny Wood Environmental Trust	Jenny Wood Environmental Trust, 36 Oak Village, London NW5 4QN		Grants are awarded annually to environmental projects that are practical, innovative, which involve the local community and/ or children.	£600-£2,500
	Re>Paint	Mark Gregory, Save Waste and Prosper Ltd, 74 Kirkgate, Leeds, LS2 7DJ Tel:0113 243 8777 Fax: 0113 234 4222 Email: mark@swap-web.co.uk		The purpose of the scheme is to collect leftover reusable paint from householders, and redistribute it to those who cannot afford it.	£3,000

	Henry Ford European Conservation Awards	Henry Ford European Conservation Awards, Ford Motor Company, Eagle Way 1/467, Brentwood, Essex CM13 3BW Tel: 020 7823 8842		To make awards for a range of conservation initiatives, drawn from the natural environment, heritage, conservation engineering and child and youth projects.	
	The Tubney Charitable Trust	Mrs Catherine Small, The Tubney Charitable Trust, c/o Nabarro Nathanson, The Anchorage, 34 Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU Tel: 0118 925 4662 Fax: 0118 950 5640 Email: www.tubney.org.uk		Support is given to a number of areas, including the environment, animal welfare, education and medical research and palliative care projects. As part of the environmental remit, they aim to support environmental charities, which are associated with the conservation and improvement of the natural environment.	£30, 000_ £250,000
	The Tudor Trust	7, Ladbroke Grove, London W11 3BD Tel		The Trust Deed gives full discretion to the Trustees to decide from time to time which charitable purposes receive funding. The types of project funded by the trust is very broad, although one of their specific areas of interest is the funding of projects that seek to develop and promote green areas which provide community focus.	£10,000-£100,000

	Whitbread Action Earth	Whitbread Action Earth, CSV Environment, St, Peter's College, College Road, Saltley Birmingham B8 3TE Tel: 0121 328 7455 Email: naseem@cseenvironment.org.uk		Over the last 10 years the Action Earth campaign has supported thousands of projects and people in making a positive difference to their local environment. This partnership has encouraged people to recognise the need to help protect and enhance their local environment.	N/A
	You Can Do It Community Awards Scheme	B&Q PLC www.diy.com/bq		To provide twenty awards each year to supply community groups with tools and equipment for a range of projects, including horticultural or cosmetic construction work as well as renovation and refurbishment.	£5,000

Appendix 4 – Useful Contacts

Thurrock Council

Strategic Environmental Planning
Civic Offices
New Road
Grays
Thurrock
Essex RM17 6SL
Tel: 01375 652486
Email: Greengrid@thurrock.gov.uk

Thurrock Thames Gateway Development Corporation

Gateway House
Stonehouse Lane
Purfleet
Essex RM19 1NX
Tel: 01708 895400
www.thurrocktgdc.org.uk

National Contacts

CABE Space

The Tower Building
11 York Road
London SE1 7NX
Tel: 020 7960 2400
Email: enquiries@cabe.org.uk
www.cabespace.org.uk

Environment Agency

Kings Meadow House
Kings Meadow Road
Reading
Berkshire RG1 8DG
Tel: 0845 9333111
www.environment-agency.gov.uk

English Nature

Northminster House
Peterborough
Cambridgeshire PE1 1 UA
Tel: 01733 455000
www.english-nature.org.uk

Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

Unit 9
Thurrock Commercial
Centre
Juliette Way
Purfleet RM15 4YD
www.rspb.org.uk

Sport England

16 Upper Woburn Place
London WC1 H OPQ
Tel: 020 7273 1500
www.Sportengland.org

Regional Partners

Countryside Agency (East of England)

2nd Floor
City House
126 – 128 Hills Road
Cambridge CB2 1PT
Tel: 01223 354462
Email:
info.eastern@countryside.gov.uk
www.countryside.gov.uk

Essex County Council

Essex County Council
County Hall
Market Road
Chelmsford CM1 1LX
Tel: 08457 430 430
www.essexcc.gov.uk

Essex Wildlife Trust

Abbotts Hall Farm
Colchester CO5 7RZ
Tel: 01621 862960
Email:
admin@essexwt.org.uk
www.essexwt.org.uk

Groundwork South Essex

Forest Centre
Station Road
Marston Moretaine
Bedfordshire MK43 0PR
Tel: 01234 766058
Email:info@groundworkeastofengland.org.uk
www.groundwork.org.uk

Thames Chase

The Forest Centre
Broadfields Farm
Pike Lane
Upminster
Essex RM14 3NS
Tel: 01708 641880
www.thameschase.org.uk

Thames Gateway South Essex Greengrid

Thames Gateway South
Essex
3rd Floor South
Acorn House
Great Oaks
Basildon
Essex SS14 1AH
Tel: 01268 595345
www.greengrid.co.uk

Local Partners

Essex Police

Grays Police Station
Grays RM17 5BX
Tel: 01375 391212

Essex & Suffolk Water

Essex & Suffolk Water
Company
Hall Street
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 0HH

Impulse Leisure

Blackshots
Tel: 01375 375533
Email:
impulse.marketing@impulse
leisure.co.uk
www.impulseleisure.co.uk

Thurrock Allotment

Steering Group

Andrea Gould
01375 372347
andreagull@tiscali.co.uk

Thurrock Biodiversity

Action Group

Steve Ireland
Chairman
53 Love Lane
Aveley
Essex RM15 4HT
01708 869474
Sci0357@homecall.co.uk

Thurrock Play Network

Carol O'Regan
The Beehive Voluntary &
Community Resource Centre
West Street, Grays
Essex RM17 6XP
01375 389876