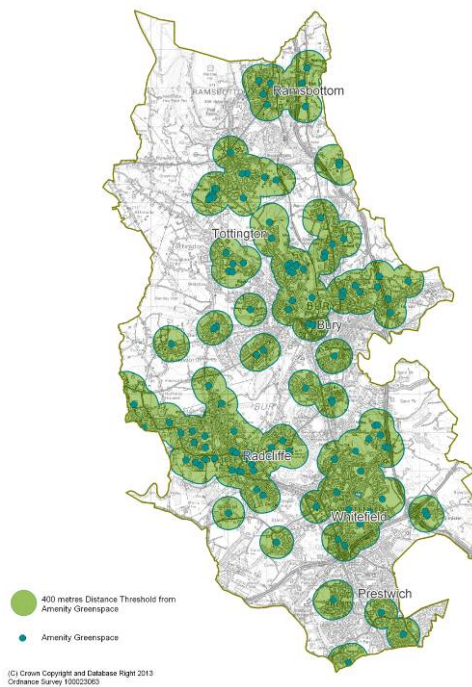


BURY GREENSPACE AUDIT AND STRATEGY

February 2015



Contents

	Index of Tables and Figures	2
1.	Introduction	3
2.	Report Format	7
3.	Overview of Audit	8
4.	Audit of Provision and Setting Standards	16
5.	Analysis of Provision	47
6.	Strategy	56
7.	Conclusions	86
8.	Glossary	87

Index of Tables and Figures

Tables

1	Summary of existing provision and recommended standards	17
2	Quantity of Parks and Gardens across the Borough	18
3	Quality Ratings for Parks and Gardens	19
4	Accessibility thresholds for Parks and Gardens	20
5	Quality Ratings for Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces	23
6	Quantity of Playing Pitches across the Borough	26
7	Quantity of Non-Playing Pitches across the Borough	27
8	Quality Ratings for Playing Pitches	28
9	Quality Ratings for Non-Playing Pitches	28
10	Quantity of Amenity Greenspace across the Borough	32
11	Quality Ratings for Amenity Greenspace	33
12	Quantity of Provision for Children and Young People	35
13	Quality Ratings for Provision for Children and Young People	36
14	Quality Ratings for Allotments	40
15	Quantity of Cemeteries and Churchyards across the Borough	42
16	Quality Ratings for Cemeteries and Churchyards	43
17	Quality Ratings for Civic Spaces	45
18	Comparison of Existing Quantitative Provision against Minimum Quantitative Standards	49
19	Summary of Qualitative Assessment and Comparison with Minimum Qualitative Standards	51
20	Key issues for quantity and quality across each Township	52
21	Identification of Neighbourhoods with Access Deficiencies	54

Figures

1	Five-stage process in PPG17 Companion Guide	9
2	Key audit findings for Parks and Gardens	68
3	Key audit findings for Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace	70
4	Key audit findings for Outdoor Sports	72
5	Key audit findings for Amenity Greenspace	74
6	Key audit findings for Provision for Children and Young People	76
7	Key audit findings for Allotments	78

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Open space, sport and recreation facilities – providing they are well-located, accessible, well designed and maintained – can make a major positive contribution to people’s lives. High quality open space, sport and recreation facilities can aid in ensuring that Bury is a place where people want to live, work and visit, and can offer opportunities to enjoy healthy lifestyles.
- 1.2 As such, there is a need to protect and enhance the areas of open space, sport and recreation that is important to the residents, landowners, businesses and other users in the Borough. Bury is at the heart of a network of green spaces which radiate out from the river valleys of the Irwell and the Roch. This network, referred to as ‘green infrastructure’, is the life support system of the Borough and its various components have many overlapping functions which provide multiple social, economic and environmental benefits.



- 1.3 High quality open space, sport and recreation facilities can contribute towards:
- Regenerating deprived areas;
 - Providing wildlife habitats;
 - Adaptation to climate change by improving air quality and cooling;
 - Educating people by adding colour and variety to the environment;
 - Promoting health and well-being by providing opportunities for exercise and leisure.

- 1.4 The latter benefit is particularly important as research by Natural England has found that people are 24% more likely to be physically active if they have good access to greenspace¹. Prioritisation of deprived areas with acute health problems is a key theme of the Strategy which can be found at Chapter 6.
- 1.5 This Greenspace Audit and Strategy report includes an audit and assessment of open space, sport and recreation facilities across the Borough. It also assesses the long-term requirements in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility of the various types of open space, sport and recreation for future provision in meeting local need where appropriate, through establishing minimum standards to be achieved.
- 1.6 The report analyses these facilities in terms of the existing situation (as at Summer/Autumn 2012) and identifies areas with deficiencies and surpluses. In relation to some types of open space, sport and recreation it is easier to establish where deficiencies exist such as outdoor sports or amenity greenspace, whereas others such as cemeteries and churchyards are not as straightforward. Where appropriate, the report will set out local standards that we should aspire to.
- 1.7 A key consideration, however, is how these deficiencies, whether this is a shortfall in quantity or quality, are tackled. A strategy is set out at Chapter 6 which prioritises and sets actions for the most pressing issues raised by the assessment via new, enhanced or alternative provision.
- 1.8 The strategy makes clear that whilst there are many success stories in Bury regarding our open space, sport and recreation sites – such as our Green Flag award-winning parks and the inspiring 'I Will If You Will' campaign from Sport England – the Council is unfortunately not in a position to be an enabler of new or improved facilities like in the past. Severe reductions have been made to the authority's budget as a result of funding cuts by Government which has necessitated a review of how services are delivered. Resources used previously to maintain and improve our recreation sites and acquire new sites are depleted and therefore opportunities to secure external funding and our work with community groups will be a key feature in realising our objectives.
- 1.9 The evidence provided within this Greenspace Audit and Strategy will be incorporated into and assist in formulating policies and proposals within the Site Allocations DPD of the Bury Local Plan. The detail of the audit and assessments undertaken can be found within the appendices of this report.

¹ 'Microeconomic Evidence for the Benefits of Investment in the Environment - review, Natural England, March 2012, <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/32031>.

- 1.10 This Greenspace Audit and Strategy replaces and updates the previous Greenspace Strategy produced in June 2010 and the 'Assessment of Needs and Opportunities' originally published in January 2009. These reports were based on an audit carried out in Summer 2006. The audit for this latest review was carried out predominantly over the Summer/Autumn period of 2012.

Aims and Objectives

- 1.11 The twin aims of this report are to:
- ***Meet the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for open, space, sport and recreation and the methodology set out in the PPG17 Companion Guide.***
 - ***Use the findings to direct funding and contributions from developers to those areas in need of new or enhanced provision.***
- 1.12 These aims will help to deliver the Community Strategy vision 'to make Bury a great place in which to live, work, visit and study' and its following supporting ambitions:
- The place to live in Greater Manchester;
 - Healthiest Borough in the North West;
 - Popular visitor destination; and
 - Each township thriving.
- 1.13 The objectives of the report are as follows:
- To provide a clear picture of the existing situation in relation to open space, sport and recreation in terms of its quantity, quality and accessibility;
 - To identify existing deficiencies and surpluses;
 - To set out mechanisms and ways of improving quantity, quality and accessibility of open space, sport and recreation within areas shown to be deficient;
 - To form a sound evidence base which will provide a basis for decisions to be taken on areas of land and designations in the Site Allocations DPD of the Bury Local Plan and will also be used in deciding planning applications involving open space, sport and recreation sites.

Scope of the report

- 1.13 This report sets out the results of a comprehensive assessment of needs and opportunities for open space, sport and recreation in the Borough and adheres to Government guidance detailed in "Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17". Whilst Planning Policy Guidance note 17 has been replaced by the NPPF, the accompanying companion guide has not been superseded in full and therefore remains valid until further supporting guidance providing an overview is produced.

1.14 The assessment of open space, sport and recreation will follow the five key stages of the PPG17 companion guide as follows:

- Step 1: Identifying Local Needs
- Step 2: Audit Local Provision
- Step 3: Setting Provision Standards
- Step 4: Application of Provision Standards
- Step 5: Drafting Policies and Implementation Plan.

Expected outputs

1.15 The following project outputs are required:

- Analysis of the provision in the Borough as a whole and a strategy for future provision;
- The setting and application of provisional standards;
- Plans showing the existing provision.

2 Report Format

<i>1. Introduction</i>	Introducing the report, its aims and objectives, scope and outcomes.
<i>2. Report format</i>	Outline of how the report is structured.
<i>3. Overview of Audit</i>	Sets out the approach of the audit and methodology and introduces the types of open space, sport and recreation to be audited.
<i>4. Audit of Provision and Setting Standards</i>	Summary of existing provision, recommended standards and the supporting methodology for audit. Each type of open space, sport and recreation is then assessed in terms of its quantity, quality and accessibility with provision standards set for each.
<i>5. Analysis of Provision</i>	The expected and actual provision figures for each type of open space, sport and recreation are compared across townships and across the Borough as a whole, with key issues highlighted for quantity, quality and accessibility.
<i>6. Strategy</i>	This section draws together all parts of the study and provides a strategy for responding to the key issues raised together with a number of objectives and priorities.
<i>7. Conclusion</i>	Key conclusions from the audit, assessment and strategy.
<i>8. Glossary</i>	Explanation of key terms used throughout the report.
<i>9. Appendices</i> <i>(Provided as a separate document)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Borough overview • Context • Identifying Local Needs • Audit Background • Provision • Detailed Analysis • Audit Site Schedule • Maps and Plans • Poor and Very Poor sites

3 Overview of Audit

- 3.1 This chapter introduces the audit and assessment of needs for open space, sport and recreation across the Borough in terms of its quantity, quality and accessibility and sets out the methodology.

Scope of Audit and Assessment

- 3.2 The starting point for the audit was the new guidance in Paragraphs 73 and 74 of the NPPF, which adheres to but has superseded PPG17. The key references below are of particular relevance:

'Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision' (Para 73).

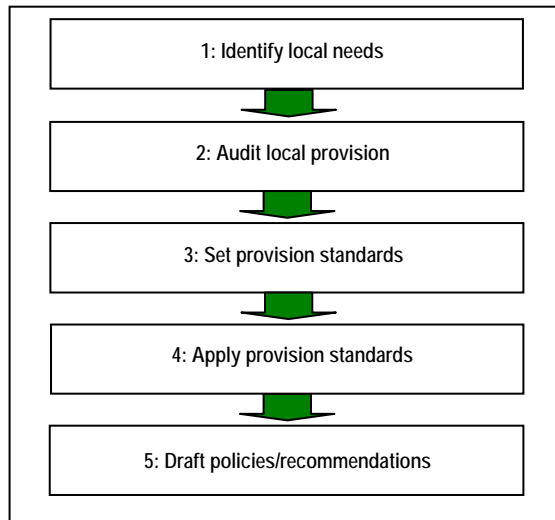
'The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in their local area' (Para 73)

'Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required' (Para 73)

'Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields should not be built on unless...an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements' (Para 74).

- 3.3 The policies give clear guidance for the protection of and appropriate provision for open space, sport and recreation, although it does not provide any detailed guidance on how to conduct an assessment of needs and opportunities. It is therefore logical to reference the guidance for assessment provided in the former PPG17 and its companion guide.
- 3.4 PPG17 placed a requirement on local authorities to undertake assessments and audits of open space, sports and recreational facilities in order to identify the needs of the population, identify the potential for increased use and establish a strategy for open space, sports and recreational facilities at the local level.
- 3.5 The Companion Guide to PPG17 recommended a five-stage approach to carrying out such an assessment as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Five-stage process in PPG17 Companion Guide



3.6 Within this overall approach the Companion Guide suggested a range of methods and techniques that could be adopted in aiding the assessment process and these have been used where appropriate. These methods and techniques, where they have been used, are explained at appropriate points in this report. However, they are summarised in the following section.

Methodology

3.7 The five key stages above have been broadly followed for the purposes of this study. These key stages are identified below, together with the main tasks involved within each stage:

Stage 1: Identification of local needs

This stage involved:

- A review of the implications and priorities of existing policies, plans and strategies to identify links with existing strategic priorities;
- Internal and external consultation to source information on local provision and needs where this has been available.

This is set out in Appendices 2 and 3.

Stage 2: Audit of local provision

This stage involved:

- A review of existing information held by the Council in respect of all known open space, sport and recreational sites;

- Site visits to all known open space, sport and recreation facilities (446 sites) with community use (across all sectors) primarily to assess the quality of the sites.

A summary of the audit findings is contained within Chapter 4. A detailed account of the measures used in undertaking the audit including the changes made to the methodology since the 2006 Audit is included at Appendix 4.

Stage 3: Setting provision standards

This stage involved:

- Setting quantity standards using the findings of the audits, local consultation and benchmarking;
- Setting quality standards using the findings of audits and local consultation; and
- Setting accessibility standards set using the findings of local consultation.

This is set out in Chapter 4 and supporting information can be found at Appendix 4.

Stage 4: Application of provision standards

The subsequent application of these standards allows for the:

- Identification of excesses or deficiencies in quantity;
- Identification of deficiencies in quality; and
- Identification of deficiencies in accessibility.

This is set out at Chapter 5 and supporting information can be found at Appendices 5 and 6.

Stage 5: Drafting Policies and Implementation Plan

The Assessment and, in particular, the application of the quantitative, qualitative and accessibility standards that have been established will provide the broad framework for the future planning of open space, sport and recreation and will provide guidance for the targeting of resources and investment by identifying shortfalls and deficiencies in provision. The Strategy will set recommendations for addressing these deficiencies.

The strategy is at Chapter 6.


Typologies of open space

- 3.8 In order to assess in some detail the adequacy of open space, sport and recreation provision, it is necessary to consider the different types of provision and their primary role and function.

- 3.9 Open space, sport and recreational facilities can take a variety of forms and fulfil various functions. This study has covered the following typologies of open space, sport and recreation which are based on those set out in the PPG17 Companion Guide.

Parks and Gardens

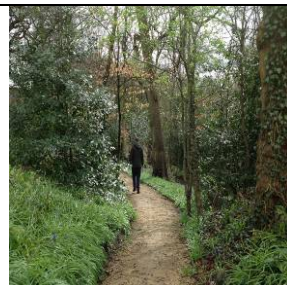
This typology encompasses a number of different sub-typologies of provision, each with differing levels of facility offered. The hierarchy of provision is as follows:

<p>Large Urban and Country Parks: Formal urban and country parks that offer a wide range of facilities for both formal and informal recreation and events.</p> <p><i>Example: Clarence Park, Limefield</i></p>	
<p>Neighbourhood Parks: Intermediate sized parks normally between 2 and 5 hectares, offering a range of facilities for formal and informal sport, play and recreation.</p> <p><i>Example: Manchester Road Park, Bury</i></p>	
<p>Pocket Parks / Recreation Grounds: Including small parks and recreation grounds that offer a limited range of facilities for formal and informal sport, play and recreation.</p> <p><i>Example: Barnfield Park, Prestwich</i></p>	
<p>Formal Gardens: Specifically laid out gardens, including memorial gardens, that include formal grassed areas, floral and permanent landscaping and seating.</p> <p><i>Example: Gallipoli Garden, Bury</i></p>	

Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace

Informal recreation sites including nature reserves, countryside and woodland, ecological assets and green corridors.

Example: Starkies Wood, Bury



Outdoor Sports

Non-pitch sport: Tennis courts, bowling greens and athletics tracks.

Example: Whitehead Park, Bury



Pitch sport: Playing fields/pitches (e.g. football, rugby, cricket).

Example: Redbank Playing Fields, Radcliffe



Amenity Greenspace

Informal Recreation: Grassed sites usually within residential areas that offer opportunities for informal play.

Example: Thatch Leach Lane, Besses



Visual Amenity: Grassed areas that offer no recreational function but which are of benefit from a visual amenity perspective.

Example: Simister Green, Simister



Provision for Children and Young People

Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, new 'Playbuilder' facilities, multi-use games areas, skateboard parks and trim-trails.

Example: Boz Park, Whitefield



Allotments

Dedicated plots for those wishing to grow their own produce.

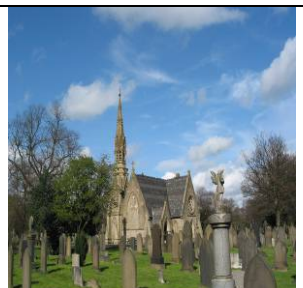
Example: Homer Street, Radcliffe



Cemeteries and Churchyards

Important places for quiet contemplation which have an amenity value and often support biodiversity.

Example: Bury Cemetery



Civic Spaces

Provide a setting for civic buildings and opportunities for events and demonstrations.

Example: Market Place, Ramsbottom



Assessing Quantity

- 3.11 The assessment of quantity has been undertaken on the basis of a review of the number of sites and size of provision, in relation to local population.
- 3.12 A comparison between the quantity of each type of open space, sport and recreational facility against known demand has enabled an assessment of quantitative supply and whether this is adequate to meet demand.
- 3.13 The quantitative assessment does not consider privately owned gardens, grass verges along transport routes or school grounds with no community access.

Assessing Quality

- 3.14 The assessment of quality has been undertaken on the basis of:
- Site visits to community accessible facilities to rate a number of key criteria affecting quality; and
 - Quality ratings from key users, residents and specific user groups.
- 3.15 The overall quality scores are expressed as a percentage and allow each site to be placed within certain key categories along the “quality value line”. The breakdown of quality has been established as follows:

0 to 19%	20 to 39%	40 to 59%	60 to 79%	80+%
Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent

- 3.16 The quality value is obtained using a scored proforma which is set to rate the quality of each typology against specific criteria and, again, the specific criteria used for each typology are highlighted in Appendix 4. Each element of the qualitative assessment has been weighted according to its perceived importance in the context of the specific typology.
- 3.16 The quality audit provides an indicative rating of quality out of 100%. It is important to note that the quality score represents a ‘snapshot’ in time and records the quality of the site at the time of the site visit.

Assessing Access

- 3.17 The assessment of accessibility has been undertaken on the basis of:
- Auditing factors known to affect the access to certain types of facility;
 - Consultation with local residents;
 - Mapping exercises to identify catchment areas for different types of provision.

4 Audit of Provision and Setting Standards



- 4.1 Chapter 4 considers how much open space, sport and recreation we have in the Borough and how much we possibly should have. It sets out the overall provision across the Borough in terms of its quantity, quality and accessibility for the eight typologies identified in Chapter 3, together with recommended standards of provision to help meet the Borough's needs.
- 4.2 Table 1 provides a summary of the total levels of provision and the recommended provision standards for quantity and accessibility in the Borough as a whole. More detailed information is available:
- At **Appendix 4** on the consultation undertaken, how these standards were calculated and how the sites were assessed;
 - At **Appendix 5** which gives a breakdown of the provision of open space, sport and recreation per Township;
- 4.3 The quality standards are set using qualitative vision statements which target all sites to achieve at least a 'Good' quality rating and can be found within the corresponding sections within this chapter.

Table 1: Summary of existing provision and recommended standards

Typology	No.	Area (Ha.)	Quantity (Ha./1000)*	Accessibility threshold
Parks and Gardens	52	134.6	0.73	400 m to 1,200 m
Natural & Semi-Natural Greenspace	74	722.54	3.9	1,200 m
Outdoor Sports	113	128.19	0.83	800 m
Amenity Greenspace	124	93.08	0.5	400 m
Provision for Children and Young People	97	11.47	0.25	400 m
Allotments	30	16.23	3.9 plots ²	1,200 m
Cemeteries & Churchyards	28	45.62	N/A	N/A
Civic spaces	9	1.25	N/A	N/A

Population: 185,422 (2011)³

- 4.4 The remainder of this chapter considers how much provision we have of each of the typologies shown in Table 1, the recommended standards of provision to be set for quantity, quality and accessibility and a consideration of whether a local standard should be set. In each section an explanation has been given for how the standards have been developed and specific information and justification has been provided at Appendix 4 where standards have been proposed.
- 4.5 It is important to note that the recommended standards are for minimum guidance levels of provision. Therefore, if areas are found to be exceeding these standards this does not mean there is a surplus of provision as all these sites may well be used.

² Quantity of Allotments given as plots per 1,000 population

³ Provision for children and young people based on population aged 0-19 (2011)

Parks and Gardens

- 4.6 Parks and Gardens can provide accessible, high quality opportunities for a range of informal recreation, formal sporting opportunities and community events. Many parks have historic features and a long heritage.

Quantity

How much do we have?

- 4.7 The audit has revealed a total of **52 sites** covering a total of **134.6 hectares** of parks and gardens across the Borough. Table 2 below breaks down this provision into the sub-categories of large urban and country parks, pocket parks and recreation grounds and formal gardens.

Table 2: Quantity of Parks and Gardens across the Borough

	No. of sites	Total area (Ha.)
Large Urban and Country Parks	7	87.79
Neighbourhood Parks	11	35.66
Pocket Parks and Recreation Grounds	4	5.35
Formal Gardens	30	5.8
Total	52	134.60

- 4.8 The sites identified within this typology are set out at Appendix 7. The detailed figures for provision per township area are provided at Appendix 5.
- 4.9 When comparing this with the Borough's total population of 185,422, the current Borough-wide provision of parks and gardens is **0.73 ha. per 1,000 population.**

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.10 The Borough does not have a locally-developed quantitative standard for parks and gardens and there is no recognised national standard of provision.
- 4.11 Consultation findings on parks and gardens can be found at Appendix 4.
- 4.12 Based on community satisfaction levels, it is considered appropriate to at least maintain current levels of provision. As such, the quantitative standard for parks and gardens is set at **0.73 ha. per 1,000 population.**

Quality

What condition are the sites in?

- 4.13 Quality inspections have been undertaken via a site visit to all 52 parks and gardens in the Borough. The inspections considered the physical, social and aesthetic qualities of each individual site and the assessment proforma for each type was modified according to the type of park or garden in question.
- 4.14 Table 3 shows the average qualitative scores for parks and gardens across the Borough.

Table 3: Quality Ratings for Parks and Gardens

	Range (%)	Average score (%)	Quality Rating
Large Urban and Country Parks	37 - 82	69	Good
Neighbourhood Parks	48- 79	64	Good
Pocket Parks and Recreation Grounds	43- 52	49	Average
Formal Gardens	28 - 94	69	Good
Total	28 - 94	67	Good

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.15 It is considered to be reasonable to expect all parks and gardens to be of a good qualitative standard when assessed against the criteria used in the qualitative assessment of sites. The Council therefore aspire to achieving a minimum of 'Good' quality across all parks and gardens. Such sites will meet the following quality vision:

- A welcoming, well maintained, safe, clean, litter and dog foul free park providing an appropriate range of leisure, recreational and play opportunities for all ages.
- To include formal or boxed lawns and varied and well-kept vegetation including flowers, trees and shrubs.
- This should be combined with appropriate ancillary facilities and furniture (including toilets, benches, cycle parking and litter and dog bins).
- Provision should be made for the disabled allowing adequate access into the site as well as movement within it and use of facilities.
- Seating should be designed so as to accommodate use by disabled people.
- Provision should also be made for effective and good quality signage and interpretation both to and within the park.
- The quality of parks also benefit from Rangers and 'Friends Of' Groups.

Accessibility

Are the sites easy to reach and to use?

4.16 Accessibility has been assessed from the results of consultation:

- Results from respondents to the household survey revealed that the 66% of people surveyed have not made use of a park or garden in the last 4 weeks and of those that have used parks 55% use them at least weekly and 11% at least daily.
- 68% of people using parks and gardens will walk and 31% will access the sites by car.
- The average acceptable travel time is 9 minutes which equates to a distance of 0.72 km, based on an average walking speed of 4.8 km/h.
- The audit revealed that there was scope for more facilities for those with a disability.
- Few sites had lighting provision which potentially restricts usage to daylight hours.

What standard should we be aiming for?

4.17 Taking into account both the consultation exercise and other benchmarks that have been established elsewhere, accessibility standards for parks and gardens have been set in Table 4 and are expressed as maximum distance thresholds. The standards are described as radial i.e. straight line distances.

4.18 The effective catchments derived from consultation, benchmarking and justification for the thresholds below are contained within Appendix 4.

Table 4: Accessibility thresholds for Parks and Gardens

Sub-Typology	Accessibility standard
Large Urban and Country Parks	1,200 m
Neighbourhood Parks	800 m
Pocket Parks and Recreation Grounds	400 m
Formal Gardens	400 m

Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace

- 4.19 Natural and semi-natural green space includes countryside and woodland and green corridors. The sites assessed under this typology are those that are readily recognisable as natural and semi-natural green space and in most cases is specifically managed to serve this purpose. The audit includes both public and private sites which are publically accessible.
- 4.20 A number of sites identified within this typology were formerly 'informal' recreation sites which have been managed to promote wildlife, and countryside recreation. Others are large areas of open countryside with public access via a right of way network, or former disused railway lines that promote countryside recreation and are managed to promote wildlife.
- 4.21 The Borough is fortunate in respect of its location in relation to open countryside and much of this is readily accessible and forms an important asset for informal recreation. The West Pennine Moors is an example of a site which, although not specifically identified under this typology nor in this assessment as a whole, does provide an invaluable and accessible recreational asset. This needs to be borne in mind when assessing the levels of provision covered under this typology.
- 4.22 Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are an important element of accessible natural greenspace. The LNR Project in Bury was initiated through a grant from English Nature's (now Natural England) Wildspace! grant scheme in 2001. The aim of this grant scheme was to encourage local authorities and other organisations to manage and develop LNRs, particularly in areas that lack accessible green space. An essential part of the project is to encourage local communities to take an active interest in the improvement of their environment and its wildlife. Bury's LNR Officer works closely with local community groups to encourage community involvement in local nature reserves and assist these groups in the management of these sites. The LNR designation gives recognition of a site for its importance to wildlife, education and recreational value. There are six adopted LNRs in Bury at the present time, Philips Park, Chesham Woods (Phases 1 and 2), Hollins Vale, Redisher Wood near Holcombe and Kirklees Valley.

Quantity

How much do we have?

- 4.23 The audit has revealed a total of **74 sites** covering a total of **722.55 hectares** of natural and semi-natural greenspace across

the Borough. The sites identified within this typology are set out at Appendix 7. The detailed figures for provision per township area are provided at Appendix 5.

- 4.24 26 of the 74 sites are privately-owned and represent 349.55 hectares which is 48% of the natural and semi-natural greenspace identified in the audit. Of these 26 sites:
- 18 sites are not managed and are 'de-facto' natural greenspace (165.25 hectares);
 - 4 sites are managed by Non Governmental Organisations such as the Lancashire Wildlife Trust and Woodland Trust (56.31 hectares);
 - 4 Sites are managed by the Forestry Commission, predominantly in Prestwich Forest Park (128 hectares).
- 4.25 When comparing the overall provision of 722.55 hectares with the Borough's total population of 185,422, the current Borough-wide provision of natural and semi-natural greenspace is **3.9 Ha. per 1,000 population.**

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.26 The Borough does not currently operate a quantitative standard for natural and semi-natural greenspace. However, in assessing the adequacy of the supply of natural and semi-natural greenspace, consideration has been given to Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) as specified in 'Nature Nearby' and the Woodland Trust's Woodland Access Standard outlined in 'Space for People'. The performance against ANGSt, the Woodland Access Standard and consultation findings on natural and semi-natural greenspace are covered in Appendix 4.
- 4.27 In terms of the actual level of provision of natural and semi-natural green space, the Borough currently has 3.9 Ha. per 1,000 population. Overall, this is considered to be a more than satisfactory level of provision in the context of the Natural England standards.
- 4.28 On the basis of community satisfaction levels, it is considered appropriate to at least maintain the current levels of provision in order to ensure that the natural and semi natural greenspaces continue to contribute to the wider biodiversity agenda and provide continued opportunities for countryside recreation. As such, the quantitative standard for natural and semi-natural greenspace is set at **3.9 Ha. per 1,000 population.**

Quality

What condition are the sites in?

- 4.29 Quality inspections have been undertaken via a site visit to all 74 sites and the completion of a scored proforma. The quality assessment has been based on a non-technical visual assessment completed to rate the quality of a number of key criteria. The criteria used for natural and semi-natural greenspaces are shown at Appendix 4.
- 4.30 Table 5 shows the average qualitative scores for natural and semi-natural greenspaces across the Borough.

Table 5: Quality Ratings for Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces

	Range (%)	Average score (%)	Quality Rating
Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspaces	12 - 59	34	Poor

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.31 It is considered to be reasonable to expect all natural and semi-natural greenspaces to be of a good qualitative standard when assessed against the criteria used in the qualitative assessment of sites. The Council therefore aspire to achieving a minimum of 'Good' quality across all natural and semi-natural greenspaces. Such sites will meet the following quality vision:

- A well maintained, safe, clean and litter-free site with clear pathways and natural features including river valley areas, nature reserves and woodlands that benefit wildlife conservation, biodiversity and raising environmental education awareness and allowing for countryside recreation.
- Access points into such sites should be clear and well maintained and allow for disabled access. Although such sites may not lend themselves to full disabled access, provision should be made for disabled use e.g. a circular route within the site.
- Vegetation should be appropriately maintained and there should be provision for good quality seating, litter and dog bins.
- The site should also be served by adequate car and cycle parking as well as including appropriately surfaced cycle routes, where appropriate.
- Natural and semi-natural greenspaces also benefit from Ranger time and 'Friends Of' Groups.

Accessibility

Are the sites easy to reach and to use?

- 4.32 Accessibility has been assessed from the results of consultation:
- Only 4% of respondents identified using a wild area (countryside and woodland sites) in a four week period
 - 50% of respondents to the survey who use wild areas (countryside and woodland sites) access them at least weekly and walking is the most common means of travel (65%)
 - 70% of respondents walk for an average of 10 minutes and this equates to a distance travelled of 0.8 km.
 - Disabled access is inconsistent and sites lack identified safe routes for people with disabilities.

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.31 Taking into account both the consultation exercise and other benchmarks that have been established elsewhere, the accessibility standard for natural and semi-natural greenspace has been set at **1,200 metres** and is expressed as a maximum distance threshold. The standards are described as radial i.e. straight line distances.
- 4.32 The effective catchment derived from consultation, benchmarking and justification for the final threshold is contained within Appendix 4.

Outdoor Sports

- 4.33 For the purposes of this study, outdoor sports facilities have been sub-divided into the following facilities:
- **Playing Pitches** – provision for Football, Cricket, Rugby and Hockey. Although this study does provide details in terms of the number of pitches available in the Borough, it concentrates on the general area of land set aside as playing pitches rather than providing a detailed analysis of supply based on the specific number of pitches and how this satisfies current and anticipated future demand. This analysis of supply and demand is undertaken as part of Bury's 2009 Sports Pitch Strategy which is a separate document prepared in accordance with Sport England's 'Towards a Level Playing Field' model.
 - **Bowling Greens** - have been assessed separately as discrete sports facilities. Where they are present in parks, bowling greens have formed part of the overall quality score for the facility.
 - **Tennis Courts** - as with Bowling Greens these have been assessed as discrete sports facilities and where they are present in parks, have contributed to the overall score for the park or other typology.
 - **Athletics Tracks** - have been assessed separately.
 - **Golf Courses** - have been assessed on the basis of access and opportunities to play.

Quantity

How much do we have?

- 4.34 The audit has revealed a total of **113 sites** which include an outdoor sports facility with community access covering a total area of **128.19 hectares**. This figure does not include golf courses which have been excluded from the calculations due to their land intensive nature and the disproportionate impact this would have on provision figures. With the additional 305.01 Ha. of golf courses included, outdoor sports provision would equate to a total area of 433.20 hectares.
- 4.35 88 of the 113 sites are dedicated outdoor sports facilities, the remaining being sites under other typologies such as parks and gardens which include sports pitches. Of these 88 sites, 39 are wholly private facilities or are leased from the Council, representing 44% of purpose-built outdoor sports facilities with community access. All 10 golf courses in the Borough are also privately-owned but do not form part of the quantitative figures as described above.

- 4.36 When comparing the 128.19 hectares of outdoor sports with the Borough’s total population of 185,422, the current Borough-wide provision of outdoor sports is **0.69 Ha. per 1,000 population**.
- 4.37 The various types of outdoor sports facility are outlined in brief below and are separated into playing pitches and non-playing pitches. The sites identified within the outdoor sports typology are set out at Appendix 7. The detailed figures for provision per township area are provided at Appendix 5.

Playing Pitches

- 4.38 In Bury, playing pitches comprise specifically delineated areas, together with ‘run-off’, which are used formally for football, rugby, cricket or hockey. Pitches are provided either by the Council’s Leisure Services team, Education Services through community use or by the private or voluntary sector via long-term lease arrangements for self-management by local clubs.
- 4.39 The audit of facilities has revealed that there are currently 174 playing pitches in the Borough which are available for community use. These are summarised in Table 6 in terms of number of sites and level of provision in relation to population for the sub-categories of senior football, junior football, mini football, cricket, rugby and hockey.

Table 6: Quantity of Playing Pitches across the Borough

	No. of pitches	Total area (Ha.)
Senior Football	66	48.28
Junior Football	43	20.27
Mini Football	39	10.50
Cricket	15	22.28
Rugby	7	6.09
Hockey	4	2.58
Total	174	109.99

Non-playing pitches

- 4.40 **Bowling Greens** as sports facilities accommodate a range of formal and casual use. Demand manifests itself through differing uses, such as formal bowling teams using facilities for league games, or for individuals to bowl on a more casual or informal basis.
- 4.41 **Tennis courts** are provided in a variety of settings, including schools, public parks and through private sports clubs. They provide for casual opportunities and formal competitive play. As with bowls, the demand for tennis is varied, ranging from facilities to accommodate formal league matches to casual games between friends and family.

- 4.42 At present, there are two **athletics tracks** within the Borough at Market Street in Bury and Cams Lane in Radcliffe. The specialist nature of these facilities means that they are a Borough-wide facility rather than catering for a specific area of the Borough. As such, it is not considered to be appropriate to break down the level of provision on an area basis.
- 4.43 There are ten **golf courses** located across the Borough providing a range of opportunities for local residents to play golf. The focus of the audit has been on “access” given that in the case of private facilities, supply is often developed to meet a known demand and all sites are of high quality. The golf courses have been omitted from the calculations for outdoor sport on the basis that the size of the sites in relation to participation rates would disproportionately distort the levels of provision for outdoor sport.
- 4.44 The audit has identified a total of the following non-playing pitches across the Borough:
- 43 bowling greens across 35 sites which are currently provided by the Council (Council managed and private greens under self-management) at public facilities such as parks and recreation grounds, and private facilities such as private clubs, public houses and social clubs;
 - 17 sites with 55 tennis courts either via casual access or club membership or formal hire;
 - 2 athletics tracks;
 - 8 golf courses with a further 2 that extend into the Borough at Harwood and Brightmet Golf Clubs. All golf club facilities are private courses and none are Council operated. Golf courses occupy a total of 305.01 hectares across the Borough.
- 4.45 The above non-playing pitches are summarised in Table 7 in terms of number of sites and level of provision in relation to population.

Table 7: Quantity of Non-Playing Pitches across the Borough

	No. of sites	Total area (Ha.)
Bowling Greens*	35 (43)	9.00
Tennis Courts*	17 (55)	3.17
Athletics	2	6.03
Golf Courses	10	305.01
Total	64	323.21

*Number of Greens and Courts shown in brackets.

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.46 Fields in Trust specifies a benchmark standard for outdoor sport in ‘Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play’ of 1.6 hectares per 1,000 population for urban local authorities. Although this standard does not take account of local circumstances, it does, nonetheless, provide a useful benchmark for the provision of outdoor sports.

- 4.47 Consultation findings on outdoor sports can be found at Appendix 4.
- 4.48 On the basis of community views that there are too few outdoor sports facilities across the Borough and given that current levels of provision fall well below the FIT recommendations, it is considered appropriate to identify a quantitative standard that is above current levels of provision. The minimum provision standard has been set at 20% above current provision levels. As such, the quantitative standard for outdoor sports is set at a minimum of **0.83 Ha. per 1,000 population**.

Quality

What condition are the sites in?

Playing pitches

- 4.49 Quality inspections have been undertaken via a site visit to all 174 playing pitch sites in the Borough and the completion of a non-technical visual assessment, using a standard proforma.
- 4.50 Table 8 shows the average qualitative scores for playing pitches across the Borough.

Table 8: Quality Ratings for Playing Pitches

	Range (%)	Average score (%)	Quality Rating
Senior Football	16 - 84	43	Average
Junior Football	14 - 82	36	Poor
Mini Football	16 - 82	49	Average
Cricket	39 - 80	54	Average
Rugby	41 - 85	62	Good
Hockey	62 - 81	71	Good

Non-playing pitches

- 4.51 Quality inspections have been undertaken via a site visit to all 63 non-playing pitch sites in the Borough and the completion of a non-technical visual assessment, using a standard proforma.
- 4.52 Table 9 shows the average qualitative scores for non-playing pitches across the Borough.

Table 9: Quality Ratings for Non-Playing Pitches

	Range (%)	Average score (%)	Quality Rating
Bowling Greens	34 - 83	59	Average
Tennis Courts	51 - 85	69	Good
Athletics	36 - 58	47	Average

What standard should we be aiming for?

4.53 It is considered to be reasonable to expect all outdoor sports facilities to be of a good qualitative standard when assessed against the criteria used in the qualitative assessment of sites. The Council therefore aspire to achieving a minimum of 'Good' quality across all outdoor sports facilities. Such sites will meet the following quality vision:

- A well maintained, safe, clean, litter and dog foul free sports facility which is fit for the purpose intended.
- The site should include sufficient and good quality changing facilities; level, well maintained and well drained grass surfaces; provision of good quality seating, litter bins and appropriate toilets and car parking.
- Provision should also be made for the disabled allowing adequate access into the site as well as movement within it and seating that can accommodate use by disabled people.

Accessibility

Are the sites easy to reach and to use?

Playing pitches

4.53 Accessibility has been assessed from the results of consultation. The key findings show that:

- 1.5% (8) of the respondents to the door to door survey identified using sports pitches in a four week period with 7 of the 8 respondents using them weekly.
- Travel time average was 10 minutes with 37.5 % of respondents walking and 37.5 % driving to access outdoor sports facilities.

4.54 In addition to the above, access to pitch provision is also influenced by a number of other factors and needs to be viewed differently to access factors for more general open space, sport and recreation provision. The following factors need to be considered:

- The need for ancillary facilities, such as changing rooms and car parking to ensure that some league standards are met;
- The level of fees and charges for use of the facility – playing pitches have been assessed from the perspective of being formal sports facilities;
- The demand "unit" is different to that for other typologies. A team may not necessarily comprise of residents from the same locality.

- 4.55 It is important to consider the “spread” and distribution of facilities to ensure that access for local teams is in theory equitable. It is also important to consider the nature and ownership of provision that is available as this can influence access.

Non-playing pitches

- 4.56 A number of factors affect the accessibility of **Bowling Greens**. These include the geographical location of facilities, fees and charges applicable, and in the case of club facilities the membership policy. Other factors, such as the presence of floodlighting, will also have an impact. The key findings in relation to access are:
- Membership policies vary across clubs within the Borough.
 - Access arrangements also vary greatly. Some clubs provide casual use (Mainly those with a self management agreement with the Council). Others require membership.
 - The cost of playing bowls also needs to be considered as a key potential barrier to access. The cost of playing Bowls on a casual basis in Bury ranges from £1.00 per session to £8.00 per session. Seasonal charges also vary significantly, according to the club responses, with costs ranging from £30 per season at Openshaw Park to £360 per season at Manchester Road.
 - The cost of playing Bowls (on public greens) has been compared with other neighbouring authorities. This revealed that fees and charges vary considerably across neighbouring Boroughs.
- 4.57 As with bowling greens, a number of key factors affect access to **tennis courts**. These include location of facilities, marketing and promotion of facilities, hire fees and charges and the membership policies of private clubs. Floodlit tennis courts create opportunities for greater accessibility and training especially in the traditional out of season months. However, the lack of floodlighting in the Borough prevents evening use throughout the year. Private clubs did not provide any information regarding the use of their facilities by the public, although the cost of membership and the selection of members may prove to be barriers that put people off and therefore reduce the opportunities to participate and access tennis locally.
- 4.58 A number of factors affect the accessibility of **athletics tracks** including geographical location, membership policies and the provision of floodlighting.
- 4.59 Access to opportunities to play **golf** has been the focus of the assessment undertaken. Telephone consultation was undertaken with identified Golf Clubs based in Bury in order to ascertain information regarding membership. Despite there being a number of golf courses within the Borough, none of these are owned by the Council and public access is reliant upon the continuation of casual day ticket use. Consultation reveals that the cost of participation,

although varying significantly, is generally high and membership fees would present a barrier to participation for many local people.

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.60 Taking into account both the consultation exercise and other benchmarks that have been established elsewhere, the accessibility standard for outdoor sports has been set at **800 metres** and is expressed as a maximum distance threshold. The standards are described as radial i.e. straight line distances.
- 4.61 The effective catchment derived from consultation, benchmarking and justification for the final threshold is contained within Appendix 4.

Amenity Greenspace

- 4.62 Amenity greenspace is frequently found around housing areas and fulfils a number of functions, including enhancing the appearance of local areas and providing opportunities for informal activities such as jogging, dog walking and informal play. In built up areas, amenity greenspace can also provide space for workers or visitors to eat lunch or go for a walk.
- 4.63 Amenity greenspace can also help reduce noise and generally provide a natural break in the urban street scene. Amenity greenspace sites can be large useful areas, or small parcels of land sporadically scattered within housing estates that are too small to have any recreational value. They may, however, contribute to the overall appeal of an area through adding to the aesthetic quality within housing areas.
- 4.64 Given the different uses and potential purpose of amenity greenspace, sites within this typology have been divided into two categories:
- **Active Amenity Greenspace** – which is considered to fulfil an informal recreational function; and
 - **Passive Amenity Greenspace** – which is considered to be of visual amenity value only and does not fulfil any recreational function.

Quantity

How much do we have?

- 4.65 The audit has revealed a total of **124 sites** covering a total of **93.08 hectares** that have a primary purpose of amenity greenspace across the Borough. Inevitably, other areas of amenity greenspace exist within other typologies of open space, sport and recreation. Table 10 below breaks down this provision into the sub-categories of informal recreation and visual amenity.

Table 10: Quantity of Amenity Greenspace across the Borough

	No. of sites	Total area (Ha.)
Informal Recreation	97	89.44
Visual Amenity	27	3.64
Total	124	93.08

- 4.66 The sites identified within this typology are set out at Appendix 7. The detailed figures for provision per township area are provided at Appendix 5.

4.67 When comparing this with the Borough’s total population of 185,422, the current Borough-wide provision of amenity greenspace is **0.5 ha. per 1,000 population.**

What standard should we be aiming for?

4.68 The Borough does not have a locally-developed quantitative standard for amenity greenspace. However, FIT advise a benchmark standard for informal playing space as part of their overall standard of 0.55 ha. per 1,000 population.

4.69 Consultation findings on amenity greenspace can be found at Appendix 4.

4.70 Based on community satisfaction levels and the FIT guidance, it is considered appropriate to at least maintain current levels of provision. As such, the quantitative standard for amenity greenspace is set at **0.5 ha. per 1,000 population.**

Quality

What condition are the sites in?

4.71 Quality inspections have been undertaken via a site visit to all 124 amenity greenspace sites and the completion of non-technical visual assessment, using a standard proforma.

4.72 Table 11 shows the average qualitative scores for amenity greenspace across the Borough.

Table 11: Quality Ratings for Amenity Greenspace

	Range (%)	Average score (%)	Quality Rating
Informal Recreation	20 - 89	58	Average
Visual Amenity	37 - 86	63	Good
Total	20 - 89	59	Average

What standard should we be aiming for?

4.73 It is considered to be reasonable to expect all amenity greenspaces to be of a good qualitative standard when assessed against the criteria used in the qualitative assessment of sites. The Council therefore aspire to achieving a minimum of ‘Good’ quality across all amenity greenspaces. Such sites will meet the following quality vision:

- Sites should comprise a well maintained area of grass that is free from litter and dog foul and with a sufficient quantity of seating and litter/dog bins to adequately serve the size of site.

- Seating and bins should be maintained to a high standard.
- Provision should also be made for the disabled allowing adequate access into the site as well as movement within it and/seating that can accommodate use by disabled people.

Accessibility

Are the sites easy to reach and to use?

4.74 Accessibility has been assessed from the results of consultation:

- The proportion of residents accessing amenity greenspace is lower than for formal parks and natural greenspace sites. (32% of respondents). For those that do make use of provision, walking is the most common form of travel.
- The average travel time identified was 7 minutes which equates to a travel distance of 0.56 km.

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.75 Taking into account both the consultation exercise and other benchmarks that have been established elsewhere, the accessibility standard for amenity greenspace has been set at **400 metres** and is expressed as a maximum distance threshold. The standards are described as radial i.e. straight line distances.
- 4.76 The effective catchments derived from consultation, benchmarking and justification for the threshold are contained within Appendix 4.

Provision for Children and Young People

- 4.77 Provision for children and young people incorporates equipped play areas and specialist provision for young people, including skate parks and Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs). This typology also includes facilities introduced under the Playbuilder scheme which incorporate more natural forms of play.
- 4.78 The provision of facilities for children and young people is important in facilitating opportunities for physical activity and the development of movement and social skills.

Quantity

How much do we have?

- 4.79 Provision for children and young people is made on either dedicated play areas or within other typologies, such as within a park.
- 4.80 The audit has revealed a total of **97** separate play facilities for children and young people covering **11.47** hectares.
- 4.81 There are 35 play facilities on 31 dedicated sites covering a total of 4.58 hectares that have a primary purpose as provision for children and young people across the Borough.
- 4.82 There are a further 62 play facilities that exist within other typologies, primarily parks and gardens, which account for 6.89 hectares.
- 4.83 Table 12 below breaks down this provision into the sub-categories of equipped play areas, MUGAs and skate parks. For the purposes of this assessment, it is considered that children's provision (i.e. equipped play areas) is intended to cater for children up to the age of 9. Youth provision (i.e. MUGAs and skate parks) is considered to cater for the 10–19 age group. This is reflected in the quantitative analysis of provision per 1,000 population which has utilised the respective populations for each age group.

Table 12: Quantity of Provision for Children and Young People

	Population	No.	Area (Ha.)
Equipped Play Areas	23,454	67	8.77
MUGAs	22,959	26	2.25
Skate Parks		4	0.46
Total	46,413	97	11.47

- 4.84 The sites identified within this typology are set out at Appendix 7. The detailed figures for provision per township area are provided at Appendix 5.
- 4.85 When comparing this with the Borough’s total child population aged 0-19 of 46,413, the current Borough-wide provision for children and young people is **0.25 Ha. per 1,000 population**.

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.86 The Borough does not have a quantitative standard specifically for the provision of facilities for children and young people. However, FIT recommend a quantity benchmark standard of 0.8 hectares per 1,000 population for total children’s play space, of which around 0.25 hectares should be designated or equipped play space and 0.55 hectares should be informal playing space. The latter extends beyond the scope of this study’s definition of provision for children and young people which covers equipped areas of play only and does not extend to informal recreational areas which fall under the amenity greenspace typology.
- 4.87 Consultation findings on provision for children and young people can be found at Appendix 4.
- 4.88 Community views in 2006 concluded that there were too few play facilities across the Borough, although 10 additional facilities have been added since as part of the Playbuilder initiative. As such, in accordance with the FIT benchmark, the quantitative standard for provision for children and young people is set at **0.25 Ha. per 1,000 population**.

Quality

What condition are the sites in?

- 4.89 The quality of provision for children and young people has been assessed via site visits to all 97 facilities and the completion of a non-technical visual assessment, using a standard proforma.
- 4.90 Table 13 shows the average qualitative scores for the provision for children and young people across the Borough.

Table 13: Quality Ratings for Provision for Children and Young People

	Range (%)	Average score (%)	Quality Rating
Equipped Play Areas	20 - 89	71	Good
MUGAs	35 - 82	61	Good
Skate Parks	52 - 82	60	Good

What standard should we be aiming for?

4.91 It is considered to be reasonable to expect all provision for children and young people to be of a good qualitative standard when assessed against the criteria used in the qualitative assessment of sites. The Council therefore aspire to achieving a minimum of 'Good' quality across all provision for children and young people. Such sites will meet the following quality vision:

Children's Provision

- A site providing a clean, well-maintained and enriched play environment which is free from litter and vandalism.
- The site should contain a variety of equipment tailored to meet the needs of children and should allow opportunities for innovative and challenging play.
- Sites should be in a safe and secure location near to housing or on a multi-purpose site.
- Disabled children and parents/carers with buggies should be able to access and use the play facility as much as non-disabled children.
- Seating for supervising adults should be provided as should litter and dog bins.

Young People's Provision

- Provision for young people (including multi-use games areas and skate parks) should be clean, well-maintained and provide a varied environment appropriate to the needs of young people which is free from litter and vandalism.
- The site should include shelter and seating tailored to meet the needs of young people of varying ages.
- The site should be in a safe and secure location near to housing or on a multi purpose site.
- Young disabled people should be able to access and use the facility as much as non-disabled children.

Accessibility

Are the sites easy to reach and to use?

4.92 Access to play provision is influenced by a number of key factors. These include:

- Geographical location and proximity to key residential areas;
- The appropriateness of facilities provided and target user group; and
- External factors such as community safety.

- 4.93 Only 2.3% of the respondents to the door-to-door survey identified visiting a children's play area once in a four week period and of those respondents 58% use them on a weekly basis.
- 4.94 The mode of travel is equally split 50-50 between walking and driving.
- 4.95 The average travel time to access provision for young people is 8 minutes by foot. This equates to a travel distance from home of 0.64 km.

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.96 Taking into account both the consultation exercise and other benchmarks that have been established elsewhere, the accessibility standard for children and young people has been set at **400 metres** and is expressed as a maximum distance threshold. The standards are described as radial i.e. straight line distances.
- 4.97 The effective catchments derived from consultation, benchmarking and justification for the final thresholds below is contained within Appendix 4.

Allotments

- 4.98 Allotments provide a key type of provision within the overall portfolio of open space, sport and recreation facilities. From the consultation undertaken, the value of allotments is significant, providing facilities for physical activity in addition to the promotion of healthy eating and educational value. The provision of allotments is a statutory function for local authorities under a number of legislative acts including the 1950 Allotment Act.

Quantity

How much do we have?

- 4.99 The audit has revealed that there are currently **30 active allotment sites** occupying a total of **16.23 hectares** and including **603 separate plots**. The sites identified within this typology are set out at Appendix 7. The detailed figures for provision per township area are provided at Appendix 5.
- 4.100 22 of the 30 sites are Council-owned and represent 546 plots. Of these 22 Council sites, 14 sites (349 plots) are self-managed by an allotment association, totalling 63%.
- 4.101 When comparing the total 603 plots with the Borough's total population of 185,422, the current Borough-wide provision of allotment plots is **3.25 plots per 1,000 population**.

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.102 The Borough does not have a quantitative standard specifically for allotments and there is no recognised national standard of provision.
- 4.103 Consultation findings on allotments can be found at Appendix 4.
- 4.104 Based on the results of consultation with Allotment Societies and information held by the Council in terms of the levels of demand and whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate this demand, it is considered appropriate to increase the current minimum level of provision by 20%. As such, the quantitative standard for allotments is set at **3.9 plots per 1,000 population**.

Quality

What condition are the sites in?

- 4.105 Quality inspections have been undertaken via a site visit and completion of a scored proforma. The quality assessment has been based on a non-technical visual assessment completed to rate the

quality of a number of key criteria. The criteria used for allotments are shown at Appendix 4.

4.106 Table 14 shows the average qualitative scores for allotments across the Borough.

Table 14: Quality Ratings for Allotments

	Range (%)	Average score (%)	Quality Rating
Allotments	8 - 90	48	Average

What standard should we be aiming for?

4.107 It is considered to be reasonable to expect all allotments to be of a good qualitative standard when assessed against the criteria used in the qualitative assessment of sites. The Council therefore aspire to achieving a minimum of 'Good' quality across all allotments. Such sites will meet the following quality vision:

- A clean, secure and well-maintained site with good quality soils which provides people with the opportunity to grow their own produce and encourages biodiversity, healthy living and education.
- Sites should include a water supply, signage and information boards.
- Sites should include an appropriate range of ancillary facilities, such as composting bins, meeting room and toilets.
- Provision should also be made for the disabled allowing adequate access into the site as well as movement within it and use of the site itself.
- The site should be served by appropriate car parking.

Accessibility

Are the sites easy to reach and to use?

4.108 A number of key considerations have been made in assessing access to allotments. These have included; the cost of renting an allotment; physical access, particularly for those with a disability; marketing and promotion of sites; location of facilities; range of services provided; availability of plots. These considerations are reviewed in Appendix 4.

What standard should we be aiming for?

4.109 Taking into account both the consultation exercise and other benchmarks that have been established elsewhere, accessibility standards for allotments have been set at **1,200 metres** and is

expressed as a maximum distance threshold. The standards are described as radial i.e. straight line distances.

4.110 The justification for the final threshold is contained within Appendix 4.

Cemeteries and Churchyards

4.110 Cemeteries and churchyards have an amenity value as people will use them to walk through and could be said to have green infrastructure benefits as their peaceful nature and minimal disruption is advantageous for wildlife and biodiversity as well as for the general public. Often flora and fauna can flourish in these conditions as they are relatively undisturbed compared to more intensively used environments.

Quantity

How much do we have?

4.111 The audit has revealed a total of **28 sites** covering a total of **45.62 hectares** of cemeteries and churchyards across the Borough. Table 15 below breaks down this provision into the separate sub-categories of cemeteries and churchyards.

Table 15: Quantity of Cemeteries and Churchyards across the Borough

	No. of sites	Total area (Ha.)
Cemeteries	3	28.22
Churchyards	25	17.39
Total	28	45.62

4.112 The sites identified within this typology are set out at Appendix 7. The detailed figures for provision per township area are provided at Appendix 5.

4.113 Of the 28.2 hectares of cemeteries in the Borough, Bury Cemetery covers 20.5 hectares. The need for burial grounds and new burial spaces is dependant on site capacity and the gradual need for more space when the capacity of remaining sites is exhausted. As at 2010, Bury and Ramsbottom cemeteries had over 50 years capacity at the current level of demand, although Radcliffe's capacity stood at 11 years⁴. The need to monitor population estimates is necessary as this could give an indication of demand depending on whether an area has an ageing population or not. In the case of Bury, population forecasts show there is set to be significant rise in the number of older people over the next 20 years, with the population aged 65 and over projected to increase by 47.9% from mid-2012 to mid-2035 (from 33,012 in 2012 to 48,835 in 2035)⁵.

4.114 When comparing this with the Borough's total population of 185,422, the current Borough-wide provision of cemeteries and churchyards is **0.25 ha. per 1,000 population**.

⁴ Source: Bury Council Bereavement Services, 2010.

⁵ ONS 2011-based population projections.

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.115 There are currently no national or local quantitative standards for the provision of cemeteries and churchyards.
- 4.116 There is little opportunity to have a strategic influence over cemeteries and churchyards and therefore no quantitative standard is to be set, however existing cemeteries and churchyards should be protected to ensure that their value to people is maintained, to provide areas of biodiversity and contribute to the green infrastructure of the Borough.

Quality

What condition are the sites in?

- 4.117 Quality inspections have been undertaken via a site visit to all 28 cemeteries and churchyards and the completion of a non-technical visual assessment, using a standard proforma.
- 4.118 Table 16 shows the average qualitative scores for cemeteries and churchyards across the Borough.

Table 16: Quality Ratings for Cemeteries and Churchyards

	Range (%)	Average score (%)	Quality Rating
Cemeteries	90 - 96	94	Excellent
Churchyards	38 - 92	58	Average
Total	38 - 96	68	Good

What standard should we be aiming for?

- 4.119 It is considered to be reasonable to expect all cemeteries and churchyards to be of a good qualitative standard when assessed against the criteria used in the qualitative assessment of sites. The Council therefore aspire to achieving a minimum of 'Good' quality across all cemeteries and churchyards. Such sites will meet the following quality vision:

- A clean and well-maintained site with adequate information for visitors, and graves and surfaces that are in good condition.
- Sites should comprise a well maintained area of grass that is free from litter and dog foul and with a sufficient quantity of seating and litter bins to adequately serve the size of site.
- Seating and bins should be maintained to an adequate standard.

- Provision should also be made for the disabled allowing adequate access into the site as well as movement within it and/seating that can accommodate use by disabled people.

4.120 Aside from their primary purpose, it is also important to note that cemeteries and churchyards bring wider benefits to local areas including cultural and landscape value as greenspaces, as well as ecological diversity.

Accessibility

4.121 There are no definitive local or national standards for accessibility of cemeteries and churchyards.

4.122 There is little opportunity to have a strategic influence over cemeteries and churchyards and therefore no accessibility standard is to be set, however existing cemeteries and churchyards should be protected to ensure that their value to people is maintained, to provide areas of biodiversity and contribute to the green infrastructure of the Borough.

Civic Spaces

4.123 Civic spaces are focal points for interaction and are usually provided within town centres and adjacent key landmarks to enhance their setting. Many of the civic spaces within the Borough are utilised for open air markets and other events and therefore attract a high number of visitors. Due to their accessible location it is likely that they are visited as part of an associated trip, for example to visit heritage assets, take part in leisure activities or use shops and services.

Quantity

How much do we have?

4.124 The audit has revealed a total of **9 sites** covering a total of **1.25 hectares** of civic spaces across the Borough. The sites identified within this typology are set out at Appendix 7. The detailed figures for provision per township area are provided at Appendix 5.

4.125 When comparing this with the Borough's total population of 185,422, the current Borough-wide provision of civic spaces is **0.01 Ha. per 1,000 population**.

What standard should we be aiming for?

4.126 There are currently no national or local quantitative standards for the provision of civic spaces.

Quality

What condition are the sites in?

4.127 Quality inspections have been undertaken via a site visit to all 9 civic spaces and the completion of a non-technical visual assessment, using a standard proforma.

4.128 Table 17 shows the average qualitative scores for civic spaces across the Borough.

Table 17: Quality Ratings for Civic Spaces

	Range (%)	Average score (%)	Quality Rating
Civic spaces	63 - 89	77	Good

What standard should we be aiming for?

4.129 It is considered to be reasonable to expect all civic spaces to be of a good qualitative standard when assessed against the criteria used in the qualitative assessment of sites. The Council therefore aspire to achieving a minimum of 'Good' quality across all civic spaces. Such sites will meet the following quality vision:

- A well-maintained, safe, clean, litter-free site with hard landscaped surfaces using imaginative materials in good condition.
- Where soft landscape elements are present, these should include flower beds, planters, trees, grassed areas and shrubs that are well-kept and integral to the overall design of the space.
- Where public art, monuments or other key focal points are present these should be in good condition and integral to the overall design of the space.
- This should be combined with appropriate additional street furniture that enhances the quality and function of the site for users (including seating opportunities, bins, lighting, bollards, fencing and cycle parking).
- Provision should be made for allowing disabled people adequate access into the site as well as movement within it and use of facilities.
- Seating should be designed so as to accommodate use by disabled people.
- Where appropriate provision should also be made for effective and good quality signage and interpretation within the site.

Accessibility

4.130 There are no definitive local or national standards for accessibility of civic spaces.

5 Analysis of Provision

- 5.1 This chapter compares the standards set for quantity, quality and accessibility in Chapter 4 with the existing levels of provision which were recorded in the audit on a township-by-township basis. This allows us to identify the areas where there may be deficiencies in how much open space, sport and recreation we have, the condition of these sites, and how easy it is to travel to them.
- 5.2 Appendix 6 includes tables and graphs which illustrate how the spatial distribution of each typology varies against each of the quantitative standards.

Quantity

- 5.3 Provision levels can vary within the Borough both in terms of typology and on a spatial basis. Table 18 sets out the quantitative standards for each typology and assesses the existing level of provision within each of the six townships of the Borough against the standards that have been previously set. The table is colour-coded to reflect the acuteness of the excess or deficiency of provision.
- 5.4 It should be noted that where a township is shown to have a quantitative excess of one typology, **this should not be seen as justification for disposal** but could indicate an opportunity to adapt sites in order to address deficiencies in other typologies within local areas.
- 5.5 In addition, the standards outlined in Table 18 are **set as a minimum for future provision**. Current excesses could also play an important role in meeting future demand, particularly given that the Borough's population is forecast to increase in coming years.

Quality

- 5.6 Chapter 4 identifies the minimum qualitative standards for all typologies of open space, sport and recreation. This requirement, as a minimum, is to achieve good quality sites across all typologies. Table 19 sets out the average quality for each typology and compares this with the qualitative standards that have been set. The table is colour-coded to reflect the acuteness of the qualitative issues.
- 5.7 In seeking to address any qualitative issues that may exist, it will be necessary to prioritise those individual sites that scored the lowest in terms of quality. **It is important to note that the assessments are merely a 'snap shot' of the perceived quality of the site on the day of the survey in 2012. Since**

that time, quality may have changed as a result of refurbishment or, conversely, through deterioration.

Accessibility

- 5.8 As stated in Chapter 4, the consultation exercise from 2006 together with comparable benchmarking has enabled the establishment of maximum distance thresholds that residents can reasonably be expected to travel to various types of open space, sport and recreational facilities.
- 5.9 The setting of accessibility standards allows for the subsequent identification of areas where there is a deficiency of particular types of open space, sport and recreation. This information is derived by plotting the straight-line distance threshold as a radius around the site. Any gaps in coverage would suggest that these areas are unable to access provision within the identified distance threshold.
- 5.10 Appendix 8 contains plans for each of the various typologies showing the respective accessibility threshold around each site and highlighting areas where there is deficient access (see Plans 9 to 14).
- 5.11 This is a non-complex approach towards identifying areas of the Borough that are without ready access to particular facilities. However, it should be noted that, even areas that sit within the identified distance thresholds, there may be instances where physical barriers (such as rivers, canals or motorways) can preclude ready access to sites and this needs to be considered in assessing whether areas have acceptable access to sites.
- 5.12 When areas of deficiency are identified, this may suggest the need for additional provision to meet the needs of those residents that do not have adequate access to open space, sport and recreation facilities. However, alternatives to new provision may, for example, include:
- Arranging for public use of private facilities;
 - Organising dual use of school playing fields; or
 - Changing the use of a specific typology of which there is an excessive supply to the typology for which there is inadequate access.
- 5.13 Table 21 highlights the specific neighbourhoods that are showing a deficiency in terms of access to various typologies.
- 5.14 It can be seen from Tables 18 and 19 that there are a number of notable features in terms of the quantity and quality of open space, sport and recreational facilities across the Borough. Table 20 summarises these for each township. Appendix 6 provides more detailed analysis of the performance against standards.

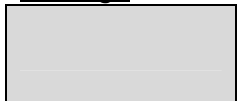
Table 18: Comparison of Existing Quantitative Provision against Minimum Quantitative Standards

	Population (aged 0-19 in brackets)		Parks and Gardens (Ha.)	Natural and Semi- Natural Greenspace (Ha.)	Outdoor Sports (Ha.)	Amenity Greenspace (Ha.)	Provision for Children and Young People (Ha.)	Allotments (plots)
Provision Standard per 1,000 population			0.73	3.90	0.83	0.5	0.25	3.9
Ramsbottom, Tottington and North Manor	31,363 (7,290)	Required	22.77	122.21	26.02	15.74	1.80	122
		Existing	23.43	131.53	23.33	19.36	2.45	126
		Balance	+0.66	+9.31	-2.69	+3.61	+0.65	+4
Bury West	21,843 (5,038)	Required	15.86	85.12	18.12	10.96	1.25	85
		Existing	34.14	38.01	11.07	3.10	0.90	67
		Balance	+18.28	-47.10	-7.05	-7.86	-0.35	-18
Bury East	34,178 (9,193)	Required	24.81	133.18	28.35	17.16	2.27	133
		Existing	40.96	57.46	36.54	8.49	1.42	86
		Balance	+16.15	-75.73	+8.19	-8.67	-0.85	-47
Radcliffe	33,673 (8,554)	Required	24.44	131.22	27.94	16.90	2.11	131
		Existing	18.89	183.86	23.16	28.21	1.56	31
		Balance	-5.55	+52.65	-4.78	+11.31	-0.56	-100

	Population (aged 0-19 in brackets)		Parks and Gardens (Ha.)	Natural and Semi- Natural Greenespace (Ha.)	Outdoor Sports (Ha.)	Amenity Greenespace (Ha.)	Provision for Children and Young People (Ha.)	Allotments (plots)
Provision Standard per 1,000 population			0.73	3.90	0.83	0.5	0.25	3.9
Whitefield and Unsworth	29,986 (7,117)	Required	21.77	116.85	24.88	15.05	1.76	117
		Existing	6.38	118.89	17.61	26.73	3.39	81
		Balance	-15.39	+2.04	-7.27	+11.67	+1.63	-36
Prestwich	34,379 (9,221)	Required	24.96	133.97	28.52	17.26	2.28	134
		Existing	10.80	192.80	16.50	7.20	1.76	212
		Balance	-14.15	+58.83	-12.02	-10.06	-0.52	+78

Key

Average



+/- 1 Ha. or +/-
1 allotment plot

Excess

SLIGHT
SIGNIFICANT
MAJOR

1.01 to 10 Ha. or 1 to 10
allotment plots

10.01 Ha. to 50 Ha. or 11 to 50
allotment plots

50.01 Ha. + or 51+ allotment
plots

Deficiency

SLIGHT
SIGNIFICANT
MAJOR

1.01 to 10 Ha. or 1 to 10 allotment
plots

10.01 Ha. to 50 Ha. or 11 to 50
allotment plots

50.01 Ha. + or 51+ allotment
plots

Table 19: Summary of Qualitative Assessment and Comparison with Minimum Qualitative Standards

	Parks and Gardens	Natural/ Semi-Natural Green-space	Playing Pitches	Bowling Greens	Tennis Courts	Amenity Green Space	Equipped Play Areas	MUGAs	Skate Parks	Allotments	Cemeteries/ Churchyards	Civic Spaces
RAM	64%	35%	52%	64%	68%	56%	74%	62%	82%	37%	68%	75%
BUR W	56%	31%	40%	56%	74%	64%	70%	61%	N/A	90%	N/A	63%
BUR E	79%	34%	55%	55%	64%	57%	70%	69%	53%	48%	60%	79%
RAD	65%	34%	50%	64%	75%	60%	69%	53%	52%	39%	74%	86%
WFD	63%	33%	49%	66%	64%	63%	76%	57%	N/A	53%	69%	N/A
PRE	58%	39%	48%	46%	75%	54%	65%	67%	53%	64%	57%	79%

0 to 19%	20 to 39%	40 to 59%	60 to 79%	80+%
Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
Extensively Below Minimum Standard	Significantly Below Minimum Standard	Below Minimum Standard	Meets Minimum Standard	Exceeds Minimum Standard

Table 20: Key issues for quantity and quality across each Township

	Quantity	Quality
RAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Slight deficiency in outdoor sports provision (-2.69 Ha.). ▪ Parks and gardens (+0.66 Ha.) and provision for children and young people (+0.65 Ha) are roughly in line with the standard. ▪ Slight excess in natural and semi-natural greenspace (+9.31 Ha.), amenity greenspace (+3.61 Ha.) and allotment provision (+4 plots). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural and semi-natural greenspace and allotment provision are rated as 'poor' quality and are significantly below the minimum qualitative standard. ▪ Playing pitches (52%) and amenity greenspace (56%) are just below the minimum qualitative standard. ▪ Skate parks in this area are rated as 'excellent' overall. ▪ Other than the above, the average quality of other open space, sports and recreation facilities meet the minimum qualitative standard of 'good'.
BUR W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Significant deficiency in natural and semi-natural greenspace (-47.10 Ha.) and allotments (-18 plots). ▪ Provision for children and young people (-0.35 Ha.) is roughly in line with the standard. ▪ Slight deficiency in outdoor sports provision (-7.05 Ha.) and amenity greenspace (-7.86 Ha.) ▪ Significant excess in parks and gardens (+18.28 Ha.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural and semi-natural greenspace is rated as 'poor' quality and is significantly below the minimum qualitative standard. ▪ Parks and gardens, playing pitches and bowling greens are below the minimum qualitative standard. ▪ Allotments in this area are rated as 'excellent' overall. ▪ Other than the above, the average quality of other open space, sports and recreation facilities meet the minimum qualitative standard of 'good'.
BUR E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Major deficiency in natural and semi-natural greenspace (-75.73 Ha.). ▪ Significant deficiency in allotments (-47 plots). ▪ Provision for children and young people (-0.85 Ha.) is roughly in line with standard. ▪ Slight excess in outdoor sports provision (+8.19 Ha.). ▪ Significant excess in parks and gardens (+16.15 Ha.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural and semi-natural greenspace is rated as 'poor' quality and is significantly below the minimum qualitative standard. ▪ Playing pitches, bowling greens, amenity greenspace, skate parks and allotments are below the minimum qualitative standard. ▪ Other than the above, the average quality of other open space, sports and recreation facilities meet the minimum qualitative standard of 'good'.

	Quantity	Quality
RAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Major deficiency in allotments (-100 plots). ▪ Slight deficiency in parks and gardens (-5.55 Ha.) and outdoor sports provision (-4.78 Ha.). ▪ Provision for children and young people (-0.56 Ha.) is roughly in line with standard. ▪ Significant excess in amenity greenspace (+11.31 Ha.). ▪ Significant excess in natural and semi-natural greenspace (+52.65 Ha.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural and semi-natural greenspace and allotment provision are rated as 'poor' quality and are significantly below the minimum qualitative standard. ▪ Playing pitches, MUGAs and skate parks are below the minimum qualitative standard. ▪ Other than the above, the average quality of other open space, sports and recreation facilities meet the minimum qualitative standard of 'good'.
WFD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Significant deficiency in parks and gardens (-15.39 Ha.) and allotments (36 plots). ▪ Slight deficiency in outdoor sports provision (-7.27 Ha.). ▪ Slight excess in natural and semi-natural greenspace (+2.04 Ha.) and provision for children and young people (+1.63 Ha.). ▪ Significant excess in amenity greenspace (+11.67 Ha.). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural and semi-natural greenspace is rated as 'poor' quality and is significantly below the minimum qualitative standard. ▪ Playing pitches, MUGAs and allotments are below the minimum qualitative standard. ▪ Other than the above, the average quality of other open space, sports and recreation facilities meet the minimum qualitative standard of 'good'.
PRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Significant deficiency in parks and gardens (-14.15 Ha.), outdoor sports provision (-12.02 Ha.) and amenity greenspace (-10.06 Ha.). ▪ Provision for children and young people is roughly in line with standard (-0.52 Ha.). ▪ Major excess in natural and semi-natural greenspace (+58.83 Ha.) and allotment plots (+78 plots). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Natural and semi-natural greenspace is rated as 'poor' quality and is significantly below the minimum qualitative standard. ▪ Tennis courts, equipped play areas, MUGAs, allotments and civic spaces all meet the minimum qualitative standard of 'good'. ▪ Other than the above, the average quality of other open space, sports and recreation facilities are below the minimum qualitative standard.

Table 21: Identification of Neighbourhoods with Access Deficiencies

	Parks and Gardens	Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace	Outdoor Sports	Amenity Greenspace	Provision for Children and Young People	Allotments
Threshold	400 m – 1,200 m	1,200 m	800 m	400 m	400 m	1,200 m
RAM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shuttleworth • Holcombe • Hawkshaw • Summerseat • Nangreaves • Scobell St 	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shuttleworth • Nangreaves • Affetside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holcombe • Hazelhurst • Nuttall • Holcombe Brook (west) • Hawkshaw • Summerseat (north) • Baldingstone • Tottington • Hawkshaw • Bolholt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shuttleworth • Ramsbottom • Hazelhurst • Nuttall • Affetside • Holcombe Brook • Summerseat (east) • Walshaw • Bolholt • Mather Road area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hawkshaw • Affetside • Holcombe Brook (east) • Summerseat • Baldingstone • Walmersley
BUR W	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lowercroft • Seddons Farm (west) 	None	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woolfold • Elton • Seddons Farm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woolfold • Brandlesholme (south) • Lowercroft • Seddons Farm (west) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brandlesholme (north) • Lowercroft • Seddons Farm (west)
BUR E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jericho • Redvales 	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jericho • Fairfield (east) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chesham (north) • Jericho • Fairfield • Wash Lane area • Pimhole • Manchester Old Road area • Gigg Lane area • Blackford Bridge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limefield (west) • Chesham (east) • Freetown (north) • Jericho • Redvales • Radcliffe Road area • Dumers Lane (east) • Gigg Lane area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jericho (east) • Manchester Road area • Fishpool/Gigg Lane • Redvales • Dumers Lane (east)

	Parks and Gardens	Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace	Outdoor Sports	Amenity Greenspace	Provision for Children and Young People	Allotments
RAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bradley Fold • Cemetery Road area • Outwood 	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starling Road area • Stopes Road area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starling Road area • Bury Road area • Dumers Lane area • Radcliffe New Road/ Nipper Lane area • Chapelfield • Outwood Road (south) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ainsworth (east) • Starling Road area • Grindsbrook Road area • Bradley Fold • Cemetery Road area • Cross Lane area • Greendale Drive area • Outwood 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ainsworth • Starling Road area • Bradley Fold • Outwood Road area/Outwood
WFD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hollins • Unsworth (north) • Sunny Bank • Mersey Drive area • Oak Lane/Thatch Leach Lane area • Stand 	None	None	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand (east) • Pinfold Lane/ Moss Lane area • Hollins • Unsworth (south) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand (north and west) • Sunny Bank (west) • Lily Hill (west) • Unsworth (north) • Parr Lane area • Mersey Drive area • Ribble Drive area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stand • Hollins • Unsworth (north)
PRE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simister • Kirkhams • Rainsough • Sheepfoot Lane area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middleton Road area • Sheepfoot Lane area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simister • Sheepfoot Lane area (east) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Butterstile Lane area • Bury New Road • Hilton Lane • Sedgley Park • Heywood Road area • Polefield/Kirkhams • Sheepfoot Lane area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • M60 Junc 17 area • Prestwich village • Heys Road/ Heywood Road area • Polefield • Simister (east) • Middleton Road area • Prestwich Hills • Hilton Road area • Sedgley Park • Sheepfoot Lane area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rainsough • Sheepfoot Lane area (east) • Middleton Road area

6 Strategy

- 6.1 As referenced in Chapter 1, the two drivers for this report are to meet national requirements for open, space, sport and recreation in the NPPF and PPG17 Companion Guide, and to help direct monies towards areas in need of new or enhanced facilities.
- 6.2 The NPPF requires local authorities to use the outcomes of the Audit to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is required. This chapter is a key part of the report as it pulls out the main themes from the findings of the audit in Chapter 5, sets them within the local context in Bury and the challenges and opportunities which the Borough faces, and outlines a strategy for how the Council intends to act on these findings.
- 6.3 Before each typology of open space, sport and recreation is considered in detail and objectives are set out going forward, any strategy needs to be placed within a context which will underpin its principles and actions. This chapter will firstly take a step back and look at the strategic aims of the Council for preserving and improving our recreational facilities and for addressing health inequalities, drawing upon evidence in Appendices 1 to 3.

Our challenges

Acquiring, improving and maintaining recreational facilities

- 6.4 The Council, through the 'Plan for Change', has had to make unprecedented savings to its budget in response to funding reductions by Government, with cuts expected to rise to £54 million by the end of 2016, which represents nearly 50% of its controllable budget. This has required a review of the ways in which the Council continues to deliver its services and fulfil its legal duties. In turn, this has had an impact on the Operations Team of the Council in terms of their ability to divert resources towards maintaining and improving open space, sport and recreation facilities around the Borough.
- 6.5 External funding sources and opportunities for leasing arrangements from partner organisations are often key drivers for making improvements, although these have also depleted due to the economic climate. Therefore, it is clear that the Council will not be in a position to be an enabler of creating new or upgrading existing facilities like in the past. The Council is unlikely to acquire new sites for recreational use and will not be in a position to maintain a regular programme of improvements but will enhance poorly-performing sites wherever possible through the use of developer contributions.

- 6.6 The Operations Team will need to rationalise their maintenance arrangements and therefore work with community groups will become ever more crucial as the Council hope to move to a self-management model for some sites for greater community ownership.



Addressing health inequalities

- 6.7 A key ambition in the Council’s Community Strategy is for Bury to become the ‘Healthiest Borough in the North West’ by 2025. Childhood obesity in Bury is in line with the national average for children aged 4-5 years old and levels are increasing, whilst the proportion of adults that are smokers in the Borough exceeds the national level. In response, the Council and its partners have produced or are preparing a number of strategies to help tackle these problems:

- **Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy** – This sets a five-year vision for improving health and wellbeing, highlighting the importance of greenspace in improving mental health and prioritising healthy lifestyles in all actions and activities. The role of access to greenspaces is noted as an important factor in helping to build strong communities, wellbeing and mental health.
- **Healthy Weight Strategy** – The aim of this strategy is to empower the people of Bury to maintain a healthy weight through positive behaviour change such as eating healthily, and taking part in regular physical activity.
- **Sport and Physical Activity Strategy** – This document when completed in Autumn 2015 will aim to address the

challenges and effects of inactivity encouraging local communities to live more active lifestyles through regular participation. The delivery of this aim is seen as a shared responsibility including agencies other than the Council and the focus will be on the solutions that have the greatest impact and on those with the greatest need.

- **Township Plans** – These provide an essential focus to the work of the Borough's six Township Forums and 'improving health and wellbeing' features as a key priority within each Township Plan. The key outcomes of each Township Plan of relevance to the strategy are outlined later in this chapter.

Community safety

- 6.8 Green spaces can be popular places for their tranquillity and sense of seclusion from everyday life. However, as in many parts of the country, these qualities can be exploited by small sections of the community, causing disturbances for the majority. Parks and gardens provide a key role in bringing people together through sporting activities and community events, but in some cases have been known to be 'hotspots' for incidents of anti-social behaviour, although this has largely been addressed in partnership with local bodies and residents.
- 6.9 Bury's natural greenspace corridors are popular recreational routes for walkers and cyclists traversing the Borough, although this accessibility and the lack of natural surveillance can be used to ill-effect by some users. Offenders have been known on some occasions to use trails as a means of escape in the aftermath of committing a crime, and the Council can take preventative measures on the advice of the Police where projects are planned such as the planting of hawthorn hedges adjacent properties as a deterrent. There have also been isolated incidents of routes being used for tipping, quad biking, dumping of abandoned cars and instances of graffiti, usually at weekends or in late Summer. Cemeteries have also been targeted occasionally by groups committing anti-social behaviour, which has resulted in damage to gravestones.
- 6.10 These are not widespread problems, although Greater Manchester Police and Bury Council nonetheless work in collaboration to take action against the causes of crime and anti-social behaviour. The role of our recreation spaces in this is important, as well-designed spaces can reduce the fear of crime, thereby increasing usage and enabling everyone to make the most of them.

Restoring biodiversity

- 6.11 Our green spaces provide habitats for wildlife, can enhance biodiversity and give the chance for people to experience and appreciate nature. Nationally, biodiversity is declining and action

needs to be taken to ensure that impacts on biodiversity from development are minimised and net gains are provided where possible. Ecological Enhancement Areas have been identified in the submitted Core Strategy chiefly at Holcombe Moor and along the Irwell Valley which aim to restore habitats such as acid grassland, broadleaved woodland and great crested newts where opportunities arise.

Combating the effects of climate change

- 6.12 Climate change is an international threat, and the NPPF encourages authorities to move towards a low carbon future by adopting proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to its effects. Green spaces are the 'green lungs' which absorb pollutants, process carbon dioxide and provide natural drainage systems to reduce flooding. The challenge is to design green spaces so as to meet these functions.

Our opportunities

- 6.13 Despite the above challenges there is much to be positive about, including the following initiatives and success stories taking place in the Borough:

Green Flag winning parks

- 6.14 In August 2014, Bury achieved the Green Flag award from Keep Britain Tidy for 12 of its main parks for the 5th year running, an accolade that recognises well-maintained and well-managed parks with excellent community involvement. The parks are as follows:

Ramsbottom, Tottington & North Manor	Nuttall Park, Town Meadow Park.
Bury West	Burrs Country Park, Whitehead Park.
Bury East	Clarence Park, Hoyles Park, Manchester Road Park and Openshaw Park.
Radcliffe	Bolton Road Park, Close Park.
Whitefield and Unsworth	Whitefield Park.
Prestwich	St. Mary's Park.

- 6.14 Close Park in Radcliffe has retained the rating for 11 years and a further seven parks have been successful for 10 years.

New 'Playbuilder' facilities

- 6.15 £10,000 of funding was obtained from The Big Lottery and the Department of Children, Schools and Families in 2008 for an initial four-year programme known as 'Playbuilder', aimed at providing a catalyst to change the focus of play design within the Borough. The ethos was to create imaginative community playspaces where children have access to natural elements and are encouraged to take acceptable risks, learning to manage risks for themselves in the process.
- 6.16 24 Playbuilder installations were originally approved, although only 16 were built before funding was discontinued by the Government in the 3rd year of the programme. Of the 16 sites, 10 are new facilities and 6 represent enhancements of existing facilities.



Community Involvement

- 6.17 Bury has an extensive network of community groups and volunteer groups with people who help out with a range of activities on parks and countryside sites and in connection with floral displays for 'Bury In Bloom'.
- 6.18 The Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) Project in Bury has been instrumental in providing opportunities for communities to take an interest in improving their local environment and its wildlife. The project was initiated through a Wildspace! grant scheme from Natural England in 2001 and was aimed at encouraging local authorities to manage and develop LNRs in areas that lack accessible green space.
- 6.19 Community groups, schools and local residents gather for volunteer workdays and take part in practical activities such as laying hedges and planting trees alongside Council officers and representatives

from The Conservation Volunteers (TCV). New community groups have formed and continue to form as a result of this project; particularly at established sites such as Chapelfield which are proposed as future LNR designations (see Appendices 4 and 8).

- 6.20 With the aid of Big Lottery funding, the Council has worked with five communities within deprived neighbourhoods in Bury East, Radcliffe and Whitefield since 2009 as part of the Bury Accessible Natural Greenspace (BANG) project to help introduce residents to the health benefits of being outdoors and involve them in improving sites for wildlife. As part of this initiative, 'Green Gym' sessions have been organised to engage volunteers in maintaining woodlands whilst allowing improvements to health and wellbeing.
- 6.21 A number of 'Friends' groups have been set up to maintain and support parks and countryside sites around the Borough, and in March 2013 the Bury Parks and Open Spaces Users Forum was formally established to act as an umbrella organisation for such voluntary and non-profit community groups in the area. There are also active 'Incredible Edible' groups in Ramsbottom, Tottington and Prestwich where the local community grow their own food on dedicated plots within parks and other public open space, sport and recreation facilities.
- 6.22 This resource is invaluable and will become more important going forward. Interestingly, the Plan for Change consultation revealed that the wider public were of the opinion that allowing the self-management of sports facilities by the community would be a popular option should changes need to be made to reduce costs.

Taking direct action to improve health

- 6.23 As a result of measures implemented from the 2012 Health and Social Care Act, Bury now has a Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Bury Public Health is now part of the Council within Knowsley Place. This has resulted in a more joined-up approach and an example of this is the collaboration of the Council and Public Health in helping to protect young children from the harmful effects of smoking. In November 2012, signs were placed in play areas within parks to discourage parents from smoking whilst their child is playing. A partnership approach such as this is promising as the future of our green infrastructure will be informed by shared priorities and allows the Council to make more sustainable choices.



'I Will If You Will' campaign

- 6.24 In May 2013, Bury was unveiled by Sport England as the chosen location for a 12-month behaviour change programme to get more women and girls active and participating in sport. The campaign, branded as 'I Will If You Will', has been highly successful in its first phase, to the extent that Sport England announced in January 2015 that the project will receive a further £2 million of National Lottery funding as part of a 2-year extension to the programme.
- 6.25 There is currently a gender gap at the national level with two million fewer women than men participating in sport regularly. To date, the pilot has benefited more than 6,500 women and girls as part of nearly 25,000 activity sessions and awarded almost £35,000 of funding to local groups. This funding is to be backed by significant capital investment in new facilities for table tennis, outdoor gyms, athletics, tennis and netball courts within parks. Further details of the facilities are provided later within this chapter.
- 6.26 The vision for phase two of I Will If You Will is 'To increase women and girls participation in sport and physical activity as a lever for change, bringing benefits to women and girls, their families and the wider community'. The programme will see a Council-wide approach, bringing together a range of departments, services and agencies to achieve long-term goals of changing the culture within Bury to make sport and physical activity the social norm, and contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of local residents.
- 6.27 The I Will If You Will programme will be closely aligned with Sport England's new national campaign 'This Girl Can' which it is hoped will break down barriers that stop women and girls playing sport and being physically active.

Our approach



- 6.28 The Borough is blessed with a wealth of open space, sport and recreation facilities with access to wider countryside beyond via the West Pennine Moors and through the principal river valleys of the Irwell and the Roch, providing a valuable resource to local residents as well as visitors. Collectively, this represents the wider framework for Bury's 'Green Infrastructure' which has a vital role to play in addressing climate change, supporting urban regeneration, enhancing health and wellbeing and promoting sustainable development.
- 6.29 As well as open space, sport and recreation facilities within Bury, residents benefit from provision in neighbouring authorities with large sites in close proximity to the Borough boundary, such as Heaton Park in Manchester.
- 6.30 Despite this resource, the Audit has revealed that, when compared with required levels of provision, there are a number of areas with **deficits in open space, sport and recreation** both in terms of **how much we have (the quantity)** and **what condition it is in (the quality)**. Some neighbourhoods are beyond a reasonable distance from these sites and so **have difficulties reaching them (the accessibility)**. There are also areas which perform well against national provision standards.
- 6.31 The role of the strategy is therefore to take note of the findings of the Audit, consider whether there are any fundamental issues to address and highlight the methods by which the Council will endeavour to deal with them. The starting point will be to **protect sites identified in this Audit under planning designations in the Local Plan** and to **maintain sites** as far as is possible, although the Council will also **seek opportunities to attract**

investment by improving existing and providing new sites, the key mechanism being Section 106 contributions from developers of housing schemes. In seeking improvements, those **areas with severe problems of health deprivation will be targeted** to help deliver the objectives of supporting Public Health strategies.

- 6.32 Some of the shortfalls identified are markedly below the standards we have set in this report for some types of open space in certain Townships. In line with the aim in Chapter 1, and due to the funding constraints outlined, those **deficiencies in Townships highlighted as being 'significant' or 'major' in Chapter 5 will primarily be the Council's focus** via funding streams and developer contributions to help secure new or enhanced provision.
- 6.33 There may be occasions where it can be proved that sites are no longer required for recreational use. The NPPF affords protection to sites identified in this audit although it also states that any assessment must clearly demonstrate a site is surplus to requirements before it can be considered for other uses. There are important issues to resolve in terms of achieving the right balance of green spaces in the Borough before any disposal is contemplated, and it is once again emphasised that **the standards set in this report are minimum standards and therefore any excesses in provision will not necessarily justify disposal of sites.** Should the Council consider any sites for disposal, this report and other relevant supporting strategies will be consulted as part of any decision.
- 6.34 As highlighted in the challenges and opportunities shown earlier in this chapter, the Council have an important role in delivering open space, sport and recreation facilities, although our role may move from that of 'deliverer' to 'facilitator'. **The Council will therefore seek to work with community organisations to make local decisions about how facilities and services will be maintained.**

6.35 The aims of this Greenspace Strategy are therefore to:

PROTECT our open space, sport and recreation provision guided by national planning policy, the Local Plan and evidence in supporting audits and strategies.

- *Our parks and gardens, natural/semi-natural greenspace and amenity greenspace are particularly important in providing a range of functions and helping to serve areas deficient in other types of recreation.*

ENHANCE our existing sites, and **PROVIDE NEW** facilities using Section 106 contributions for recreation and via external funding mechanisms where possible.

- *For enhancement, the Council will endeavour to focus on those sites scoring as 'Poor' and 'Very Poor' in the quality assessment (see Appendix 9) where opportunities arise.*
- *For new provision, the focus will be the 'significant' and 'major' deficiencies in quantity, subject to the typology strategies on pages 62 to 79 (see 'Priorities for investment').*

MAINTAIN Council-owned sites as far as operational resources will allow.

ALLOCATE AND DESIGNATE sites and areas for recreational use for protection and enhancement through the Local Plan process including a Strategic Green Infrastructure network.

PROMOTE COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP in helping to protect, enhance and maintain sites.

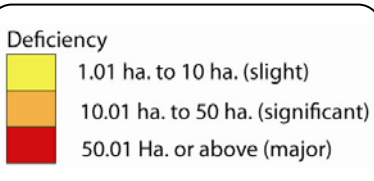
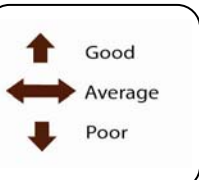

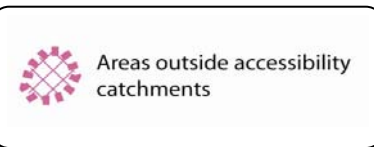
- *Council services are expected to be much reduced due to budget constraints and in line with the Council's 'Plan for Change', which means that the reliance on these services will need to change. The community groups that currently play a pivotal role in managing and maintaining parks, countryside and allotment sites around the Borough are invaluable and this will need to continue and expand in coverage across more sites if current standards are to be upheld.*

PRIORITISE DEPRIVED AREAS with acute health problems.

- *The Council will work with partners in Public Health and the Health and Wellbeing Board to act on the findings of this report and on the recommendations of supporting strategies where appropriate.*

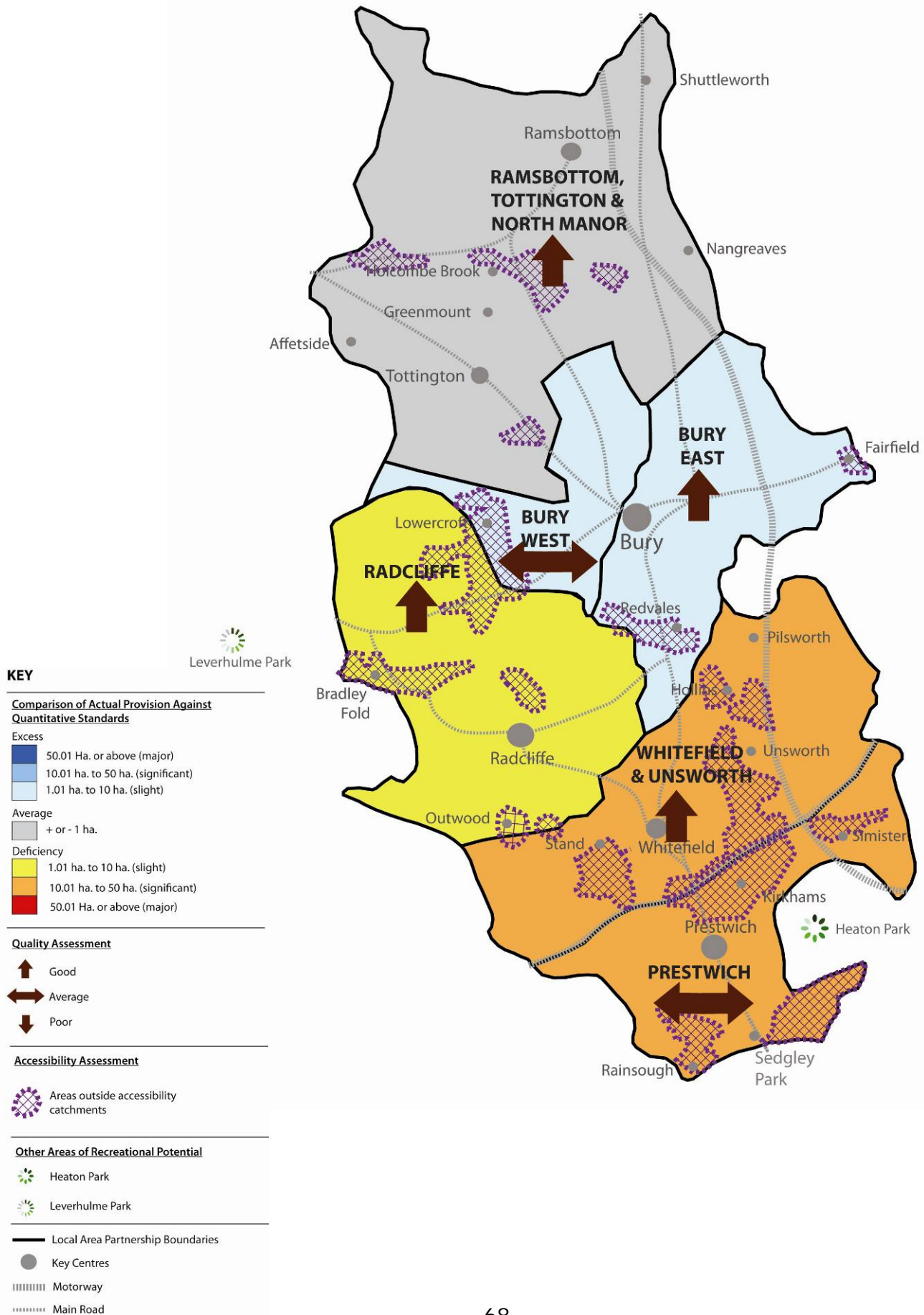
How will the key issues be tackled?

- 6.36 Over the following pages, Figures 2 to 7 comprise maps which combine the findings for quantity, quality and accessibility outlined in Chapter 5 to help uncover the headline themes across the Borough for six of the eight typologies covered in the audit. Adjacent to these outputs, a consideration of the highlights, emerging issues and planned interventions for each type of open space, sport and recreation is set out along with a number of objectives showing how the Council intend to act on these findings.
- 6.37 Quantitative and accessibility standards were not set for civic spaces and cemeteries/churchyards and therefore there are no such maps for these typologies, however an overview and commentary on the quality assessment is provided. The distribution of these sites can be found in Appendix 8.

Using the strategy maps (Figures 2 to 7)	
<i>For the quantitative results:</i>	<p>Deficiency</p>  <p>1.01 ha. to 10 ha. (slight) 10.01 ha. to 50 ha. (significant) 50.01 Ha. or above (major)</p>
<p>The colour shading of the Townships represent the degree of variance between the quantitative standard and the actual level of quantitative provision i.e. the 'balance' from Table 18 and uses the same colour code from this table e.g. red for a major deficiency.</p>	
<i>For the qualitative results:</i>	<p>Quality Assessment Legend:</p>  <p>Good Average Poor</p> <p>Sub-typologies Legend:</p>  <p>Playing Pitches Bowling Greens Tennis Courts</p>
<p>The arrows reflect the overall outcome of the quality assessment for each Township, derived from Table 19. An upward arrow is 'Good', a downward arrow is 'Poor' and a horizontal arrow represents an 'Average' score.</p> <p>For outdoor sports and provision for children and young people, a number of different coloured arrows are used to show the sub-typologies such as bowling greens and skate parks.</p>	
<i>For the accessibility results:</i>	<p>Accessibility Legend:</p>  <p>Areas outside accessibility catchments</p>
<p>The hatched areas show those neighbourhoods which have difficulties accessing open spaces and are currently situated beyond the distance thresholds identified in Chapter 4 and Appendix 8. These areas are also listed at Table 21 and are meant to be indicative, showing only those areas with resident populations outside of the thresholds.</p>	

PARKS AND GARDENS	
Please refer to Figure 2 opposite.	
Highlights	Commentary
The quality standard has been met for much of the Borough.	Quality is generally good across the Borough with the 2 'average'-rated Townships within 5% of the minimum standard of 'Good'. The 12 Green Flag parks are examples of good practice with at least one located in each of the six Townships (see Objectives PG1 and PG2). A third of the award-winning parks are located a short distance from the town centre within Bury East.
Central and northern areas meet or surpass the quantity expected.	
Very few access problems around Bury's urban area.	
Bury East in particular performs well for quantity of parks and gardens, condition of sites (Good) and in accessibility terms.	
Issues	Commentary
Significant deficiencies in the south of the Borough.	The close proximity of Whitefield/ Unsworth and Prestwich to Heaton Park, one of the largest municipal parks in Europe would appear to negate the need to create new provision in the south of the Borough. Other parks in Bury West and Bury East are easily accessible by public transport. The spine of the access deficiency in Whitefield and Unsworth is along Parr Brook which is served by a network of amenity greenspace and natural sites that fulfil some functions of a park and garden. The areas in Radcliffe, particularly at Bradley Fold are well-served by Leverhulme Park in Bolton. However, should there be opportunities to provide off-site provision of parks and gardens in areas with access deficiencies these will be explored further.
Access deficiencies in outlying areas. Much of the M60 corridor is beyond the recommended distance away from a park or garden.	
Priorities for investment via funding /developer contributions	
→ New provision in areas with poor accessibility.	
Planned interventions	
Under the 'I Will If You Will' campaign the following activities will be added to the Green Flag parks: → 3 outdoor gyms (in addition to the facility at Close Park in Radcliffe). → 24 refurbished tennis courts on 10 sites. → Table tennis equipment on 4 sites – will result in 6 tables per Township. → 6 netball courts marked out on existing tennis courts with moveable posts → 3 new netball courts marked out with fixed posts. → 3-2-1 marked running or jogging routes on 4 parks provided by Run England.	
Objectives	
PG1: <i>To protect the Green Flag award-winning parks from development and to maintain as examples of good practice, on which amenity space-deficient areas depend.</i>	
PG2: <i>To develop long-term development plans for Burrs Country Park and Philips Park.</i>	
PG3: <i>To continue to operate anti-smoking policy aimed at parents with children within Green Flag park play areas with the use of signage.</i>	
PG4: <i>To work with voluntary groups including 'Friends of' to encourage community ownership of parks and gardens.</i>	
NS2: <i>To explore options for creation of natural areas within large parks and amenity sites.</i>	

Figure 2: Key audit findings for Parks and Gardens



NATURAL & SEMI-NATURAL GREENSPACE Please refer to **Figure 3** opposite.

Highlights	Commentary
All townships outside Bury West and Bury East have considerable levels of provision, particularly Radcliffe and Prestwich.	Much of the neighbourhoods outside Bury town centre, particularly in the Radcliffe and Prestwich areas have ready access to open countryside within easy walking distance, and Ramsbottom/Tottington is bordered by the West Pennine Moors which comprises 90 square miles of open access moorland.

Very few pockets of access deficiency at edges of Borough.	Application of 'ANGSt' and the Woodland Access Standard (see Appendix 4) has also revealed that residents in the Borough are never too far away from accessible natural greenspace and woodland sites of varying sizes.
--	---

Issues	Commentary
Quality is a significant problem for this typology, as all townships are rated as 'Poor'.	The overall quality ratings reveal that some sites may be in need of investment, although due to their character it can be challenging to find opportunities for improvement which do not erode their 'natural' feel. The audit revealed that just under half of these sites are privately-owned and therefore there is less scope to take action on these sites. However, the audit has found 18 sites where interventions could be made should there be opportunities to do so, 11 of which are Council-owned and these will be prioritised using Section 106 contributions from developers, along with those sites generally performing below required standards (see Objective NS1). £1.5 million has been procured for enhancing key greenways in the Borough's Green Infrastructure network at Woolfold, Outwood and Chamberhall and this will also help to raise standards. Community involvement at natural and semi-natural greenspace sites is at a high level for a number of sites and is pivotal in maintaining standards (see Objective NS2).

Quantitative deficiencies around Bury town centre, mostly in Bury East.	Opportunities for new provision are limited around Bury town centre and the inner urban areas, therefore consideration may be given to the provision of natural areas within existing larger parks and amenity greenspace sites (see Objective NS3). Whilst the Townships themselves may have lower quantities of this typology, these areas have easy access to key green infrastructure corridors such as the Kirklees Trail and the Manchester, Bury and Bolton Canal.
---	---

Priorities for investment via funding / developer contributions

- **New provision** in Bury West and Bury East.
- **Enhanced provision** in all Townships across the Borough.

Planned interventions

- Local Nature Reserve designations planned for Kirklees Valley Phase 2, Parr Brook and Chapelfield.
- 3-2-1 marked running or jogging routes on 3 sites provided by Run England.

Objectives

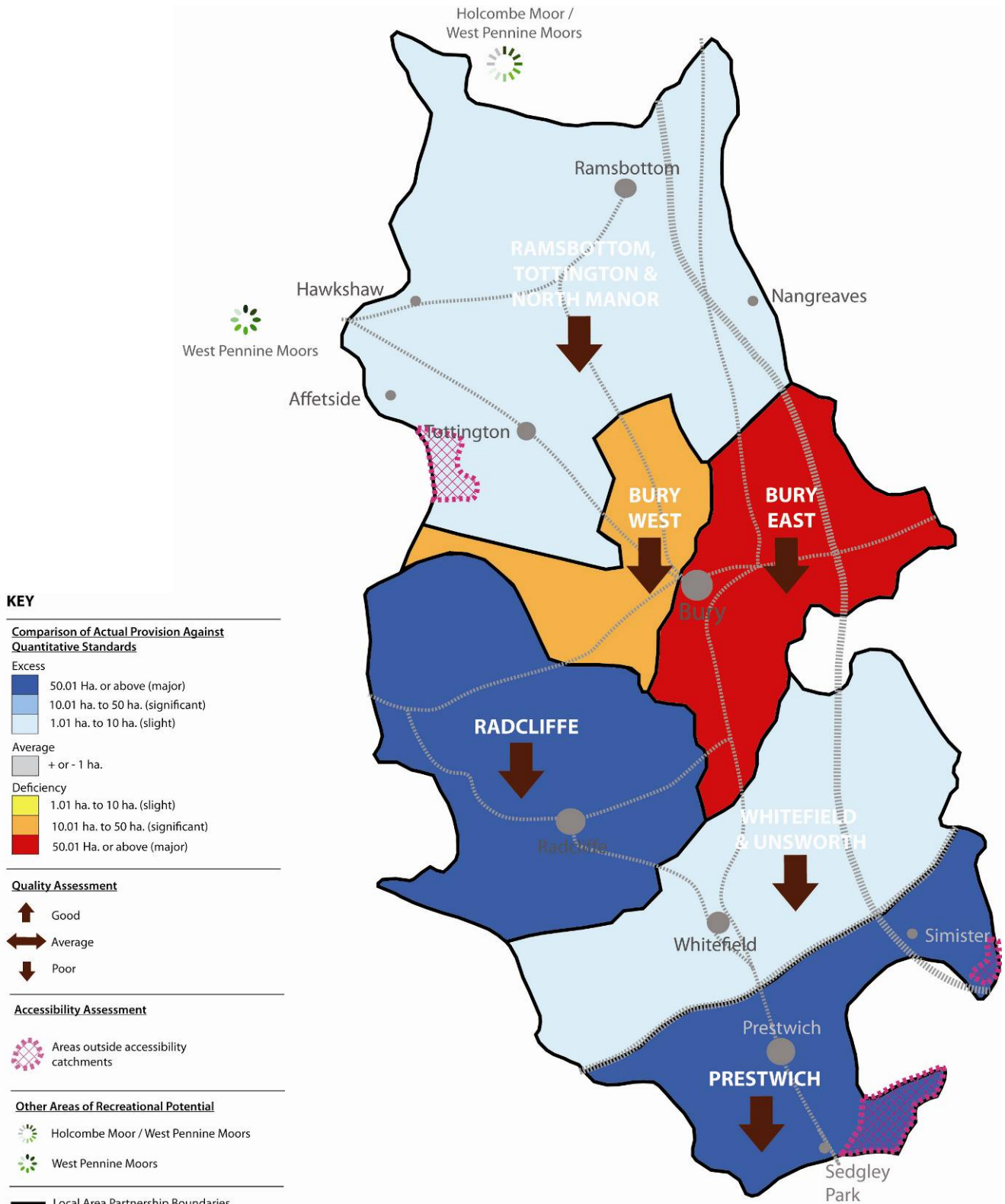
NS1: *To prioritise natural and semi-natural greenspace sites which were identified by the audit as (i) scoring 'Poor' or Very Poor' (see Appendix 9) and (ii) having potential for improved recreation and access for enhancement using Section 106 contributions.*

NS2: *Work with voluntary groups to encourage community ownership of natural and semi-natural greenspace sites.*

NS3: *To explore options for creation of natural areas within large parks and amenity greenspaces.*

NS4: *To liaise with the Council's Community Safety Team and Greater Manchester Police regarding relevant applications involving new natural greenspace projects.*

Figure 3: Key audit findings for Natural and Semi-Natural Greenspace



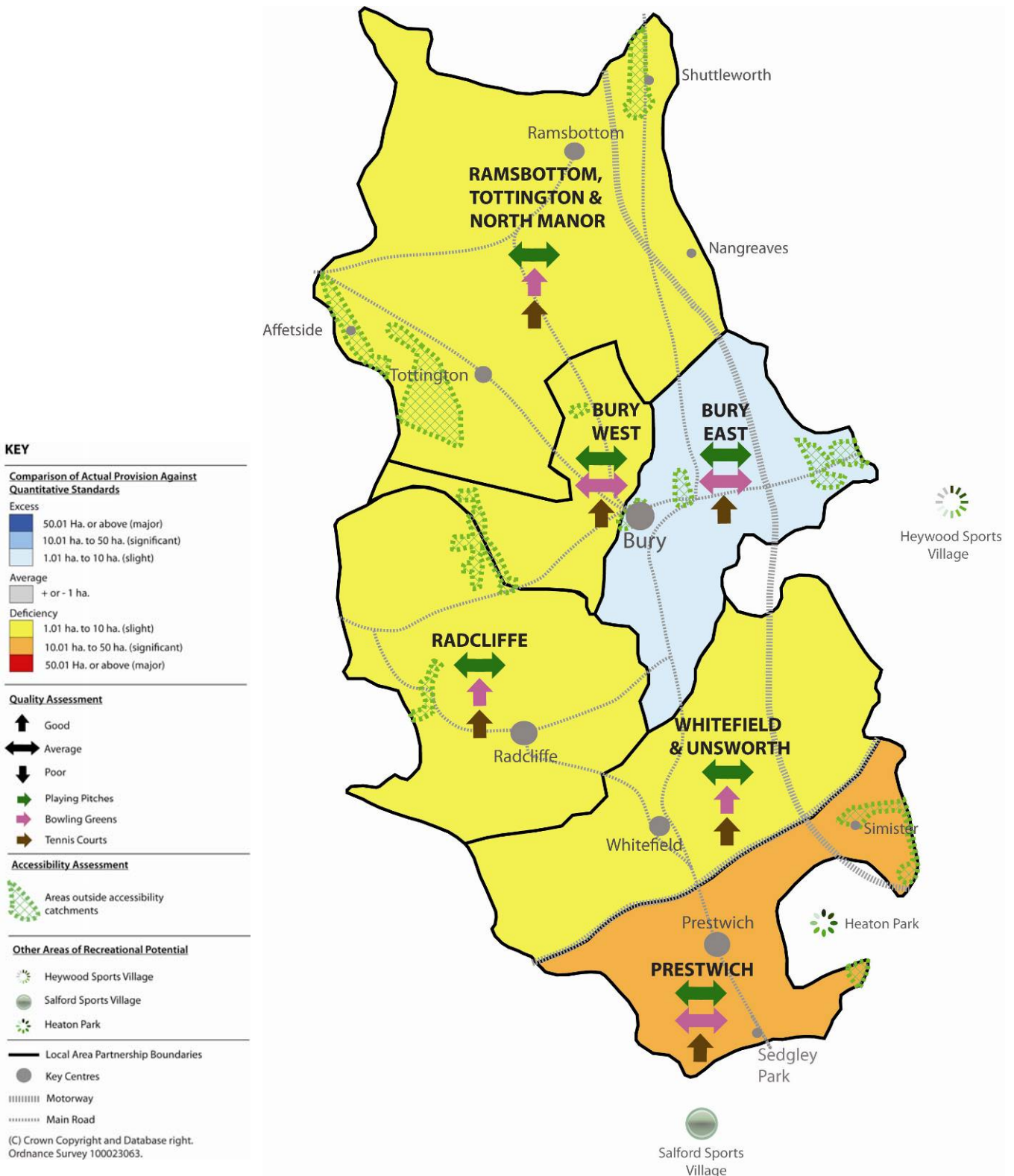
(C) Crown Copyright and Database right. Ordnance Survey 100023063.

OUTDOOR SPORT	
Please refer to Figure 4 opposite.	
Highlights	Commentary
The quality of outdoor sports facilities overall is 'average' or above, with no townships scoring as 'poor' or 'very poor'.	Outdoor sports facilities perform well in terms of quality, and there is now an opportunity to improve them further, particularly those within Green Flag parks, as part of the 'I Will If You Will' campaign. Many playing pitches are located within parks and at schools and colleges, with a significant proportion of these occurring around the town centre in Bury East, such as Bury College's Play Football facility which has 8 mini-football pitches.
All tennis courts are of 'good' quality overall.	
Bury East exceeds the quantity levels required.	
Issues	Commentary
Slight shortfalls in quantity for all Townships other than Bury East, significantly so for Prestwich.	The playing pitches which are included in the survey are only those which are available for community use. Due to the fluctuation in availability and the costs of playing it is not considered that the 'slight' shortfalls are generally a priority to be addressed, however Section 106 contributions will be diverted towards off-site provision where possible, particularly at Prestwich where the deficiency is more significant. The Council's Sports Pitch Strategy revealed a number of deficiencies in pitch numbers, particularly for football, cricket and rugby, based on the supply and demand analysis of Sport England's Playing Pitch Model. The Council will continue to use the findings of the strategy when deciding applications involving loss of or additional playing pitch provision (see Objective OS1). Many areas of the Prestwich Township are within a reasonable distance of Salford Sports Village at Lower Kersal near Rainsough just beyond the Borough boundary which has 3G and astroturf pitches of all sizes. Additional high-quality sports facilities are also provided at Heaton Park and there are proposals to enhance this further with a soccer centre complex.
Large areas outside of the accessibility threshold in the Tottington and Radcliffe areas and in the east of the Borough.	The access-deficient areas in Bury East are within 3 miles of Heywood Sports Village, opened in 2010, which has outdoor artificial turf pitches for a variety of team sports. However, it is proposed to increase the number of pitches in community use in these areas to improve availability (see Objective OS1).
Priorities for investment via funding / developer contributions	
→ New provision in Prestwich and in areas of poor accessibility across the Borough.	
Planned interventions	
Under the 'I Will If You Will' campaign the following activities will be added to the Green Flag parks:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → 3 outdoor gyms (in addition to the facility at Close Park in Radcliffe). → 24 refurbished tennis courts on 10 sites. → Table tennis equipment on 4 sites – will result in 6 tables per Township. → 6 netball courts marked out on existing tennis courts with moveable posts. → 3 new netball courts marked out with fixed posts. → 3-2-1 marked running or jogging routes on 4 parks provided by Run England. 	

Objectives

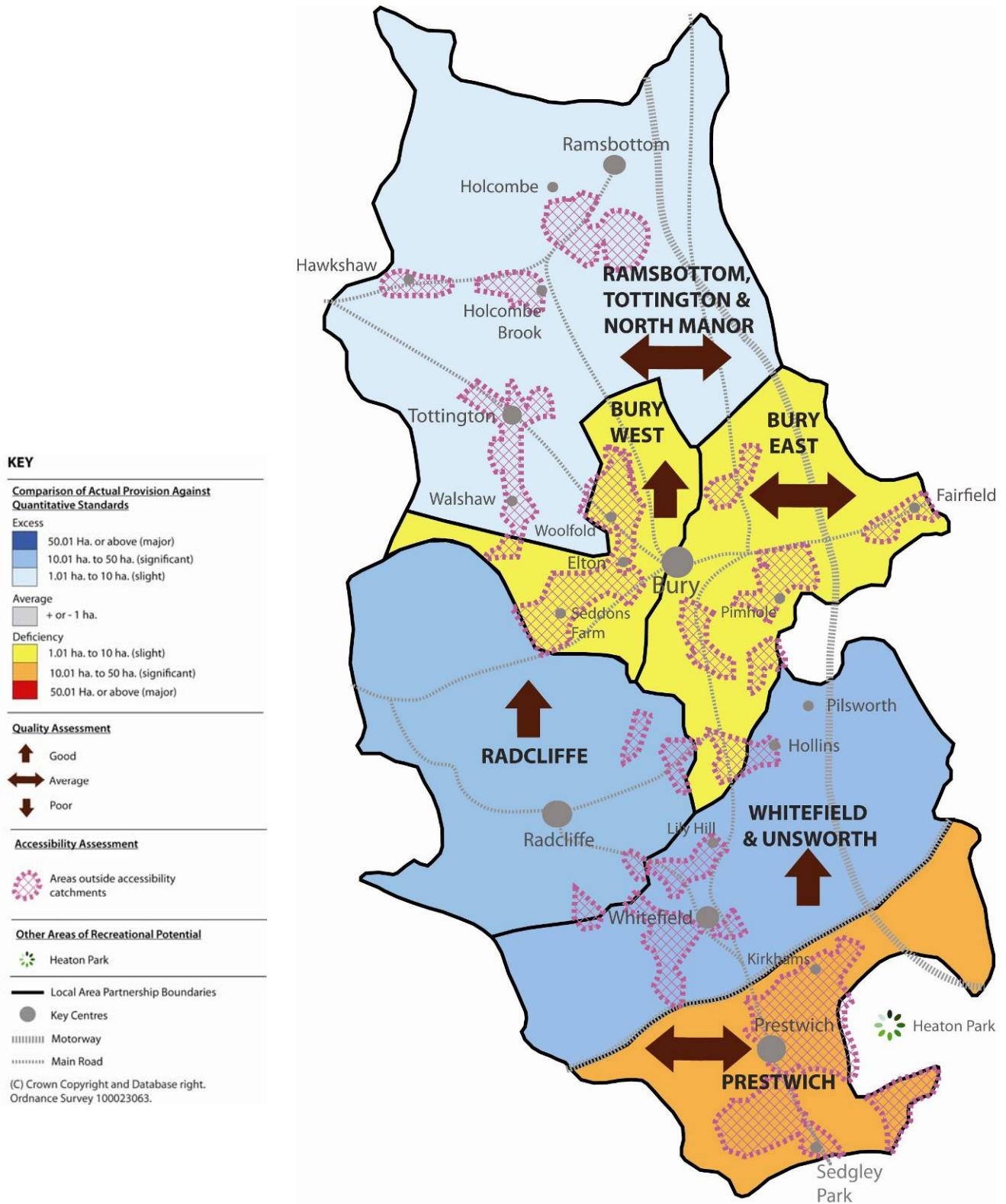
OS1: To help implement the objectives of the Sports Pitch Strategy including the aims of meeting deficiencies in junior and mini pitches, supporting private clubs to develop their facilities and to encourage greater community use of pitches at schools, particularly in the Radcliffe and Tootington areas.

Figure 4: Key audit findings for Outdoor Sports



AMENITY GREENSPACE		Please refer to Figure 5 opposite.
Highlights	Commentary	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality is either 'Good' or 'Average' across the Borough. • The majority of the Radcliffe Township has more than enough amenity space in quantity terms which is scored as 'good' quality and has no problems with accessibility. 	<p>This reflects the excellent work of the Operations Team in maintaining sites, however there will be fewer resources to carry out work in these areas in the future.</p> <p>The quality rating for amenity greenspace in Radcliffe and Whitefield/Unsworth is even more noteworthy given the large quantity of sites within the residential estates of these Townships.</p>	
Issues	Commentary	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pockets of access deficiency in every Township covering most urban areas in the Borough. • Significant quantitative deficiency of sites which score as 'average' quality in Prestwich, and half of the Township are located beyond the recommended distance of these sites. 	<p>The accessibility deficiency findings initially appear to present a major Borough-wide issue, however it is less of a problem when comparing this with the quantity of provision. Bury West, Bury East and Prestwich are below the required levels and therefore these Townships should be the priority for new provision where possible (see Objective AG1). However, it should be noted that for most communities in Prestwich, Heaton Park satisfies any demand for recreation.</p>	
Priorities for investment via funding / developer contributions		
→ New provision in Bury West, Bury East and Prestwich.		
Planned interventions		
N/A		
Objectives		
AG1: <i>To seek on-site provision of amenity greenspace as part of new housing developments in Bury West, Bury East and Prestwich to address access deficiencies where appropriate.</i>		
AG2: <i>To protect key amenity greenspace sites which act as a community hub and provide opportunities for informal play in areas with a deficiency in provision for children and young people.</i>		
PG1: <i>To protect the Green-Flag award-winning parks from development and to maintain as examples of good practice, on which amenity space-deficient areas depend.</i>		
NS1: <i>To explore options for creation of natural areas within large parks and amenity sites.</i>		

Figure 5: Key audit findings for Amenity Greenspace

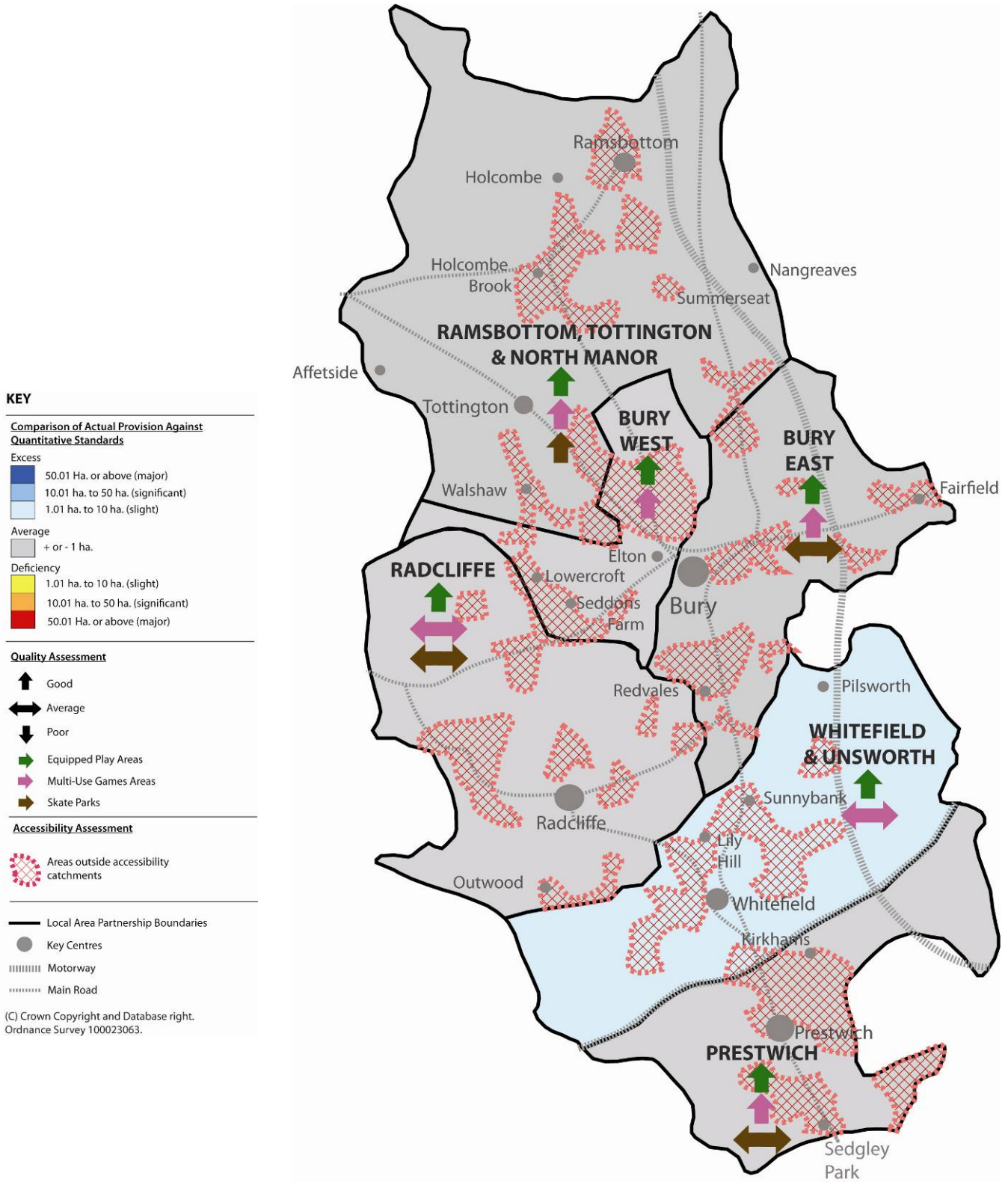


PROVISION FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Please refer to **Figure 6** opposite.

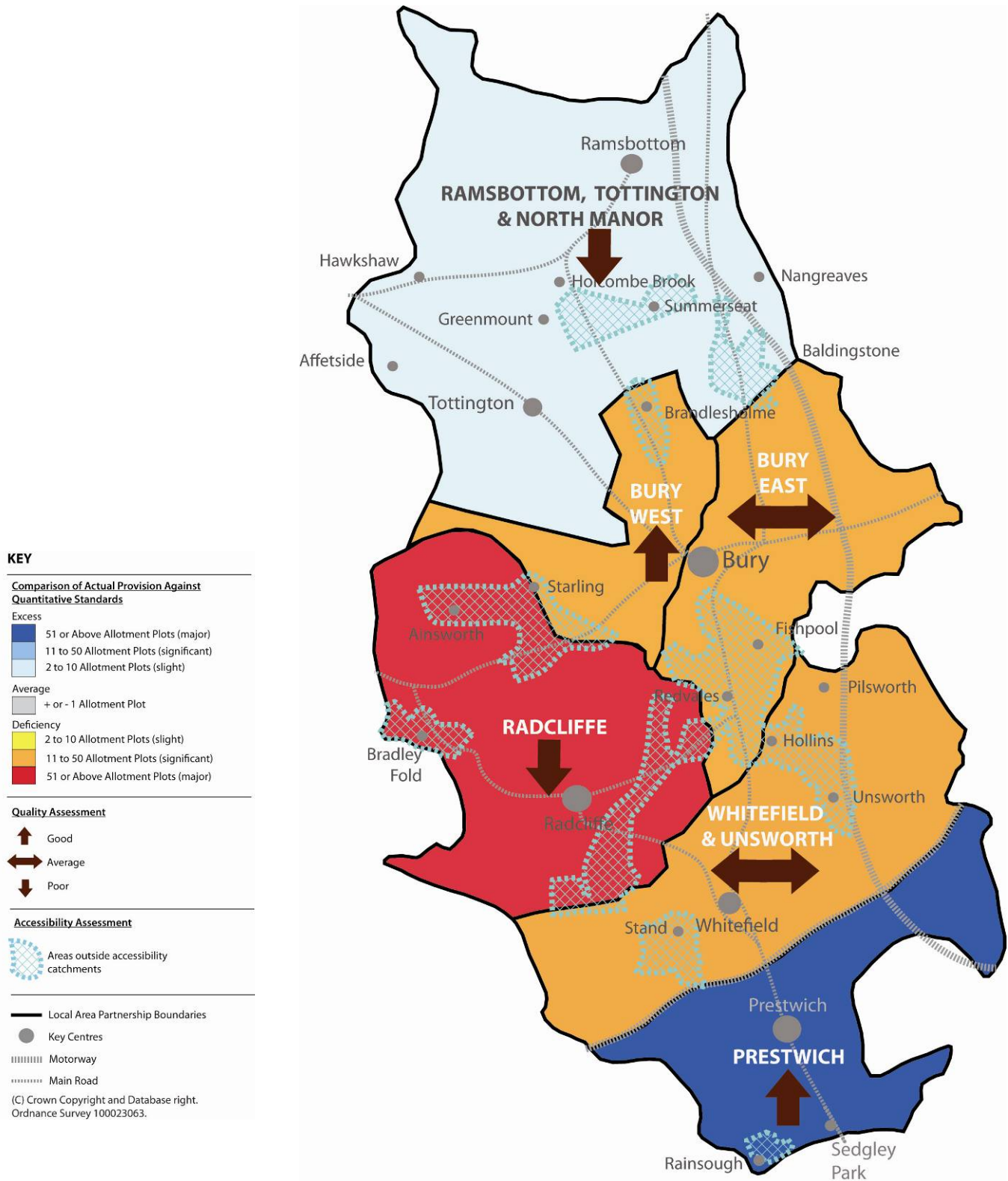
Highlights	Commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The level of quantitative provision is either in line or exceeds the standard required, making it the best performing typology in terms of quantity. • All equipped play areas were found to be of a very high standard, with no Township scoring less than 65%. • MUGAs on the fringes of Bury town centre, north of the Borough and in Prestwich also exceed the quality standard. 	<p>10 new facilities were added to the Borough’s play provision between 2008 and 2011 under the Government’s Playbuilder initiative before funding was unfortunately discontinued. This has helped to increase quantitative provision and has also had a positive impact on qualitative scores. New Multi-Use Games Areas have also been erected by the Council at Tottington and Sedgley Park.</p>
Issues	Commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Much like amenity greenspace, most neighbourhoods in every Township are located more than the required distance away from these facilities. • No skate park in Bury West or Whitefield and Unsworth. 	<p>New provision is not required to meet the accessibility shortfalls identified. Quantitative standards have been met overall across the Borough through investment in additional and improved provision from the Council and using Playbuilder funding. Also there is currently a resource issue as challenges are being experienced with maintaining the existing stock.</p> <p>Opportunities for informal play are also offered by many sites within other typologies such as amenity greenspace and therefore these sites may satisfy some of this demand (see Objective AG2).</p> <p>There are no plans at this stage to address the lack of a skate park in Bury West or Whitefield/Unsworth and it is considered that the existing skate parks at Radcliffe and Clarence Park, particularly the former, are accessible via public transport.</p>
Priorities for investment via funding / developer contributions	
→ Enhanced provision and/or maintenance of existing play equipment.	
Planned interventions	
N/A	
Objectives	
<p>AG2: <i>To protect key amenity greenspace sites which act as a community hub and provide opportunities for informal play in areas with a deficiency in provision for children and young people.</i></p>	

Figure 6: Key audit findings for Provision for Children and Young People



ALLOTMENTS	
Please refer to Figure 7 opposite.	
Highlights	Commentary
<p>Prestwich performs well for allotment provision, as quantity levels far exceed required levels, the sites are of 'good' quality overall and only Rainsough is access-deficient.</p> <p>The quality of plots in Bury West and Bury East is 'average' or above overall.</p>	<p>The Prestwich township has 5 sites, all of which are owned by the Council and where 4 are self-managed by an association of tenants. One site has 96 plots which is the largest number of plots on one site in the Borough.</p> <p>Nearly two-thirds of the 22 Council-owned sites are self-managed, and the Operations Team are keen to see this successful arrangement rolled out across the remaining sites (see Objective AL1).</p>
Issues	Commentary
<p>Allotment plot levels significantly below the standard expected in the centre of the Borough at Bury West, Bury East, Radcliffe and Whitefield and Unsworth.</p>	<p>The township-based figures mask the reality that many allotment users are prepared to travel further to an available allotment plot (as reflected in the threshold of 1,200 metres). It should also be noted that the 'Incredible Edible' movement is popular and many communities are taking up the opportunity to grow their own food on these plots which form part of larger sites such as Nuttall Park in Ramsbottom and St. Mary's Park in Prestwich.</p>
<p>Radcliffe is a particular problem area as there is a major deficiency in quantity, quality is 'poor' overall and most neighbourhoods around Radcliffe town centre are not within the specified distance threshold.</p>	<p>The Radcliffe township has 31 plots across 4 sites, 3 of which are Council-owned and of these there are 2 which are self-managed. When township boundaries are set aside, it can be seen that the Radcliffe area has good access to two of the largest allotment sites in the Borough in terms of plots at Nipper Lane (56 plots) and Diggle Lane (67 plots). However, the Council do recognise there is a shortage of allotments, particularly in Radcliffe, and therefore action will be taken by directing developer contributions towards addressing this issue.</p>
Priorities for investment via funding / developer contributions	
<p>→ New provision in Bury West, Bury East, Radcliffe and Whitefield & Unsworth.</p> <p>→ Enhanced provision in Ramsbottom, Tottington & North Manor and Radcliffe.</p>	
Planned interventions	
N/A	
Objectives	
<p>AL1: <i>To work towards achieving 100% self-management of allotment plots on sites which are Council-owned.</i></p>	

Figure 7: Key audit findings for Allotments



CEMETERIES AND CHURCHYARDS

Highlights/Issues	Commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Four Townships meet the minimum quality standard of 'Good' with Prestwich only 3% below. • The three cemeteries in the Borough at Bury, Radcliffe and Ramsbottom all received an 'Excellent' score. • There are no open cemeteries or churchyards in Bury West. 	<p>The cemeteries and churchyards in the Borough received some of the highest scores in the audit, although some of the smaller sites offer basic facilities with many lacking formal paths and do not benefit from regular maintenance to repair damaged headstones. Many of the sites are private and therefore no actions will be taken. There are no proposals to improve Council facilities at present.</p>
Planned interventions	
N/A	
Objectives	
N/A	

CIVIC SPACES

Highlights	Commentary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality standard has been matched for much of the Borough and has been exceeded with the Radcliffe township scoring as 'Excellent'. • Ramsbottom, Bury East and Prestwich are within 5% of an 'Excellent' score. • There are no civic spaces in Whitefield and Unsworth. 	<p>The Radcliffe township rating of 'Excellent' is based on the quality assessment of one site at Radcliffe Piazza and therefore is not comparable with other townships such as Bury East which contains 5 of the 9 sites surveyed.</p> <p>The Borough's civic spaces are well used and form the setting for many events held around the year. These sites are often the centrepiece of the 'Bury In Bloom' and 'Radcliffe in Bloom' competitions which will continue to be supported as part of the Council's priorities to focus on town centre facilities, subject to resources.</p> <p>There are no plans to provide new civic spaces in Whitefield and Unsworth.</p>
Planned interventions	
<p>The public realm at Radcliffe town centre is to improve further with a new high-quality pedestrian link to be provided between Radcliffe Piazza and Radcliffe New Road alongside a new retail scheme on the current bus station site set for completion in 2016. These plans will follow proposals to relocate the bus station to Dale Street car park and undertake improvement works on the Market Hall building.</p>	
Objectives	
N/A	

What does this mean for my area?

- 6.38 This section highlights the key issues and challenges raised by the Audit for the future delivery of open space, sport and recreation facilities in each of the six Townships of the Borough and compares this with the recommended actions of the Greenspace Strategy. The key issues and outcomes of the Township Plans from each forum are considered as part of the summary.
- 6.39 One of the emerging priorities from the Government’s Localism agenda is for there to be more decision-making at the local level with regards to planning, and for local communities to develop neighbourhood plans. Although it is up to local communities to define their own priorities within neighbourhood plans, the information provided within this section will form a good basis to inform any decisions related to the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities.

Ramsbottom, Tottington and North Manor

The Ramsbottom, Tottington and North Manor township is predominantly rural and offers excellent access to open countryside, with the West Pennine Moors forming part of its tourism offer, especially for the market town of Ramsbottom.

The Township Plan identifies that the Tottington and North Manor wards have high levels of child obesity compared to the Bury average. The forum has also noted that many outlying villages have limited transport links available to central Bury.

Key findings / commentary	Actions	Township Plan actions
<p>There are no significant issues arising from the audit in quantity terms aside from a slight shortage of outdoor sports facilities, although there are some recorded shortfalls in the quality of natural and semi-natural greenspace and allotments.</p> <p>The majority of typologies meet or exceed the required levels of provision and quality of facilities is generally good.</p> <p>However, many neighbourhoods are beyond the recommended travel distance of a range of typologies, particularly play facilities and amenity greenspace.</p>	<p>Priorities Enhanced provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace; • Allotments. <p>Objective OS1 Greater community use of sports pitches required in support of Sports Pitch Strategy.</p>	<p>The Township Forum wish to address lack of physical exercise among young children though working with schools and children centres and will liaise with Transport for Greater Manchester on improving and expanding public transport routes to improve access to areas of open space.</p>

Bury West

The Bury West township is a relatively affluent suburban area and contains some of the Borough's key recreational assets within easy access of Bury town centre including Burrs Country Park, the Kirklees Valley and the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal.

The Township Plan includes a desire to promote pride and responsibility in the parks and open spaces in the area.

Key findings / commentary	Actions	Township Plan actions
<p>The audit found that allotments and natural and semi-natural greenspace are significantly below required levels, with the latter being rated as poor quality.</p> <p>Allotment quality is above required standards.</p> <p>Very few neighbourhoods in Bury West have problems with accessing recreation facilities, except in the case of amenity greenspace sites which are beyond 400 metres of most households.</p> <p>There is also no skate park in the area but other facilities in the Borough are accessible via public transport.</p>	<p>Priorities</p> <p>New provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace; • Amenity Greenspace (on-site); • Allotments. <p>Enhanced provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace. <p>Planned intervention</p> <p>Local Nature Reserve designation at Kirklees Valley Phase 2.</p> <p>Objective PG2</p> <p>Long term development plan for Burrs Country Park.</p>	<p>The Township Forum plan to address issues of litter, graffiti and fly tipping on sites in collaboration with volunteer groups. The forum also intends to be involved in organising events at parks to promote the area. The planned 'I Will If You Will' investment in facilities within Green Flag parks will aid with raising their profile.</p>

Bury East

Bury East is anticipated to experience significant change and growth over the period of the Local Plan with the submitted Core Strategy directing 30% of the Borough’s housing target to the township. It is therefore expected that this area will experience increased population and subsequently higher levels of demand which may result in pressure on recreation sites. The township has a dense urban area including Bury town centre although it accommodates four of the twelve Green Flag winning parks. The outlying neighbourhoods east of Bury are amongst the Borough’s most deprived areas.

The Township Plan highlights the lack of physical exercise among young children in the area and consequently the need to encourage healthy lifestyles.

Key findings / commentary	Actions	Township Plan actions
<p>According to the audit, Bury East has the largest deficiency of natural and semi-natural greenspace in the Borough compared with the standards set for quantity. Whilst the urban character of the Township restricts opportunities to remedy this, new provision will be sought via developer contributions where possible.</p> <p>Quality is also significantly below expected levels for natural and semi-natural greenspace sites.</p> <p>Provision for other typologies meet or exceed the targets, particularly parks and gardens which is to be expected given the high proportion of Green Flag parks in the area.</p> <p>Accessibility problems have been found for amenity greenspace, provision for children and young people and allotments.</p>	<p>Priorities</p> <p>New provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace; • Amenity Greenspace (on-site); • Allotments. <p>Enhanced provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace. 	<p>The Township Forum wish to address lack of physical exercise among young children through working with schools and children centres. Amenity greenspace can offer opportunities for informal play and new provision will be encouraged via Section 106 contributions from developers.</p>

Radcliffe

Radcliffe is anticipated to experience significant change and growth over the period of the Local Plan with the submitted Core Strategy directing 35% of the Borough’s housing target to the township. It is therefore expected that this area will experience increased population and subsequently higher levels of demand which may result in pressure on recreation sites. The inner areas of Radcliffe are particularly deprived and residents experience health problems although there is ready access in most parts of the township to large areas of countryside and a network of walking and cycle routes along the Manchester, Bolton and Bury Canal and the Outwood Trail. Much of the area is suburban and contains a high proportion of amenity greenspace sites although the village of Ainsworth to the north is more remote.

The Township Plan has an aim of promoting the positive side of Radcliffe through improvements to parks and efforts to regenerate the town centre.

Key findings / commentary	Actions	Township Plan actions
<p>Radcliffe is recorded by the audit as being particularly under-represented in terms of the quantity, quality and accessibility of allotment provision.</p> <p>Natural and semi-natural greenspace and amenity greenspace perform much better however in quantitative terms.</p> <p>The quality of natural sites and allotment plots is significantly below required standards.</p> <p>Play provision is slightly below the required quantitative standard and is over 400 metres away from many neighbourhoods in Radcliffe.</p> <p>The quality of cemeteries and churchyards and civic spaces represent an improved picture as these types of recreation received the highest overall scores in the audit.</p>	<p>Priorities New provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allotments. <p>Enhanced provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace; • Allotments. <p>Planned interventions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhancements to civic spaces as part of town centre regeneration proposals; • Local Nature Reserve designation at Chapelfield. <p>Objective OS1 Greater community use of sports pitches required in support of Sports Pitch Strategy.</p>	<p>The Township Forum have a focus on giving support to and encouraging membership of parks forums to help protect and improve parks with the involvement of young people. Work continues to regenerate the town centre in partnership with the Council and Radcliffe businesses.</p>

Whitefield and Unsworth

The Whitefield and Unsworth township is predominantly urban in character although there are large tracts of land taken up by the four golf clubs in the area and the network of amenity greenspaces and woodlands that occur along the Parr Brook tributary. The township is relatively affluent although the Besses ward is one of the Borough's most deprived areas.

The Whitefield and Unsworth Township Plan has identified that health and wellbeing is a concern, particularly smoking and childhood obesity.

Key findings / commentary	Actions	Township Plan actions
<p>Parks and gardens provision is the lowest in the Borough, but this is not considered a problem as its residents are within easy travelling distance to Heaton Park in Manchester and there are large Local Nature Reserve sites such as Philips Park and Hollins Vale which fulfil a number of functions of the parks and gardens typology.</p> <p>Allotment sites are also at a premium as is the case for much of the Borough, although it is not an issue for parts of Whitefield and Unsworth close to the M60 corridor as these areas are within the recommended distance of a considerable quantity of plots in nearby Prestwich.</p> <p>The proportion of amenity greenspace and play provision exceeds required standards and, as does the quality of equipped play areas in particular. Despite this, many parts of Whitefield and Unsworth are beyond the distance threshold of these play facilities.</p> <p>There is also no skate park in the area but other facilities in the Borough are accessible via public transport.</p>	<p>Priorities</p> <p>New provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allotments. <p>Enhanced provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace. <p>Planned intervention</p> <p>Local Nature Reserve designation at Parr Brook.</p>	<p>The Township Forum would like to encourage healthy eating and healthy lifestyles and will investigate the potential for developing new allotment sites with the Council. The parks and open spaces are valued highly and parks groups will be supported in efforts to promote the township as a place to live.</p>

Prestwich

The Prestwich township is on the fringes of the Manchester conurbation with major transport links to the city and to the M60 motorway. However, the township also has considerable areas of open space, sport and recreation within easy access such as Prestwich Forest Park in the Irwell Valley and the 247-hectare Heaton Park, one of the largest municipal parks in Europe, adjoining the Township within the neighbouring district of Manchester.

The Township Plan expresses support for parks forums in the area and wishes to increase membership and the involvement of young people. Other issues raised are the need to encourage healthy eating and increase fitness and exercise opportunities and access to sport.

Key findings / commentary	Actions	Township Plan actions
<p>Quantity shortages were found in the audit for parks and gardens, outdoor sports facilities and amenity greenspace. Heaton Park satisfies any demand for park provision and for outdoor sports to some extent although there is also pitch facilities in Salford closeby.</p> <p>Prestwich comfortably exceeds expected levels of provision for natural and semi-natural greenspace and for allotments.</p> <p>Quality of facilities is generally good, although natural and semi-natural greenspace is significantly below the standard that has been set.</p> <p>There are parts of the Prestwich township with access deficiencies to a range of typologies although these areas are adjacent Heaton Park and are therefore not considered a priority for action.</p>	<p>Priorities New provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor Sports; • Amenity Greenspace (on-site). <p>Enhanced provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural/ Semi-Natural Greenspace. <p>Objective PG2 Long term development plan for Philips Park.</p>	<p>The Township Forum will support the use of the many allotment sites in this area, will raise awareness of Incredible Edible and will help to promote local sports clubs in partnership with the Council's Sports Development team.</p>

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 The Greenspace Audit and Strategy set out in the previous chapters highlights the needs and opportunities for open space, sport and recreation throughout the Borough and devises a framework for how these issues can be addressed.
- 7.2 In particular, the application of the quantitative, qualitative and accessibility standards that have been established will provide the broad framework for the future planning of open space, sport and recreation and will provide guidance for the targeting of resources and investment, as far as is practicable, by identifying deficiencies in provision.
- 7.3 However, not all shortfalls in provision can be addressed and therefore only those judged to be the most significant have been targeted for action as the Council's resources are in short supply due to budget constraints. The Strategy outlines future priorities and actions for the delivery of an appropriate supply of open space, sport and recreation provision and will subsequently play an important role in informing future policies and allocations developed as part of the Bury Local Plan.
- 7.4 It should be noted that the assessment is based on information gathered throughout this study and includes the qualitative assessments that were undertaken of all sites in 2012. From a qualitative perspective in particular, it is inevitable that the situation will change over time as resources are invested in sites as well as through the deterioration of others. Similarly, from a quantitative perspective new sites may come forward or be lost.
- 7.5 As such, it is important to recognise that the assessment is based on a 'snapshot' of provision at the time of the audit. It is therefore considered important to keep an assessment of needs as up-to-date as is practically possible and for this reason it is recommended that the audit of open space, sport and recreation sites is revisited every 5 years.

8 Glossary

8.1 A number of terms are used throughout this report which may require further explanation. This is provided below:

Accessibility	The relative ease by which open space, sport and recreational facilities can be reached within an acceptable distance threshold for the typology concerned.
Distance threshold	This is a buffer drawn around a site showing the acceptable distance in a straight-line that a person would be prepared to travel to that facility. This varies according to the typology and is largely based on consultation responses and benchmarking.
Green Infrastructure	'A network of natural environmental components and green and blue spaces that lie within and between the North West's cities, towns and villages which provides multiple social, economic and environmental benefits. In the same way that the transport infrastructure is made up of a network of roads, railways, airports etc., green infrastructure has its own physical components, including parks, rivers, street trees and moorland'. ⁶
Greenspace	As utilised in the title of this report, this is used as a short-hand term to encompass the 'open space, sport and recreation facilities' as referred to in national planning policy and therefore all of the typologies of open space, sport and recreation covered in the audit and assessment (see Chapter 3).
Typology	A particular type or category of open space, sport and recreation. These have been selected according to advice in the PPG17 companion guide (see Chapter 3).
Provision Standard	The required level of open space, sport and recreation for a typology, whether that is in terms of quantity, quality or accessibility. Again, this is based on consultation responses and benchmarking.
Quantity	The amount of open space, sport and recreation usually expressed in numbers of facilities e.g. pitches/plots etc. or in hectares (Ha. for short).
Quality	The condition of open space, sport and recreation sites expressed as a percentage which is scored using a proforma with criteria according to the typology that is being surveyed.

⁶ Green Infrastructure North West, 2011, <http://www.greeninfrastructurenw.co.uk/html/index.php>

