

Leicester City Council
Green Space Strategy
(2009 – 2015)





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Forward

We all need places where we can go to relax, walk, play with our children, take part in sport, experience nature, enjoy leisure activities or simply somewhere to go and sit to chat with our friends.

Leicester is covered by a wealth of green space that includes parks, gardens, country parks, nature areas, woodlands, riverside walks, play areas, sports facilities, allotments and much more besides.

This Green Space Strategy is an important step towards protecting and improving Leicester's green spaces and supports the One Leicester vision of making Leicester a beautiful, vibrant, clean and green city that is a great place for people to live.

The Green Space Strategy has been developed following detailed research into the existing quantity and quality of green spaces across the city and provides clear proposals for how our existing green spaces can be improved to be safer, cleaner, and more sustainable places.

We have identified that while we have a sufficient supply of parks, informal open space, natural green space and allotments there is an under supply of outdoor sports space and equipped play facilities. Provision, however, is not evenly distributed as some areas of the City have access to large parks and natural green spaces, whilst in other areas open space is only noticeable by its absence. A key aim of the Strategy is to improve accessibility to Leicester's parks and green spaces, and includes proposals to develop six new District Parks that will provide better green spaces for a number of our neighbourhoods.

There is also unevenness in the quality of provision. The recent Green Flag Awards show that some of our green spaces are of a very high quality, but we recognise that this is not true for all parts of our green space network.

Some of the improvements in this strategy will take time, particularly in these challenging economic times. Improving Leicester's green spaces will also require the support and commitment of the whole community and there are many ways for everyone to play their part.

I am confident that the Green Space Strategy will help us to look at ways to build on our strengths and put every household within easy reach of a range of quality facilities.



Councillor Robert Wann, Cabinet Lead Member for Culture and Leisure



1.0 Context

Leicester City Council, through its Parks and Green Spaces service, manages 1,250 hectares of green space. To successfully manage this portfolio it is necessary to regularly assess performance and to plan for the future; this Strategy forms part of this management process.

Recommendations from the previous Strategy (Leicester City Council: Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside Strategy 2001-2006) recognised the need to focus on raising the profile of the service, as:

- Over a ten-year period it had suffered budgetary reductions (in real terms operating on 50% of its 1992 revenue budget).
- The service had, and still was, losing staff with key skills.
- Delivery of the service was split across services and departments.
- There was a lack of strategic focus – more effort was spent on ‘fire-fighting’ than forward planning.

Since the last Strategy the service has undergone a number of changes. It has been examined, as part of the Local Environmental Services Best Value Review (2002), resulting in major organisational change, bringing together the service purchaser and the service provider, elements that had been separate since 1988 under the arrangements for Compulsory Competitive Tendering (The Local Government Act 1986).

Additionally the service has benefited from an increase in revenue funding, an increase of £650,000 per annum, so that it is now operating on approximately 62% of its 1992 revenue budget.

Locally, regionally and nationally the service has had success in raising the profile of Leicester’s parks. Public satisfaction has increased significantly (MORI 2005), we are founder members, and Chair, the GreenSpace East Midlands Forum. National recognition has been gained through a number of Green Flag Awards (administered by The Civic Trust), the CABE Space ‘Parkforce’ Award and the ILAM innovation award for the ‘Passport to Parks’ scheme.

Underpinning, and driving these changes has been the service’s response to community needs. This has been demonstrated by an increase in satisfaction, a steady increase in user numbers, and an increase in the number of Green Flag Awards held. These three measures of success form the basis of the service’s contribution to Leicester’s Local Area Agreement along with the additional measure of play area provision to meet the EN Standard – a target that the service is achieving.

This Strategy has been written to build upon recent successes and to enable the service to evolve in order to meet local, regional and national agendas and demands such as; Safer, Cleaner, Greener Communities, and Strong and Prosperous Communities, over the next six years.



2.0 Introduction

2.1 What is a Greenspace Strategy?

‘A greenspace strategy sets out an authority’s vision for using its green space, and the goals it wants to achieve, plus the resources, methods and time needed to meet these goals’ (CABE Space, Greenspace Strategies: A good practice guide).

Leicester’s Greenspace Strategy has been developed to meet these objectives, with a particular focus on the needs and aspirations of Leicester’s community and Greenspace resource.

The strategy includes the following sections:

2.1.1 Strategic Context

This section considers national, regional and local strategies or policies that influence Leicester’s Greenspace Strategy, to ensure it is informed and can contribute in an effective way.

2.1.2 Supply & Demand Analysis

Leicester has already developed an open space, sport, and recreation facilities needs assessment (PPG17 assessment). This study has made a comprehensive analysis of the existing and future supply and demand of green space in the City.

It is not the purpose of the Greenspace Strategy to cover all aspects of the PPG 17 study, but it will summarise key findings from the study and demonstrate how the Greenspace Strategy and the PPG17 study inform each other.

2.1.3 Analysis of issues, opportunities and priorities

This section looks at the issues, opportunities and priorities for the Greenspace Strategy. This is approached in two ways, firstly by considering the different types of open space in the City, such as parks, woodlands and play areas. It will also consider ‘themes’ related to the Strategy, such as involving the community and staff development.

2.1.4 Strategy aims, objectives and policies

In considering the above issues, this section will draw together clear aims, objectives and policies for the Greenspace Strategy.

2.1.5 Action Plan

This is a summary of the key actions and recommendations that emerge from the Strategy to be implemented over a six-year period.



2.1.6 Specific background papers

As part of the Greenspace Strategy, Leicester City Council have identified the need for a number of specific background papers to support the strategy and provide additional information, these are:

- **Quality**

A summary of the quality of different types of green space across the City. It draws on a proposed 'hierarchy of parks', and outlines priorities for investment.

- **Planning standards**

This section demonstrates the link between the Greenspace Strategy, the PPG17 study and other relevant planning policies.

- **Crime and Safety**

This section considers the effect of crime on both users and non-users of Leicester's parks and green spaces – how, at the local level, might this be mitigated?

- **Partnerships, volunteers and wider community participation**

This section looks at how to achieve greater participation and co-ordination with the third sector at the local level.

- **Woodlands, shelter belts and screen plantings**

This considers the opportunities for both bringing into management the recent (20-30 years) extensive plantings and better managing the mature woodland stock.

2.2 Scope of the strategy

2.2.1 What is included in the strategy?

Leicester's Greenspace Strategy covers the whole City of Leicester, and includes all publicly owned, accessible green space. Allotments are referred to throughout the Strategy, however, recommendations in relation to allotments are dealt with in the existing Allotment Strategy.

Leicester City Council own and manage some 1,250 hectares of publicly accessible open space across the City, including the following: (detail in appendix 1)

- 1 City Park
- 10 District Parks
- 80 Local Parks
- 4 Cemeteries
- 7 Local Nature Reserves

The River Soar runs through Leicester, and this provides a valuable green corridor through the heart of the City. The land holding also includes tracts of woodland, amenity areas, highway verges and school grounds. Together, these green spaces provide a huge range of facilities that benefit the community, including children's play areas, sports pitches, golf courses, rivers, lakes and ponds.



2.2.2 Why is a strategy needed?

Parks and green spaces are integral to urban life – they provide breathing space and are crucial to the successful functioning of urban communities. People pass by green space, walk through it on the way to work or the shops, or stop to enjoy it. Parks offer places to relax and enjoy the natural environment away from the stresses of everyday life, to take children to play, and for sport and recreation. In fact parks and green spaces are one of the few free facilities, which are used by the majority of a highly diverse population.

The significant health benefits of parks and green spaces are well documented. Not only are they ideal venues for formal and informal sport and active play, but they provide an environment which has been proven to improve mental well-being. In addition trees and woodlands help to reduce the effects of urban pollution, and allotments provide the opportunity for more sustainable and organic living.

Well managed good quality green spaces greatly improve the perception of an area - on a citywide level it helps bring tourists to the city and helps attract investment from the relocation of businesses, at a local level it makes people feel good and have pride in where they live.

Parks and green spaces offer an important environment for children to learn through play and social interaction. In addition they can offer an education resource to schools – one recognised by government but as yet largely untapped in Leicester.

Green space and green corridors provide habitats for a range of species, enabling a rich diversity of wildlife to thrive and enabling people to experience and engage with the natural environment.

Good quality green space is crucial to our quality of life – a significant part of the urban fabric of the city – an integral part of providing balanced and sustainable communities.

2.2.3 Methodology

The Greenspace Strategy has been prepared by independent consultants, who initially carried out the PPG 17 study for the City Council. The findings from this study have been developed in close consultation with key stakeholders in Leicester to develop the Greenspace Strategy.

The Greenspace Strategy is therefore informed by the extensive research and consultation carried out as part of the PPG17 study, and by consultation already carried out by Leicester City Council related to open space (a summary of this is provided in the greenspace background paper on ‘Partnerships, volunteers and wider community participation’).

2.2.4 Aims of the Greenspace Strategy

The key aim of the Strategy is to provide a clear framework for practical action to protect and improve green spaces within Leicester over the next ten years.

2.2.5 Objectives

Specific objectives of the Strategy are:

- To develop a hierarchy of parks and green spaces, with a framework for prioritisation and resource allocation for management and improvement;
- To understand and meet the needs of community attitudes and expectations in providing green space in the City;
- To provide standards of green space provision which are adopted within the Local Development Framework;
- To ensure Leicester builds on its strengths in green space management, and builds on its status of delivering good practice in green space provision.
- To improve the accessibility of Leicester's parks and green spaces.



Abbey Park and Gardens

3.0 Strategic Context

3.1 National context

The future of green space within UK cities must be seen in the context of planning for urban growth. The need for green space to meet the needs and expectations of the future urban population continues to intensify, as pressures on finding land for development increase. In recognising that future cities must be both liveable and sustainable, it is important to establish what type and quantity of green space is required to ensure the right balance is struck between the built environment and green space.

Three key publications emerged in 2003 that highlighted the need for a strategic approach to green space management and development.

First, the Department of Transport, Leisure and the Regions (DTLR) published the final report of the Urban Green Spaces Taskforce 'Green Spaces, Better Places'. It asserted that 'local authorities should develop (or update) and implement a green space strategy, which integrates with neighbourhood renewal, regeneration, planning, housing development, community development, local health improvement, culture, children's play and sports strategies'.

Second, was the emergence of Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener, published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM), which indicated that 'evidence from the Beacon Council process shows that preparing local parks and green space strategies is effective in developing a shared vision for service planning'. It added that 'park authorities who operate a strategy are by far the most successful at ensuring that good park stocks continue to improve'.

Third, was the publication of Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG 17: Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation, and its companion guide Assessing Needs and Opportunities – July 2002. This provides guidance for setting local standards for the provision of open space and sports and recreation facilities.

3.2 Regional context

Leicester is the largest city in the East Midlands, the traditional county town of Leicestershire, and, since 1997, has been a self-governing unitary authority. It is the 13th largest city in the UK, covering 75 km² and is located at the centre of the county. The wider conurbation of Leicester, which includes the satellite towns of Oadby, Wigston, Braunstone Town, Birstall, Glenfield, Blaby, Thurmaston, Syston, and Leicester Forest East, is home to 65% of Leicestershire's population and is very culturally and economically diverse.

Whilst the Leicester Greenspace Strategy is aimed at Leicester City, there are a number of important regional links, which need to be considered, if the strategy is to be delivered effectively.

3.2.1 GreenSpace Regional Forum

GreenSpace is a registered charity supported by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The organisation aims to be the UK's leading advocate for the economic, social and environmental benefits of better planned, designed and managed parks, gardens and green spaces for their positive contribution to our economic, physical and spiritual health, social cohesion, and bio-diversity. To support advocacy GreenSpace are establishing a national network of Regional GreenSpace Forums to:

- Facilitate exchanges in information and expertise
- Collect and disseminate good practice
- Provide funding information and opportunities to secure funding
- Lobby for improvements to policy in collaboration with the Regional Government agenda

Leicester City Council was chosen to host the first Regional Forum Manager with responsibility for the East Midlands. The Manager was appointed in late 2005, and the Forum established in 2006. This meets on a regular basis. In addition Leicester is a member of the established Leicestershire Parks, Open Spaces and Countryside Network.

3.2.2 East Midlands Green Infrastructure Scoping Study (EMGISS)

The EMGISS categorised greenspaces into functional types derived from Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) 17 recommendations, to enable assessment of their form and function. Green Infrastructure Planning will become an essential part of Local Development Frameworks (LDF's) and, in time, will become standard terminology within planning policy and development control.

Clearly, Leicester's PPG17 study and Greenspace Strategy will need to consider relevant findings and recommendations that arise from the EMGISS, particularly in terms of taking forward policies into its future LDF.

3.2.3 Leicester Biodiversity Action Plan

A working group of representatives from 19 organisations, lead by Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, have developed a regional biodiversity action plan, "Biodiversity Challenge: An Action Plan for Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland", which was produced in 1998. The plan identifies local and national priority habitats and species, and sets targets for their conservation and outlines mechanisms for achieving these. There are 18 Habitat Action Plans and 14 Species Action Plans. Leicester City has a number of specific action plan objectives, including:

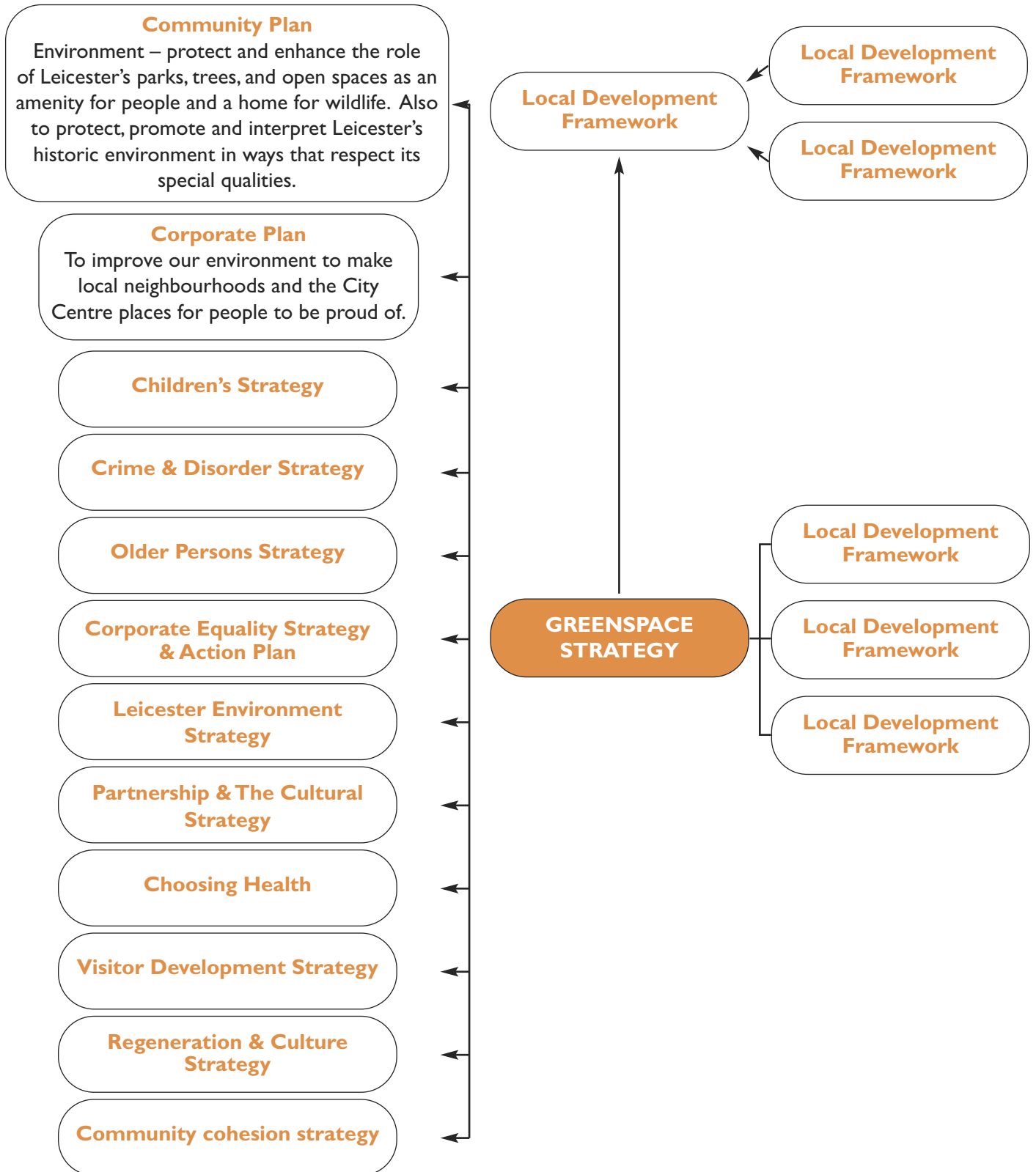
- Improve the value of wildlife corridors and the biodiversity network throughout Leicester
- Improve access to existing information on Leicester's biodiversity
- Encourage the monitoring and recording of wildlife within Leicester
- Draw attention to the need to make greenspace and natural areas accessible to the citizens of Leicester
- Develop Leicester's existing network of nature reserves



Bluebell wood

3.3 Local context

The Greenspace Strategy has links with many other strategies, it is informed by these strategies and in turn influences them. A summary of the main links is shown below:



4.0 Supply & Demand Analysis

4.1 Introduction

Leicester has developed an open spaces, sports and recreation facilities needs assessment, in line with Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17). This study includes the following stages:



The PPG17 study is integral to the Greenspace Strategy, particularly in terms of the future provision of open space across the City. It is not the intention of the Greenspace Strategy to present all the detail of the PPG17 study, but it will highlight key issues and links, and demonstrate how the Greenspace Strategy and the PPG17 study together combine to inform Leicester's Local Development Framework. This is outlined in the supporting background paper 'Planning Standards'.

4.2 Identifying Local Need

The PPG17 study involved extensive consultation with stakeholders in Leicester, through household surveys, focus groups, questionnaires to schools and sports clubs, and play and youth groups. The consultation highlighted a very wide range of interesting points and issues of value to both the PPG 17 study and Greenspace Strategy. The following general points are felt to be important:

- The local importance attached to the provision of a variety of open spaces and facilities.
- The value attached to informal and natural green space.
- The relative popularity (usage) of many local informal spaces in comparison with formal sports facilities. The latter tend to be used by a smaller percentage of the population on a regular basis.
- An appreciation of the value of good levels of maintenance for open spaces, particularly in relation to cleanliness, graffiti and dog fouling.
- The importance placed by local people on measures to improve safety and security in both accessing and using facilities.
- The need when planning for all types of recreation opportunity to take into account people's preparedness to travel, and requirement for different types of space. For children and young people this means easy access by foot/cycle, although this should be a universal aspiration in planning and locating all local community open spaces and recreation opportunities.
- The need for improved provision for children and young people, in particular for the older age range.
- The importance of a good network of footpaths and cycleways.
- Whilst the flagships parks in the City are appreciated, there is concern over the quality and maintenance of many other spaces.
- The continued strong demands placed on the City's outdoor sports and built facilities.

4.3 Provision and application of standards

The PPG17 study looked at the quantity, quality and access to the following types of publicly accessible open space in the City:

- Public Parks and Gardens;
- Accessible Natural Green Space;
- Green Corridors/Recreation Routes;
- Playing Fields and Recreation Grounds;
- Informal/Amenity Green Space;
- Equipped play provision for children and young people;
- Allotments and Community Gardens (not considered in the Greenspace Strategy).

These generally reflect the typology of open spaces identified in PPG17 and its companion guide. Although the above are varied in their nature they all share a trait of being open to community use, either freely (as in the case of Parks), or on a managed basis (such as some kinds of outdoor sports facility.)



4.4 Quality of open space

The quality of open space across the City is considered in a background paper that accompanies the Greenspace Strategy, this focuses on the quality of different types of open space across the City, drawing on a proposed 'hierarchy of parks', and outlining priorities for investment. However, the following section summarises the methodology used in the assessments, and provides an overview of the audit results.

4.4.1 Methodology

As part of the PPG17 audit all open space within the City was assessed for quality. The quality audit criteria has built on guidance provided in the 'PPG 17 companion guide', and criteria used as part of Green Flag, 'Raising the standard'. Sites were given a generic assessment against the following criteria (each made up of several sub-criteria):

- Access;
- Management and maintenance;
- Conservation & Heritage;
- Design;
- Safety;
- Community Involvement;
- Marketing;
- Sustainability;
- Value

For all of the categories, scores were given from 0-5 as follows:

0 - Not Applicable

1 - Very Poor

2 - Poor

3 - Moderate

4 - Good

5 - Very Good



Each category was also given a ‘potential to improve score’ using the same scoring system. The resulting figures give a total score and a total potential to improve score, which identifies a ‘gap’ between existing quality and potential quality.

These scores are represented as percentages. The percentage figures represent the difference between the quality of existing provision and the maximum potential of that site – giving a % gap score which represents the potential that site has to improve. The following scores indicate the potential to improve:

Percentage	Potential to improve
0 – 29%	Very little potential. Low priority for investment.
30 - 50%	Sites with some potential for improvement. Sites above 30% should be focused on for investment.
51 – 100%	Sites with significant potential for improvement. Could include sites where there are some ‘quick wins’.

4.4.2 Quality of open space in the City

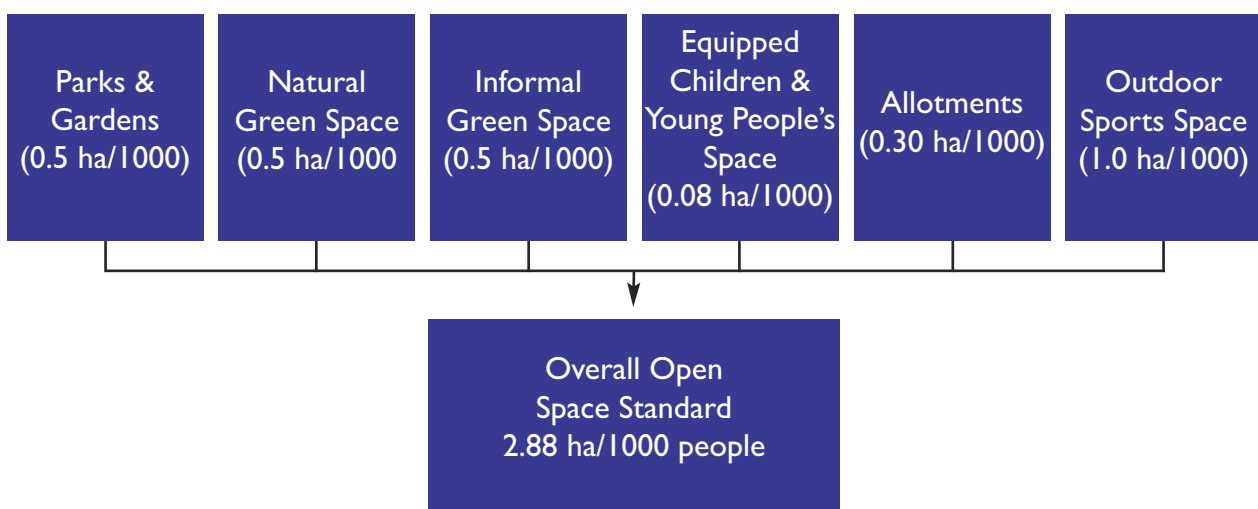
The quality data for open space across the City is held on a database and allows detailed analysis of quality by site, by typology and by theme. Appendix I provides a table, which summarises the quality of each typology for each ward.

The quality of open space, particularly in relation to a ‘hierarchy of open space’ and access to open space is further explored in the Greenspace Strategy background paper ‘Quality of Open Space in Leicester’ (see appendix I).

4.5 Quantity of open space

4.5.1 Standards of provision

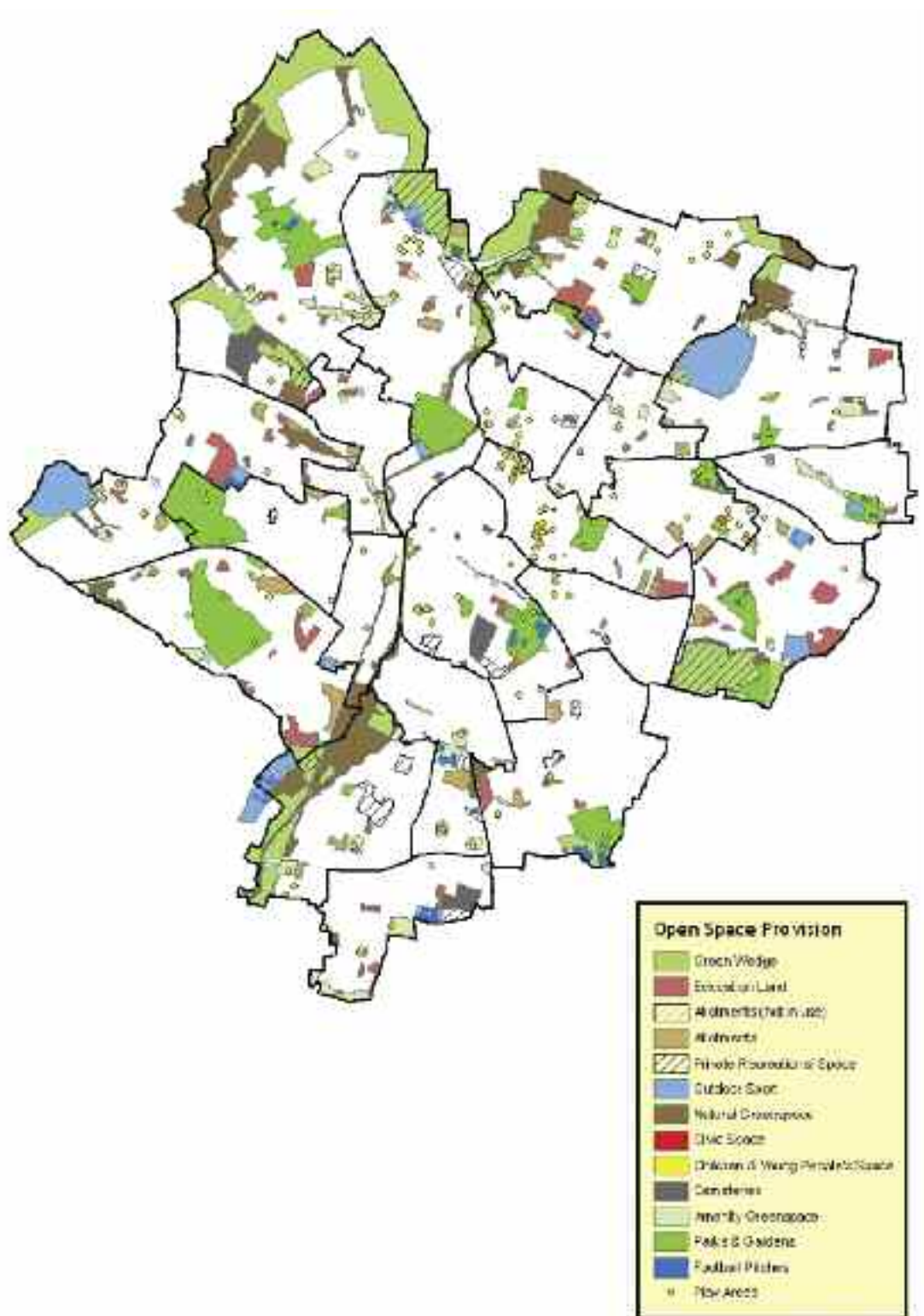
As part of the PPG17 study, a quantitative analysis of the open space provision across the City was made. This was considered across the City and by ward, using quantitative standards developed for provision by typology, as shown below:





4.5.2 Distribution of open space

The following map summarises the provision of open space across the City (more detailed maps of provision by ward are shown in appendix 2).



4.5.3 Provision of open space against the Leicester standard

Within each ward (see maps in appendix 2), the existing quantity of open space was calculated for each typology. This was then compared against the required provision for the population of the ward, which is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Required quantity of open space} - \text{Population (of the ward)} \times \text{Open space standard}}{\text{Divided by 1000}}$$

This figure is then used to calculate the overall supply (surplus/deficiency) of each type of open space against the existing quantity of publicly accessible open space (existing quantity of open space – required quantity of open space).

A table showing quantity provision against the Leicester standard for each typology by ward is shown in the table in appendix I. A summary of this is shown in figure 1:

Figure 1: Provision of open space against Leicester standard (hectares)

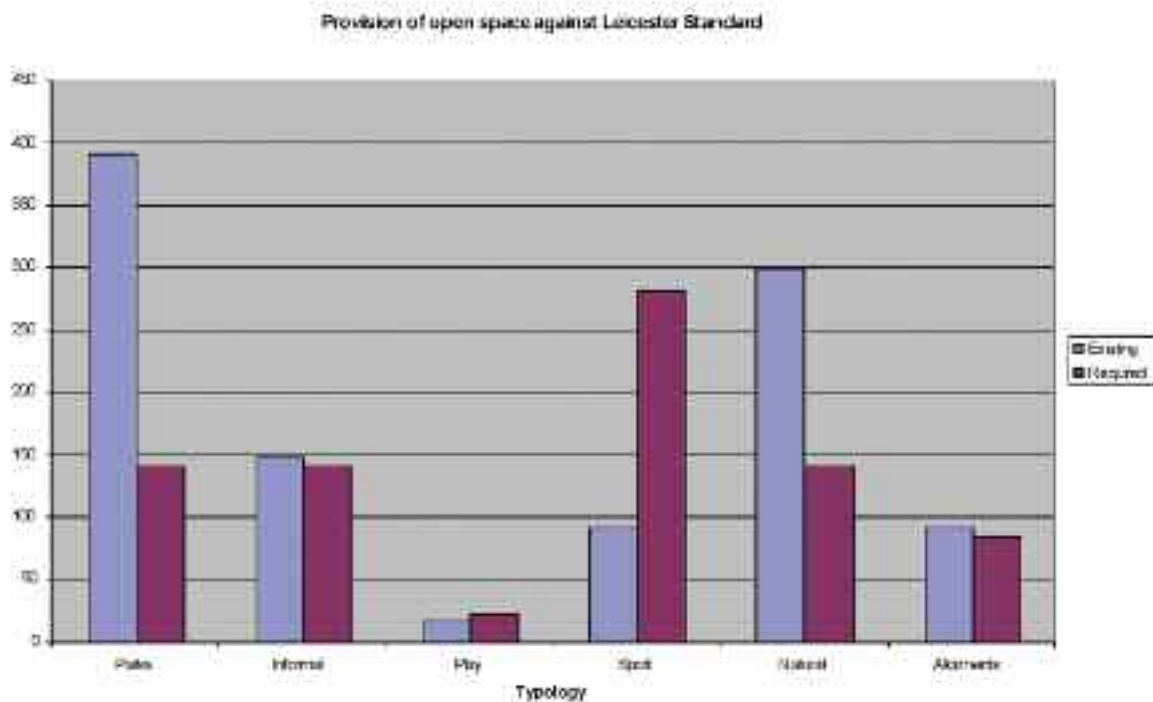


Figure 1 shows the total quantity (hectares) of open space across the City (existing) for each typology, this is compared to the required quantity of open space (required). This allows the difference between the existing quantity and required quantity to be illustrated.

Considering the figure above, overall, there is a sufficient supply of parks, informal open space, natural greenspace and allotments, whilst there is an under supply of outdoor sports space and equipped play facilities across the City.



Overall open space provision across the City by ward shows some interesting correlations, as follows:

- **Parks & Gardens**

Across the City there is a sufficient supply (about 35% above the required standard), and just under 60% of wards have sufficient supply.

- **Informal open space**

Across the City there is just enough informal open space against the standard, however, only 30% of wards have an over supply.

- **Equipped play space**

Overall there is an under supply (-5.04 ha or about 10%), however, only 3 wards exceed the standard for provision.

- **Outdoor sport**

There is an under supply across the City (66 ha or about 18%), only 2 wards exceed the standard for provision.

- **Natural greenspace**

Across the City, overall, there is a sufficient supply of natural greenspace (just over 20% above the required standard), however, in contrast to the statistics for Parks, only 6 wards (28%) have sufficient supply. This indicates that provision of natural greenspace is unevenly distributed across the City, with a few large areas making up the contribution.

There is a further consideration in relation to natural greenspace, in that many of the parks and open spaces have tracts of natural greenspace within them. So whilst their 'primary purpose' may be Informal Open Space or Park and Garden, they may also have areas of natural greenspace, which may not be accounted for in the overall quantity assessment.

4.6 Access to open space

4.6.1 Access standards

Within the PPG 17 study, considerable research was carried out in relation to distances people were willing to travel to different types of open space within the City. In general, people wanted play areas and informal open space near to where they live (5 – 10 minutes walk), whilst they were willing to travel further distances for larger parks and natural greenspace (10 – 15 minutes), and even further for outdoor sports space (more than twenty minutes). This research was used to develop access standards for open space, these are summarised below:

Parks & Gardens District Parks: 1000m Local Parks: 300m	Natural Green Space 300m	Informal Green Space 100m	Equipped Children & Young People's Space Pre-teen: 300m Teen: 1000m	Allotments 1000m	Outdoor Sports Space 3000m
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4.6.2 Application of access standards

Appendix 3 shows maps that have applied these access standards at a city-wide level, for each of the types of open space included within the typology. This is further analysed in the table in appendix I, which shows access for each typology within each ward. This is explored further in the Greenspace Strategy background paper 'Quality'. However, the following general observations are made for access to each typology:

Typology	Access against standard
Parks and Gardens	There is generally good access to parks across the City, however, notable gaps exist in the following areas and wards: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East: Humberstone & Hamilton; • South: Eyres Monsell and Aylestone; • North-East: Rushey Mead and Belgrave; • Central: Castle and Westcotes; • West: Beaumont Leys (southern part of ward).
Informal open space	There is a reasonable average distribution of informal open space across the City. Whilst there are gaps in access in all wards, when informal space is considered along with parks the majority of wards have an open space near to their home. The following observations can be made: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are a number of informal open spaces in the east and south of the City which have the potential to be upgraded to 'parks' and fill some of the gaps identified in access to parks; • There is a considerable concentration and overlap in access of informal open space in the Beaumont Leys area;



Typology	Access against standard
Outdoor sports facilities	The access standard set for outdoor sports facilities means the standard is met across the City.
Children and Young People's provision	<p>The following observations are made in relation to the provision of equipped play areas in the City:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All wards within the City have play areas; • There is an uneven distribution of play areas, for example there is a high concentration and overlap of facilities in the Spinney Hills/Latimer wards, in contrast there is only one facility in Thurncourt ward; • Access to play areas cannot be considered in isolation, for example whilst there are several play areas in the Spinney Hills area that overlap in access, the majority are small play areas with 2 or 3 items of equipment, and as such there is still a very small under supply of quantity for the ward; • Access to play also needs to be considered with the quality of the play provision, so one large good quality play area may better meet the needs of the community than several small poor quality areas; • The provision for play is focused on equipped provision, but many other open spaces offer opportunity for informal play, such as kickabout areas.
Accessible Natural greenspace	<p>The following observations are made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are gaps in access to natural greenspace across the City; • There is an important green corridor focused around the river, running roughly north to south within the City; • Access to natural greenspace tends to be to larger areas of space, most of which are located on the fringe of the City (e.g. Watermead Country Park and Castle Hill Country Park);
Allotments	There is generally good access to allotments across the City. This is further explored in the allotment strategy.

4.6.3 Barriers to access

The observations above consider access across the City as a whole, but it must be acknowledged that there are other 'barriers to access'. These can be social, physical, and intellectual barriers.

The social barriers to access can relate to a fear of crime, cultural and social barriers. These types of barriers are complicated, and understanding these must be considered strategically (e.g. Crime Reduction Strategy) and at a local level (e.g. through park management plans), detailed analysis of this is outside of the scope of this Strategy.

The physical barriers to access can include major roads, railways and even steep hills. A map showing these major barriers to access is shown in appendix 3. This needs to be considered when planning the provision of open space, for example, a play area may be located very close to a major road, which may deter some people (particularly young children), from being able to access the facility.

The intellectual barriers to access can include the absence of, or worse the wrong, information. This can be through a number of mediums such as, on site signage, leaflets, the internet, radio and newspapers.

The impact of this is that, social, physical, and intellectual barriers have the potential to flag up more access restrictions than outlined in the table above. Whilst every situation cannot be addressed, the above table should be used as a guide, and these barriers should be taken into account at a local level.

4.7 Policies

The following policies and recommendations are presented in the PPG study:

Policy Principle	Description
R1. Proper planning for and realization of OSS&R helps to create <i>Diversity</i> of positive leisure opportunity. It also helps provide a varied and attractive City in the physical sense.	Proceed with development of the proposed Greenspace Strategy
THE OSS&R should be in full	Consider the adoption of the standards suggested in this report through the Local Development Framework. Consider the need to develop a Supplementary Planning Document to aid with the interpretation and application of the standards.
R2. Well conceived and managed OSS&R opportunities can help impact positively on issues of <i>Community Safety</i> .	The proposed Greenspace Strategy should embrace the need to provide opportunities for young people within its remit.
	The proposed Greenspace Strategy should articulate and promote the relationship between the provision of equipped provision for young people, and service provision (such as linking youth provision with youth 'outreach' and sports development work.)
	The proposed Greenspace Strategy should recognise and address the comments highlighted in the consultation underpinning this document about concerns in relation to vandalism, graffiti, and concerns about safety in respect of the use of open space.
R3. OSS&R can assist in the <i>Education</i> of young people in a very general sense through teaching them about the value of healthy active lifestyles, and other life skills.	The proposed Greenspace Strategy should encourage a coordinated approach between the promotion and provision of open space and green corridors. In particular links should be fostered with schools and to integrate green routes into local transport plans aimed at schools.
	The proposed Greenspace Strategy should seek to promote more imaginative use and management of school grounds, both as a learning resource, but also to contribute to local biodiversity.
R4. OSS&R plays a (literally) vital role in the lives of people. There can be overall benefits in terms of reduced spending on <i>Health and Social Care</i> .	See R5.1 (below)
	See R5.3 (below)



Policy Principle	Description
<p>R5. Well conceived open spaces and recreation corridors within the City also benefit the natural <i>Environment</i> to the advantage of both wildlife and people. Open space of all kinds can serve equally as a context for and relief from “buildings”.</p>	<p>Future reviews of the Local Development Framework and (possible) Supplementary Planning Documentation should consider the possibilities for creating both utility and recreation routes for use by foot and bike in both urban and rural areas. Creative application of the Informal Green Space and Accessible Natural Green Space components of the proposed overall standard in respect of new development will be possible.</p>
	<p>The proposed Greenspace Strategy should consider the possibility of changing the management regime of some existing spaces (especially in urban areas) that lack access to natural greens space within easy walking distance.</p>
	<p>The proposed Greenspace Strategy and future reviews of the Development Framework must recognise the need when planning for all types of recreation opportunity to take into account people’s preparedness to travel, and requirements for different types of space. For children and young people this means easy access by foot/cycle.</p>
<p>R6. Attractive OSS&R opportunities can help promote the City to potential inward investors to the benefit of both <i>Jobs and Regeneration</i>.</p>	<p>Ensure that the interpretation and application of adopted new standards embrace the importance of open space being of high quality.</p>
	<p>Work with developers and local business interests to maximize the support for the proposed new standards by the local development industry, in particular.</p>
	<p>In conjunction with the proposed Greenspace Strategy consideration should be given to developing a business plan to assist in the long term maintenance of open space.</p>



5.0 Analysis Of Issues, Opportunities And Priorities

5.1 Introduction

This section is informed by the previous sections in this report, and specifically draws on the following information:

- Research and evidence from the PPG17 study;
- Extensive research carried out by Leicester City Council related to open space;
- Analysis of existing strategies and plans (section 3.3);
- Workshops, meetings and interviews with staff, community groups and other key stakeholders.

The issues, opportunities and priorities are explored in two ways, firstly by type of open space, and secondly by 'strategic themes'. Inevitably there is cross over between the two and this is brought together in the final action plan.

5.2 Types of open space

This section considers issues, opportunities and priorities for each of the key typologies of open space considered in the strategy.

5.2.1 Parks & Gardens

5.2.1.1 Issue 1: Quality

Issues

Leicester has several good quality urban parks located across the City, including a number of parks that, in 2009, have been awarded a Green Flag award for good practice (Abbey Park, Aylestone Hall Gardens, Evington Park, Knighton Park, Watermead Park, Welford Road Cemetery).

It does however, as with most other cities have a number of poor parks, where the quality, management and use by the community is well below standard.

Research (from LCC and the PPG 17 study), has identified that people are generally satisfied with the quality of the larger urban parks in the City, however, there is less satisfaction when it comes to smaller local or pocket parks – those that tend to be on people's doorsteps.

This is a major challenge facing the City Council – how does it maintain, and increase the number of Green Flag parks, without diverting resources from the smaller parks, which are of equal importance to local people?



With the limited resources of the Parks and Green Spaces Service, not all open space can be of the highest quality, therefore, priorities and difficult choices have to be made.

Opportunities

Clearly, the most obvious opportunity for improving quality of parks across the City is to spend more money on them. However, the likelihood of additional resources from existing budgets is extremely unlikely.

Therefore, if the City Council is to increase investment in parks, 'new money' will have to be found. The Council has already had significant success in achieving this, through accessing funds from grants, regeneration initiatives and re-directing of internal resources, and this should continue as a priority.

There is however, a significant opportunity to secure capital from receipts from the sale of land and from Section 106 contributions (see section on budgets, funding and income generation).

Priorities

1. Maintain and increase the number of parks with a Green Flag Award, it is suggested that the following parks are considered for Green Flag:
 - Existing sites with Green Flag awards (Abbey Park, Aylestone Hall Gardens, Evington Park, Knighton Park, Watermead Park, Welford Road Cemetery);
 - Potential sites (Western Park, Braunstone Park, Victoria Park, Spinney Hill Park, Humberstone Park).
2. Develop a ten-year investment programme for local parks, so that everyone in Leicester has access to a good quality local park. This can only be achieved by securing additional money (see section 5.3.5).

5.2.1.2 Issue 2: Access

Issues

As part of this Strategy, a 'hierarchy' of parks has been developed, which aims to provide a good distribution and access to both District Parks and Local Parks across the City (see the background paper Quality of Open Space in Leicester).

The analysis has shown that there are gaps in key areas of the City, as follows:

- Central (Westcotes, Castle).
- Central/North (Belgrave, Rushey Mead, Charnwood);
- Central/South (Aylestone, Freeman);

- East (Thurncourt);
- North East (Humberstone & Hamilton);
- South (Eyes Monsell);

Opportunities

A number of existing open spaces have the potential to fill the gaps in the provision of District Parks, these are:

- Aylestone Meadows and Aylestone Hall Gardens;
- Sturdee Road Recreation Ground, linked with Featherstone Drive;
- Hamilton Park;
- Rushey Fields Recreation Ground and Cossington Street Recreation Ground;
- The Rally Park.
- Willowbrook Park, Monks Rest Gardens and Ocean Road Open Space;

Priorities

The priority is to develop improvement plans for each of the potential new District Parks, the implementation of these plans should take account of the recommendations and funding options outlined in the background paper on quality.




Aylestone Meadows

5.2.1.3 Issue 3: Staff in parks

Issues

Local and national research has identified that people want to see staff in parks, be this a park keeper, gardener, or park ranger, staff presence comes up time and again as a top priority to encourage people to use parks, and make them feel safer.



Leicester already has grounds maintenance operatives and Parks Officers, but neither of these fully meet the expectation of park users, who want to see a presence in the park on a daily basis. This role used to be fulfilled by the traditional park keeper, and whilst this role in its former guise is no longer affordable or necessarily appropriate, there is certainly a role for the ‘modern park keeper’.

The new role is of someone who is based in a park, and has responsibility for overseeing all aspects of its management from ensuring maintenance is effective, to organising community events and providing a face to the service.

Opportunities

Leicester has had considerable success in meeting the community’s needs to see staff in parks, and in fact won the CABE Space ‘Parkforce’ Award in 2006. There is a real opportunity to build on this by maximising staff interface with the public, be this through those carrying out grounds maintenance or Parks Officers.

There is also an opportunity to link this to the emerging hierarchy of parks, for example with all District Parks and clusters of Local Parks having a site presence.

Priorities

1. Enable grounds maintenance staff to ‘have more time’ to interface with the public;
2. Develop a new role for site based staff with a responsibility for all aspects of the parks management;
3. Provide resources to have a staff presence in all District Parks and all key Local Parks across the City.

5.2.2 Informal open space


Issues

Leicester has large amounts of informal open space across the City, this is in the form of large highway verges, which act as visual buffers, to informal space in housing areas, which also provide visual amenity, but may also be used for informal play or ‘kickabouts’.

Whilst these areas can provide visual and recreational value, their management and maintenance can be resource heavy. Furthermore, the quantitative assessment of informal open space shows that there are 7 wards (out of 22), which have an over supply of informal open space against the Leicester standard. These areas, may offer opportunity for alternative uses.

Opportunities

There is an opportunity to look to use informal open space for alternative uses, this may include changing their typology e.g. for providing new play areas where there are gaps in provision, or indeed where there is significant over supply (e.g. Beaumont Leys, Eyres Monsell), to dispose of land for development. Clearly this



offers a significant opportunity for securing capital receipts to re-invest in open space and help to meet the investment aspirations of the Greenspace Strategy.

Priorities

1. Carry out a pilot project in one of the wards with a significant over supply of informal open space, to dispose of the land for housing, and securing the capital to improve the quality of other open space in the ward;
2. Map the informal open spaces that have the potential to be 'surplus to requirement', and calculate the land value of this space and what improvements to other space could be achieved.

5.2.3 Outdoor sports facilities

Issues

The quality audit carried out as part of the PPG17 study identified a range of issues related to the quality of outdoor sports provision across the City. Each site has specific needs in terms of improvements, however, key general findings found that the quality of built facilities. Such as changing rooms was in need of improvement, pitches needed improved drainage and there was a lack of training facilities (e.g. floodlights).

Opportunities

Leicester City Council are currently in negotiation with the Football Foundation to develop a major capital programme to improve outdoor sports facilities within the City. The project, estimated at £12 million, seeks to create 8 hub sites across the City, providing facilities for football and other outdoor sports. The 8 sites are:

- Aylestone Playing Fields
- Aylestone Recreation Ground
- Beaumont Park
- Hamilton Park
- Knighton Park / Welford Road
- New College
- Rushey Fields
- Samworth Academy

Clearly the benefits of this to the City are significant, and would largely resolve the issues around the quality of provision for outdoor sport in the City. If this project is successful, it would offer other opportunities related to green space provision in the City. For example, if a new hub site is created in an area, this may make other spaces currently used for outdoor sport in the area 'surplus to requirement'. This could provide a number of options, including using these spaces for alternative uses (e.g. creating more natural greenspace) or releasing some of the land for development.

Priorities

1. Support the progress of the Football Foundation project to develop hub sites within the City;
2. Following the development of the proposed hub sites across the City carry out a local needs analysis to revisit the findings of Figure 1, considering a wide range of sporting opportunities. Dependant on the results, invest further to raise the quality of the existing under provision.

5.2.4 Natural greenspace

Issues

Across the City, overall, there is a sufficient supply of natural greenspace (just over 20% above the required standard), however, only 6 wards (28%) have sufficient supply. This indicates that provision of natural greenspace is unevenly distributed across the City, with a few large areas making up the contribution.

The main issue related to natural greenspace in the City relates to the management and maintenance of habitats, of particular concern being the need for improved woodland management.

There is also a lack of co-ordination between organisations involved with nature conservation in the City, although the establishment of Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire and its partnership arrangement with the City Council has started to resolve this.



Volunteers enjoy a break

Opportunities

Developing the partnership with Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire offers one of the best opportunities for improving the provision and management of natural greenspace in the City. This could be further supported by the establishment of a 'biodiversity forum', which brings together key organisations in the City to co-ordinate an approach to nature conservation and delivery of the Leicester Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP).



There are also opportunities to create natural greenspace habitats in existing open spaces, particularly in wards where there is currently an under supply of natural greenspace.

The improvement of existing Local Nature Reserves and the establishment of new reserves offers a significant opportunity to improve the provision of natural greenspace in the City.

Priorities

1. Work with Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire to develop a programme for improved management and maintenance of natural greenspace in the City, with a particular priority to manage and improve woodlands and shelter belts;
2. The opportunity to create high quality habitats in a number of the larger parks in Leicester (e.g. Western Park, Aylestone Meadows). It is recommended that ‘an action plan for nature’ project is developed, within its remit would be:
 - secure funds for a pilot project in Western Park to create habitats with good access, interpretation and management;
 - provide environmental education training to staff and develop an outreach programme with local schools and community groups;
3. Establish a nature conservation forum / Steering group for the City;
4. Work with The Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire to deliver the designation of new LNR’s;

5.2.5 Children & Young People’s space

5.2.5.1 Introduction

Leicester City Council has already developed a Play Strategy, and this should provide the strategic direction for the provision of play in the City. However, the Greenspace Strategy has an important role in the delivery of facilities and services for play.

Play comes in many guises, from supervised play in an indoor setting such as a toddler group, or outdoors at adventure playgrounds, to outdoor exploration in a number of settings, with parks playing a crucial role in the urban environment for this opportunity.

The Greenspace Strategy focuses on the provision of a range of spaces and facilities aimed specifically at children and young people:

- children’s play spaces
- wheels parks
- games areas
- teen areas

5.2.5.2 Issue 1: Spaces for Children

Issues

Traditionally children's play in parks has been based on the provision of equipment in designated play spaces. While Leicester has some wonderful play spaces such as Knighton Park, it also suffers from many small, poor quality, and poorly located equipped playgrounds.

Historically the development of children's play spaces across the City has been determined by localised funding rather than strategic decisions often linked to housing development and associated planning obligations sometimes duplicating existing facilities close by.

Research has suggested that children and young people want activities that present challenge and risk, and this needs to be reflected in the development and design of new play facilities.

Opportunities

The PPG17 study, Play Strategy and the Greenspace Strategy offer significant opportunity to develop and improve the provision of equipped play spaces in the City. Key opportunities include the removal of smaller areas of play equipment, with a focus on improving fewer larger play areas.


There is also now significant evidence (based on the PPG17 study), to support the need for investing in existing play space and creating larger areas through developer contributions, rather than providing new, small areas.

There is also the opportunity to involve children and young people in the design and development of play spaces, particularly in relation to creating 'risky play'.



Priorities

1. Some of the smaller play spaces that currently exist offer limited play value having only one or two pieces of play equipment. It is therefore recommended that these facilities are removed, the aim will be to take these out and invest in larger playgrounds offering a wider range of play opportunities, experiences and challenges for children of different ages, recognising the fact the children of the same age develop skills and abilities at different rates and often require different levels of risk and challenge in their play.

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2. Develop the concept of creating natural play spaces, which can offer plenty of opportunities for imaginative play and bring children back into contact with the natural environment.
 3. Allocate resources to involve children and young people in the design process of new play areas, which requires the input of play officers and youth workers where appropriate.

5.2.5.3 Issue 2: Spaces for young people

Issues

In the past, more attention has been given to the provision of spaces for children under the age of 13. At times this has led to conflicts with local residents when young people hang out near their homes or within younger children's play areas, often inadvertently preventing access to that play equipment by the children that it is intended for. It has also left young people feeling that there is nothing for them to do.

Challenging equipment and games areas provide avenues for exercise and gaining physical fitness, while seating and shelters provide places for hanging out and meeting friends.

Opportunities

Leicester City Council have already been pro-active in providing facilities for young people, with a number of facilities including wheels parks, teen shelters and ball courts located across the City. The Greenspace Strategy provides the opportunity to build on this and ensure provision for young people remains on the agenda and a priority for investment.

Wheels parks are extremely popular as interest in bikes and skateboards continues to increase. Research shows that young people will travel to get to good wheels park facilities. They can also attract a significant number of spectators, the proposal for a 'Street Sports' facility at Braunstone Park, in partnership with the Braunstone Community Association, will help to meet this demand.

The games areas that exist in the City are well used. They can vary from being a single basketball post to a full multi-use games area. The amount of equipment provided will depend on location, other nearby facilities and the views of potential users and local residents.

Research shows that teenagers want a place to sit and chat to friends but that while traditional teen shelters can meet this requirement more could be done to provide something that young people feel they can own and therefore respect. More involvement by young people in the choice and location of shelter or seating is required.

Specific teenage areas are welcomed by other park users particularly those whose children use playgrounds. The aim will be to provide a teen focus point on the same site as a children's playground although sited apart from it.

Priorities

- I. Provide diverse, exciting and challenging spaces for young people, including equipment, wheels parks and shelters, including:
 - a good quality wheels park should be provided within 2km of all homes;
 - a multi-use games within 1km of all homes;
 - provide teenage areas, where possible, on sites where children's playgrounds are located including seating areas and a range of challenging equipment

5.3 Key themes

This section looks at key themes and recommendations that have emerged from the document and from consultation.

5.3.1 Getting more people into parks and green spaces

Issues

National and local research has shown that people feel safer in open spaces that are well used, which encourages them to use them more frequently and more often. In contrast, parks which are under-used tend to spiral into decline, less use encourages more anti-social behaviour and in turn use continues to decline.

The condition, management and maintenance of open space is crucial in getting people into parks, however, there are many social factors which influence peoples' willingness to use green space, from the fear of crime, to cultural barriers.

Therefore, in addition to good quality well maintained open spaces, there is a need to maximise opportunities for encouraging people to use green space more often.

Opportunities

Understanding what customer needs are in relation to open space is a good starting point for developing opportunities to encourage more people to use green spaces. Leicester City Council already has a significant amount of customer research and information (see greenspace background paper 'Partnerships, volunteers and wider community participation').

Events can provide excellent opportunities to encourage people to use green spaces, particularly those people who may not usually visit them. Leicester City Council has a good track record of both supporting others to put on events, and delivering events themselves.

Priorities

1. Work more closely with the events team to deliver events targeted at groups who may currently feel unsafe using green space, and in green spaces which are currently under used;
2. Use customer feedback to develop and improve the parks events programme. The focus being on fewer, quality events with high impact, encouraging people who may not normally visit parks.
3. Continue to produce an annual marketing plan for the parks service, identifying customer research priorities and promotional opportunities for the service;
4. Employ a Marketing Officer for the service, who sits on the management team and is responsible for linking customer needs with service priorities and promotion;




Buzz off @ Braunstone Park

5.3.2 Safer Parks

A background paper has been produced as part of the Greenspace Strategy which considers crime and safety in parks. The key findings and recommendations of the report include:

- Continue with the involvement in the crime and disorder reduction partnership (CDRP) as follows:
 - Representation at the anti-social behaviour (ASB) delivery group;
 - Representation at the violent crime delivery group;
- Development work with the Partnership development officer at CDRP;
- Work with the ASB delivery group to influence priorities;
- Undertake a review of data collection within the department;
- Identify processes to improve monitoring of statistics relating to crime, vandalism, anti-social behaviour and criminal damage;

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- Look at ways of developing the evidence based system and working with the police to ensure when the new police non emergency number goes live parks are acknowledged on the collecting system and accurate data can be collected and used to influence priorities;
 - Use the tool of visual audits on a regular basis to ensure a localised multi agency approach to problem solving. Develop to ensure they become more community led;
 - Make crime reduction and community safety an inherent message in press and marketing materials and releases.

It should be noted that the Parks Service have made considerable progress in this area already, for example, the Service is a key partner on the inter-agency Community Safety Bureau Joint Management Group.

5.3.3 Better quality and range of facilities

Issues

The provision of better quality and a better range of facilities is really the driving force of the whole Greenspace Strategy. Leicester's previous Greenspace Strategy (which expired in 2006) identified the need to develop management plans for all key green spaces in the City, as a driver for improving facilities and management.

The service has been very successful in writing management plans, with plans in place for the majority of green spaces in the City.

However, this strategy needs to focus on delivering the management plans, and linking in individual site requirements with strategic needs of green space across the City.

The strategic considerations have been outlined in this plan, but this should also consider service delivery through the Parks and Green Spaces Service Improvement Plan.

There is also a need to better understand how front line services are delivered, particularly in terms of grounds maintenance. For example, at present, Parks put considerable resources into grounds maintenance of highway land and housing land. Whilst this is a valuable and essential service, the resource provided by the Parks Service far outweighs the income received from those departments responsible for the land holdings.

Opportunities

Whilst Leicester has achieved much in terms of delivering management plans for all of the major open spaces in the City, there is a real opportunity to make these plans more user friendly and hopefully more deliverable.

Key to the successful implementation of management plans is securing the necessary funding to deliver capital improvements, but also ensuring core services such as grounds maintenance are delivered effectively to improve the quality of open spaces.

Priorities

1. Develop a new format for parks management plans, making use of maps, drawings, photos, illustrations and art to show the priorities for the park. It is recommended that a 'pilot park management plan' is developed along these lines with a view to rolling this out across the City. There has already been a move towards this, with Green Flag Parks having their management plans re-written for the 2007 application round;
2. Develop pilot project for interactive management plan using GIS;

5.3.4 Working with the community

Issues

Leicester works with a number of parks 'Friends Groups' from across the City, they are all different ranging from small informal groups to larger long established groups who are active in fund raising and community activities (e.g. Knighton Park).

Clearly, such groups can bring considerable benefit to improving open spaces, but to be effective they can require considerable support from Officers, and in some cases can be non-representative of wider community views and aspirations for green spaces.


Opportunities

Working with the community to jointly improve green space can result in long-term benefits for both the Council and the community. Clearly, the Council can benefit from understanding community needs and thus deliver services more effectively to meet those needs, they may also benefit financially as many groups have been successful in securing resources for green spaces.

The community can also benefit, those who are directly involved in Friends Groups, may well benefit from engagement in community activity, which can provide both social and educational benefits. Furthermore, members of the community not directly involved with the group may benefit from improved facilities and from events that take place on green spaces.



Castle Hill Country Park - community orchard



Therefore, the Council should maximise the opportunity to work with community groups, but acknowledge that to achieve this successfully, considerable staff resources should be allocated to develop the capacity of such groups to work effectively.

Priorities

1. Allocate additional resources to develop new Friends Groups in wards where there is currently no or little participation from community groups;
2. Improve links to existing Friends Groups, and consider establishing a 'Parks Forum', which enables groups from around the City to get together to share ideas and networking;
3. Carry out a pilot project to work with one of the established parks Friends Group who would be willing to develop the capacity to self manage a park. This will need significant time investment of staff time, and the necessary skills for capacity building and training of the community group. The pilot project should seek to develop a group, which is representative of the community that use the park, including BME and young people. Such a project could take a number of years to reach fruition, and a long-term commitment to such an initiative is required.

5.3.5 Resources (Budgets, income generation & funding)

5.3.5.1 Introduction

The aspirations and priorities outlined in the Greenspace Strategy require considerable resources to be delivered successfully. The resources required to deliver the strategy include considerable capital investment to deliver quality improvements, additional revenue to improve management and maintenance of green space, and additional staff resources to deliver the Strategy.

If the Greenspace Strategy is to have any credibility, whilst it must be aspirational, it must also be deliverable, and the key to deliverability is resources.


This section will explore the options available to the Council to secure such resources, but for this to be effective, there will need to be considerable buy in from Senior Officers and Politicians within the organisation.

This section will consider the following funding options:

- Section 106 money;
- External funding;
- Capital receipts from land sale;
- Revenue funding.

5.3.5.2 Section 106 money

Section 106 contributions offer a significant opportunity to secure funds from new development for open space. It is recommended that Leicester City Council have a clear section 106 policy related to



contributions for green space that helps to deliver the objectives of the Greenspace Strategy. Further information on this is provided in the Greenspace Strategy background paper ‘Planning and Open Space’. These funds should be directed at improving the quality of existing facilities in wards where the PPG17 study has identified a sufficient quantity of green space. New green space should only be created in those wards where there is an under supply of open space or where the open space needs of a new development would change the ward from having sufficient quantity of open space to an under supply.

In addition to the above process, the planning system does allow other mechanisms for securing funds for green space, for example:

- Annual open spaces maintenance charge, levied on residents (e.g. Hamilton area, each property contributes an average of £150 p.a. which is put into a trust fund to maintain open space);
- Growth points – currently available for green infrastructure to facilitate development (e.g. riverside regeneration area, Abbey Meadows regeneration area).

5.3.5.3 External funding

Leicester City Council has been very successful in attracting funding from external grants, including the Lottery, Neighbourhood Renewal and European funding. However, the availability of external funding changes on a regular basis, often driven by government initiatives and priorities. Undoubtedly, the availability of external funding will continue to change throughout the lifetime of this strategy, but it is an important source of funding, and should be reviewed on an ongoing basis to identify where external grants could help deliver the strategy.

At present, some of the key sources of external funding include:

- Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). Schemes such as ‘Parks for People’, offer opportunity for restoration of parks with historic value. Funding of up to 75% can be realised, for projects up to £5M.
- ‘Your Heritage’, another HLF scheme for projects up to £100K (max £50K grant), particularly relevant for open space with historic aspects, education, community involvement and interpretation.
- BIG Lottery funding. Has an ‘environment’ strand, which is likely to include grants for environmental improvements, including public open space.
- Local Groundwork Trusts, Wildlife Trusts, Sports Trusts, Community Groups etc. are able to access a range of funds which are not available to Local Authorities. Leicester City Council should formally engage with these organisations to seek joint funding opportunities. An example would include the ‘Barclays Spaces for Sport’, which is administered nationally by The Groundwork Trust.
- Football Foundation provides grants for Capital and Revenue projects, which support football development. Liaison with the Football Association is also recommended who also provide smaller grants and advice.

- Natural England (formerly Countryside Agency, English Nature), have various grants and advice available and discussions with the local office should take place.

5.3.5.4 Capital receipts from land sales

Significant funding is required to deliver the improvements related to the hierarchy of parks, let alone the funding required to deliver the Greenspace Strategy overall. This will not be achieved through existing resources, section 106 and grant funding alone, and as such consideration must be given to releasing land for development, and using the capital receipts to deliver the aspirations of the Greenspace Strategy. For this to be successful, it would need to become an adopted Council policy.

Clearly there are many issues related to this, including where land could be released for sale, how this is received by local people and the considerable organisational and political risks that will arise from such a move. In terms of delivering the aspirations related to the hierarchy of parks, there are some key opportunities and considerations related to the sites having the potential to become a new District Park.

There are some basic principles to be followed in considering this approach, which are:

- Land should only be disposed of in wards where the PPG 17 study has identified an over supply of a type of open space;
- If an over supply of a type of green space is identified in a ward, consideration should first be given to identifying any under supply of other typologies in that area, and assessing if the site proposed for disposal has the potential for a change of type to meet any shortfalls;
- If any green space is to be considered for disposal, it should fall into the category of 'low quality – low value', and have little potential for improvement;
- Consideration should be given to disposing of 'parts' of green space, for example an inaccessible end;
- Close communication and liaison with the local community is essential, it is recommended that any plans or proposals clearly demonstrate the resulting benefits of any land disposal.

5.3.5.5 Revenue funding

Leicester City Council already struggles to meet its commitments to funding the management and maintenance of open space across the City. Recent work by the Parks and Green Spaces service has demonstrated how the service is subsidising work for internal clients, particularly with regard to highway and housing land. This Strategy recommends considerable re-investment in green space, which is largely capital driven. However, any capital improvements will have an implication on revenue funding.

Re-investment in facilities does not necessarily mean lower maintenance costs, in fact quite the reverse occurs with new facilities requiring new and additional maintenance with additional costs.



This is particularly relevant to any projects where external funding is applied for, e.g. HLF, who want to see a management plan demonstrating an enhanced maintenance regime for any capital investment. In some projects, this additional funding could be as much as 10% of the total grant, which the Council would have to fund from its own resources.

Therefore, Leicester City Council needs a solution to improving the revenue available for maintenance. The Council does receive contributions through commuted sums for new areas of open space. There are also opportunities through roof tax endowments and annual maintenance charges levied from new development. However, there are no other obvious sources of boosting the revenue budget.

For Leicester City Council to demonstrate commitment to delivering this strategy, and demonstrate significant benefits in terms of securing external funds and spending £106 million effectively, there needs to be a commitment from the administration to direct its resources to fund the revenue implications. Consideration could also be given to using funds from the sale of land (see above), to establish endowment funds, or its own internal commuted sum to fund revenue costs.

Finally, Leicester City Council could consider improving the income generated from green space. At present, income from concessions, kiosks, and sports lettings does come back to the service. However, there are always opportunities to increase this, particularly if there are incentives. For example, if a Parks Officer is successful in securing additional income, they should have a direct say in deciding how that money is spent.

5.3.6 Staff development

Issues

The importance of securing the appropriate level of funding to deliver the strategy has already been acknowledged, but as important is having the right staff to take forward the strategy. All staff within the service have a role to play in delivering the strategy.

Priorities

1. Staff development – development of an in house staff development programme, providing the correct skill mix to deliver the wide range of services parks offer. Potential to carry out an audit of the skills required to deliver the Greenspace Strategy and the service, then look at where there are skills gaps in the workforce, and how best those gaps can be filled. Options include in house training, shadowing, training and accreditation through both academic and practical courses. Opportunities to form links with existing education providers e.g. LANTRA exist and are currently being better developed.
2. Allocate resources to develop the parks apprenticeship scheme. Adopt a pro-active approach to engage BME and women to encourage participation. This will require outreach work, and potential partnerships with BME / women's groups within Leicester.

3. Carry out benchmarking with similar schemes where BME groups have been encouraged to participate in horticultural training.
4. Establish links with BME groups and women's groups to encourage greater participation in the staff work force. There is potential to link this in with the work needed to encourage greater participation within the parks apprenticeship scheme, and develop partnerships with other groups / agencies to develop this.

5.3.7 Partnerships

Issues

To successfully deliver the Greenspace Strategy Leicester Parks and Green Spaces Service needs to work in partnership with other services from within the Council, and with other organisations in the City.

Opportunities

The following table outlines some of the key partnerships that need to be considered:

Communities of Interest	Suppliers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park users and interest (Friends) groups • Disability representative groups • Black Development Agency • Young People and city play organisations • Allotment holders and Associations • Sports people and clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds maintenance machinery, equipment etc • Materials, play equipment • Concessionaires (e.g. caterers)
Service Delivery	Funding and Influencing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust • British Trust for Conservation Volunteers • Neighbourhood Renewal partnerships • Event organisers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CABI Space • The Groundwork Trust • GreenSpace • Heritage Lottery Fund • Natural England (formerly the Countryside Agency and English Nature) • English Heritage • Environment Agency

Priorities

1. Develop the partnership with Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire as a key partner in delivering nature conservation in the City;
2. Developing a pilot project with Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire to explore opportunities for them to manage a park in the City, working in partnership with the Council and the local community

6.0 Recommendations And Action Plan

This section draws on all the issues and priorities highlighted in the previous sections of the Greenspace Strategy. It is presented as an action plan with estimated resource requirements. Each action is grouped in relation to the main strategic objective of the strategy to which it best fits (2.2.5). Each action will be subject to further detailed assessment through relevant service plans and project briefs as required.

Objective 1: To develop a hierarchy of parks and green spaces, with a framework for prioritisation and resource allocation for management and improvement

Key action	Staff resources	Core skills required	Revenue implications	Capital implications
Develop and implement improvement plans for six new District Parks in the City	Staff time to develop plans. Potential for dedicated Officer.	Project Management Financial Management	Staff time Additional costs for maintaining parks	Significant investment required estimated £6-10M
Pursue the development of the 8 hub sites for the provision of outdoor sport across the City, and seek alternative uses for existing outdoor sports spaces that become 'surplus to requirement'	Cross department working with Parks and Sports. Project will require dedicated Project Manager	Project Management Business Planning Sports Development	Additional staff time Additional costs for maintenance	Significant investment required, estimated £12M (potential 50% funding from Football Foundation)
Develop GIS linked interactive management plans for open spaces in the City	Staff time for writing management plans and developing GIS system	IT skills (GIS) Management Planning	Staff time	Additional IT equipment (est. £10K)
Secure funding to match fund external grants, and ensure the strategy maximises the opportunity to maximise external grants.	Required as core role of Parks Officers	Fundraising	Staff time	'Ring fenced' capital funding to match fund

Objective 2: To understand and meet the needs of community attitudes and expectations in providing green space in the City

Key action	Staff resources	Core skills required	Revenue implications	Capital implications
Develop a pilot project to explore community management of a park, lead by Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire	Lead Officer required, estimated 15% of work time	Community Participation Project Management	Funds required to support project (est. £20K p.a)	May be required to bring park up to 'standard', cost to be confirmed
Adopt a pro-active approach to encourage greater representation from women and BME groups within the parks service	Lead Officer required, estimated 10% of work time	Community Participation Equalities	Advertising costs (£2K p.a)	None
Develop a parks forum for community groups with an interest in open spaces	Lead Officer required (20% work time), plus support from Parks Officers and administration	Community Participation	Officer and administrative time	None
Develop a role for the 'modern park keeper' to deliver front line services in key parks in the City	Lead Officer required (30% of work time), additional training of staff	Community Participation Horticulture	Employment of additional staff (estimated 6 no @ £25K p.a)	None
Work with the events team to deliver events in open spaces where there is currently little community use and engagement	Core role for Parks Officers. Joint working with events team	Event management Understanding customer needs	Budget for additional community events (£10K p.a)	None
Employ a Marketing Officer to lead research, understanding of customer needs and drive service priorities	Employment of dedicated Officer, or more time from 'shared'	Marketing	Additional staff costs (est. £30K p.a)	None

Objective 3: To provide standards of green space provision which are adopted within the Local Development Framework

Key action	Staff resources	Core skills required	Revenue implications	Capital implications
Develop and adopt a section 106 policy for open space, which will help to deliver the objectives of the Greenspaces Strategy.	Lead Officer required (est 15% work time), joint project with planning required	Planning Project Management Financial Management	Staff time	None

Objective 4: To ensure Leicester builds on its strengths in green space management, and builds on its status of delivering good practice in green space provision

Key action	Staff resources	Core skills required	Revenue implications	Capital implications
Deliver a pilot project in Beaumont Leys and/or Eyres Monsell to dispose of an area of amenity open space for housing, with a view to using the capital to improve other open space in the area	Lead Officer required (40% of work time)	Community Participation Project Management Financial Management Political Management	Staff time	Potential to raise capital – needs further assessment
Develop the partnership with Groundwork Leicester and Leicestershire to improve the management of natural greenspace in the City	Lead Officer required (20% of work time)	Partnership working Project Management Nature Conservation	Staff time Additional resources for management (est £15K p.a.)	Potential capita required for works (est. £100k)
Develop a staff development programme to ensure all staff have the right skills set to deliver the priorities in the Greenspace Strategy	Core role of each section manager (5% of time)	Staff Development Communication	Allocated budget for staff development- est. £50K p.a.	None
Allocate additional resources to develop and improve the parks apprenticeship scheme	Lead Officer Required (10% of work time). Time for current employees to act as effective mentors	Mentoring Communication	Additional staff to cover for additional time spent mentoring (2 f.t.e); Additional resources for apprentices	None
Keep existing Green Flag awards and identify a further 5 sites with potential, to achieve a Green Flag within the life time of the strategy	Lead Officer required (15% work time)	Management Planning Financial Management	Significant increased management costs (est. £50K per site p.a.)	Some sites will require capital investment – est. £1-2M



Objective 5: To improve the accessibility of Leicester's parks and green spaces

Key action	Staff resources	Core skills required	Revenue implications	Capital implications
Allocate resources to establish 8 new Local Nature Reserves within the City	Lead Officer required (20% work time)	Nature Conservation Project Management	Increased management costs (est. £80K p.a)	Capital investment to improve standard (est. £100K)
Dispose of play areas which only have 2 or 3 items of equipment and target future funds to creating fewer, larger high quality play facilities	Lead Officer required (30% of work time)	Project Management Financial Management	Potential decrease in revenue, although likely to balance additional spend on new sites	Funds required for new sites, (est. £4M programme)
Provide diverse, exciting and challenging spaces for young people, including equipment, wheels parks and shelters, including: - a good quality wheels park should be provided within 2km of all homes; - a multi-use games within 1km of all homes; - provide teenage areas, where possible, on sites where children's playgrounds are located including seating areas and a range of challenging equipment	Lead Office required (10% of work time)	Project Management Financial Management	Increased management costs	As above
Seek to create natural play areas as any new park improvement projects or play area improvements	Lead Office required (5% of work time)	Project Management Financial Management	Increased management costs	As above

7.0 Risk Assessment

The following section outlines the key risks associated with the Greenspace Strategy. For each risk, an assessment of its probability and impact is made (scored High, Medium, Low), and a recommendation for mitigation made. The assessment has focused on significant risks (i.e. medium/High probability and medium/high impact).

Risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation
Political			
Currently there is good political support for parks across the City, a change in administration could reduce this support.	Med	High	Senior Officers to continue gaining political support for parks. Involve members in projects. Ongoing promotion in press.
Failure to adopt the policies within the strategy, particularly more challenging policies such as disposal of land. This will mean the strategy will be difficult to deliver, and risks 'sitting on the shelf'.	High	High	This requires considerable political lobbying and support from Senior Officers to Senior Politicians.
Change in policy from central government in relation to allocation of section 106 money, where money will be paid direct to central government and distributed from there.	High	High	Difficult to mitigate this change in policy, however, unlikely to be adopted for 2-3 years, therefore, quick adoption of a new section 106 Policy for open space would secure significant funds before the new policy is considered.
Economic			
Failure to secure money through section 106 funds will impact the deliverability of the strategy.	Med	High	Section 106 Policy needs to be written, adopted and implemented. Senior Officers need to ensure this is completed as a priority.
Lack of sufficient funds provided for maintenance of housing and highways land, means resources diverted away from parks.	Med	High	The reporting of the financial implications of this need to be understood at a Senior level and resources allocated from the relevant departments to deliver the service required.
Failure to secure money through disposal of land.	High	High	Requires significant political support, and support from asset management department.
Social			
Failure to meet customer needs, and deliver services people want.	Med	Med	Carry on with customer research programme, ensure results are used to drive service improvement and change.
Unequal access to parks and open spaces across the City.	Med	Med	Implement the recommendations in the strategy for improving District Parks, and providing quality open spaces across the City.
Environmental			
Failure to effectively manage natural greenspace in the City, especially the extensive tree stock. Resulting in a reduction in biodiversity, and a significant management problem in the long-term future.	High	Med	Deliver recommendations in the strategy related to nature conservation, particularly the development of the partnership with Groundwork, and the establishment of a biodiversity forum.
Pressure for development (housing, retail, industrial), put added pressure on open spaces, including loss of open space and potential over use.	Med	High	Adopt the policies outlined in the PPG17 study to ensure the proposed minimum standards of open space are adopted. These standards need to be adopted as Council policy.

Appendix I Open Space Provision Assessment by Ward

Quality of open space			Provision (+/-)		Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard				
ABBEY WARD						
Parks & Gardens	39.81	6.36	33.45	District Parks	Abbey Park provides good access for most of the ward, with a gap to the north of the ward. Ring road can act as barrier to access (particularly for pedestrians).	Abbey Park is the only park in the ward, it is an excellent park, which has achieved Green Flag status. However, the audit did identify some need for improvement, particularly in terms of access. Ongoing implementation of the management plan should continue to ensure gradual continual improvement of the site.
				Local Parks	There are no local parks within the ward	
Informal open space	10.51	6.36	4.15		Some areas of provision within the north of the ward, no provision in the south, although Abbey Park in the south provides significant access to open space.	Thurcaston Road and Ingold Avenue are the two key areas of amenity open space within the ward. Clearly there is a need to improve Ingold Avenue, which is currently in a poor condition, but offers significant opportunity for improvement. This sites really needs an improvement plan, which considers all aspects of the open space and its future. This plan should be developed in consultation with local people, and should consider all options for the site including wholesale improvement, as well as the potential to dispose of parts of the site for development to fund improvements.
Children & Young People's space	1.63	1.02	0.61	Children	Children - reasonable access across the ward, however, there is a gap against the standard in the centre of the ward.	Children - There are 5 LAP's around the Border Drive area, by their very nature and size, these offer little opportunity for improvement. However, consideration should be given to whether having 5 play areas in such close proximity is sustainable and if they actually meet the needs of the community in that part of the ward. As a longer term plan, it may be more beneficial to de-commission these LAP's and seek a new location for one larger play area providing better play value and opportunity. There are also play facilities at Bewcastle Road (part of Thurcaston Road open space) which is larger and offers wider range of play opportunity. The play area at Abbey Park offers an attraction in itself (NEAP), and is well provided for.
				Young People	Young people - No provision within the ward	Young People - There are no facilities for young people in the ward.
Outdoor sports facilities	10.36	12.71	-2.36		Meets access standard	There are facilities for outdoor sport at Thurcaston Road, Mowmacre Sports Ground and St. Margaret's Pastures. Clearly there is significant opportunity to improve Mowmacre sports ground, which need an improvement plan to be developed to determine its future function. A management plan should be developed for Thurcaston Rd to guide ongoing improvements.
Natural Greenspace	3.10	6.36	-3.26		No primary provision within the ward, although there is access to Natural Greenspace within Abbey Park, and the riverside.	None of the sites have a primary purpose as natural green space, however, clearly sites such as Abbey Park do have natural areas (e.g. ponds, river, woodland). Management of natural green space within Abbey Park is appropriate and ongoing management should be continued.
Allotments	10.43	3.81	6.62		Meets access standard	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	There is an area of green wedge to the east of the ward providing opportunity for links into Watermead Country Park, especially from Mowmacre and Thurcaston Road. There are also links from Abbey Park along the river via a cycle way and footpath.
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	Only Belgrave Cemetery was included in the audit, which is in good condition and well maintained.
General	Abbey Meadows & Waterside regeneration areas fall within this ward, which is likely to provide additional open space.					



Quality of open space			Provision (+/-)		Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard				
AYLESTONE WARD						
Parks & Gardens	1.74	5.40	-3.66	District Parks	Access falls below the standard across the Ward.	Aylestone Hall Gardens is the only Park and garden within the ward, whilst it is a pleasant enough park, it does provide significant opportunity for improvement, this is reflected in both the quality audit, and the detailed management plan produced by LCC. This site should be a priority for the area, and the recommendations in the management plan implemented.
				Local Parks	There is good access in the centre of the Ward, the south and north do not meet the standard.	
Informal open space	3.53	5.40	-1.87		Reasonable access in north of ward, falls below standard across rest of ward.	There are areas of amenity space at Gilmorton Avenue and Montrose Rd, the site at Gilmorton Avenue shows significant potential for improvement, and is currently in poor condition. It is also in close proximity to areas of green wedge to the west of the ward.
Children & Young People's space	0.75	0.86	-0.12	Children	Significant gap in access in the centre of the ward.	There are several play areas within the ward, two LAP's in the Gilmorton Rd area which are close to a much larger play area at Gilmorton Rd Open Space, and as such the need for the two LAP's should be considered. There are also play areas at Montrose Rd Open Space and a larger facility at Aylestone recreation ground. However, access to play facilities across the ward is below the recommended standard of provision, with a particular gap in access in the centre of the ward. Provision for play does need addressing in the ward, from a quality, quantity and access point.
				Young People	Falls below standard across the ward.	There are facilities for young people at Aylestone Playing Fields including a MUGA and basketball court, this provision seems to be reasonable for the fairly low resident population of young people in the ward.
Outdoor sports facilities	24.73	10.80	13.93		Meets access standard.	There is one facility at Aylestone Playing Fields, which has a range of facilities for outdoor sport, including a MUGA sports pitches, basketball. The audit identified some need for improvement at this site (e.g. improved access), which should be co-ordinated through a management plan.
Natural Greenspace	63.37	5.40	57.97		Good access in the north of the ward, rest of the ward falls below the standard.	There is a significant area of natural green space at Aylestone Meadows, whilst there is a good range of habitats here, which is generally managed appropriately, there is opportunity for improvement across the site, including provision of information and interpretation.
Allotments	4.42	3.24	1.18		Meets access standard.	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	There are significant tracts of green wedge and open space to the west and north of the ward, and green corridor along the canal and riverside. These are valuable assets and contribute significantly to the value of the overall appearance and environment of the ward.
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	There are no cemeteries within the ward.



Quality of open space			Provision (+/-)		Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard				
BEAUMONT LEYS WARD						
Parks & Gardens	47.92	6.92	41.00 22.92 0.06 -11.44 99.48 -1.78	District Parks	Beaumont Park provides good access for most of the ward, with a gap to the north of the ward.	Beaumont Park is the only formal park and garden, it has a range of facilities including space for young people and children, playing fields, artificial turf pitch, footpaths, benches etc. Whilst there are some good quality facilities at the park, signage to and within the park is poor. The park lacks the 'formality' of other parks in Leicester, and offers significant opportunity for improvement.
				Local Parks	Astill Lodge Park provides access to local park provision.	
Informal open space	29.83	6.92	N/A N/A		Meets access standard.	There are several amenity open spaces within this area, they are largely interspersed within the housing estates, typically contain a play facility, and a number are linked through green corridors at the back of the housing. It is fair to say that the quality of these sites is lacking, and offer significant opportunity for improvement. It is acknowledged that improving these sites offers quite a challenge, as they suffer from anti social behaviour and vandalism, and require significant re-investment and community involvement. A strategy for improving these spaces is required, and this should consider which sites are really required, if any can be disposed off and funds targeted at creating fewer, better quality spaces.
Children & Young People's space	1.16	1.11		Children	Reasonable access across the ward, however, there is a gap against the standard in the centre of the ward.	There are eight areas identified as having facilities for children, the quality of which are varied. The sites within the amenity open spaces suffer from considerable vandalism, and a number of items of equipment have actually been removed. The general observation for children's play facilities is that quality needs improving across the area, and potentially there is a need to rationalise provision, providing fewer higher quality play areas which can be effectively managed and maintained. This should also be supported by 'secure by design' principles, e.g. ensure new housing faces onto play areas.
				Young People	Meets access standard.	There are four sites with facilities for young people, with a good mix of facilities including a MUGA, skate ramp, and basketball. The quality of these facilities is also good, and resources should be targeted to maintain this quality.
Outdoor sports facilities	2.40	13.84			Meets access standard.	There are facilities for outdoor sport at Beaumont Park, including playing fields and artificial pitch and multi-use hard courts. Facilities are of good quality.
Natural Greenspace	106.40	6.92			Meets access standard.	There are a number of areas of natural green space including the large Castle Hill Country Park, and the smaller nature reserves. In general, these sites are well managed and maintained. The smaller nature reserves have excellent information provision and offer valuable wildlife corridors. The Country Park could be improved for access, and there is some need for woodland thinning and improved information provision.
Allotments	2.37	4.15			Meets access standard.	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A			N/A N/A	The routeways link the amenity spaces outlined above, and are in similar need for improved quality and management. They provide quite a challenge in terms of management, as they largely back on to housing which gives them a 'backland' feel.
Cemetery	N/A	N/A				Gilroes cemetery is well managed and maintained with little need for additional facilities.



Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
BELGRAVE WARD						
Parks & Gardens	2.24	5.15	-2.91	District Parks	Does not meet access standard across the Ward.	<p>As there are only three sites within the Belgrave ward, a site specific analysis of the quality is provided:</p> <p>Thurcaston Road: The site at Thurcaston Rd has a NEAP play area and is directly adjacent to Belgrave Gardens, within links to the river path. The play area is in need of some improvement, with particular potential to provide additional facilities for young people (currently limited to a 'kick board').</p> <p>Belgrave Gardens: Formal Garden in need of general improvement, site management plan in place which needs implementing to improve key aspects such as access, safety aspects, signage and entrances.</p> <p>Loughborough Road Play Area: Play provision is reasonable, however, site feels rather unsafe, however, it is landlocked so difficult to know how this can be improved. There is a play area at Thurcaston Rd very nearby, and perhaps consideration should be given to making that facility bigger and better quality to meet the needs of the nearby community.</p> <p>Belgrave Meadow: Natural Greenspace between Loughborough Road and Thurcaston Road, with further Natural Greenspace links along the river. This area was not assessed as part of the audit, but does provide valuable natural greenspace and links to the river.</p>
				Local Parks	Access in the north and west of Ward – rest of ward falls below standard.	
Informal open space	0.00	5.15	-5.15		Does not meet access standard across the Ward.	
Children & Young People's space	0.55	0.82	-0.27	Children	Access in north and north-west, rest of Ward falls below standard.	
				Young People	Falls below standard across Ward.	
Outdoor sports facilities	0.00	10.30	-10.30		Meets the access standard.	
Natural Greenspace	1.59	5.15	-3.56		Access to riverside in the west of the Ward, rest of ward falls below standard.	
Allotments	3.21	3.09	0.12		Meets the access standard.	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A			
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A			



Quality of open space			Provision (+/-)		Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard				
BRAUNSTONE PARK & ROWLEY FIELDS WARD						
Parks & Gardens	70.54	8.31	62.23	District Parks	Braunstone Park provides good access for most of the ward, with a gap to the north of the ward.	Braunstone Park and Wescotes Park are both within the ward. The priority for the ward should be to improve Braunstone Park, which is large centrally located park, with considerable opportunity for improvement of the facilities it provides. Whilst there is a management plan for the site, it is also recommended that an improvement plan be developed to guide larger scale re-investment, and a programme of community engagement takes place to support the development of the park.
				Local Parks	Westcotes Parks provides access although there is a gap in provision in the south of the ward.	
Informal open space	7.28	8.31	-1.03		Some areas of provision within the north of the ward, no provision in the south, although Braunstone Park in the south provides significant access to open space.	Hockley Farm and Church Fields show significant opportunity for improvement, particularly with regards to improving access, signage, entrances and habitat development within the sites.
Children & Young People's space	0.63	1.33	-0.70	Children	Reasonable access across the ward, however, there is a gap against the standard in the centre of the ward.	There are seven equipped play areas identified in the ward, there is opportunity to invest in a number, with a focus on the most strategic sites such as at Braunstone Park and Hockley Farm.
				Young People	No provision within the ward.	
Outdoor sports facilities	0.30	16.61	-16.31		Meets access standard.	There are facilities for outdoor sport at Braunstone Park, improvement of these should be considered alongside the need to develop an improvement plan for the park, and ensure effective implementation of the site management plan.
Natural Greenspace	8.55	8.31	0.24		Gaps in access within the ward, although there is access to Natural Greenspace within Braunstone Park.	Whilst none of the sites are classified as having a primary purpose of natural green space, clearly there are natural features within a number of the sites including Braunstone Park, Meynells Gorse and Church Fields. The audits identified that there is potential for habitat development and creation within these sites.
Allotments	17.52	4.98	12.53		Meets access standard.	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	There are strategic links between open spaces at the north of the ward, through Highway Spinney, Meynells Gorse and Hockley Farm. There are also areas of green wedge to the south of the ward linking into Aylestone Meadows and wider countryside.
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	None present in ward.



Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
CASTLE WARD						
Parks & Gardens	36.26	6.73	29.53	District Parks	Victoria Park provides good access for the Ward, although ring road can act as major barrier to access.	There is a high concentration of Parks and Gardens in the ward, which is expected due to its central location within the City. A number of sites are of high quality, including War Memorial Approach and De Montfort Hall Gardens. Victoria Park is the major park, and has potential for improvement, a management plan is in place for the park, and this needs to be implemented to improve the park, significant re-investment is required. Castle Gardens would benefit from some lower key improvements such as better interpretation and improved soft landscaping. Nelson Mandela Park is also in need of lower key improvements, and there is evidence of improvement already in place through implementation of the site management plan.
				Local Parks	Good access across majority of Ward (gap to the north of Ward).	
Informal open space	2.64	6.73	-4.09		Limited provision, however, majority of Ward covered by Local/District Parks.	There is little general amenity space in the ward, as the majority of open space is more formal, however, this does provide valuable amenity space in its own right.
Children & Young People's space	0.73	1.08	-0.35	Children	Good access in the south of the Ward, falls below standard in the north.	There are 11 equipped play areas for children or young people in the ward. A number are located within parks (Victoria Park, Nelson Mandela Park). There are a couple of LAP's near Thirlmere st which are potentially surplus to requirement. Priority for investment should be in the larger parks.
				Young People	Meets standard – largely through provision at Victoria Park.	There is a good facility for young people at Thirlmere Street Gardens, with an excellent floodlight MUGA. There is also a skate ramp at Victoria park. Both facilities appear to be well used and in reasonable condition.
Outdoor sports facilities	5.13	13.47	-8.34		Meets standard.	Victoria Park provides the major venue for outdoor sport with facilities for football, rugby and cricket. The pitches appear to be in reasonable condition, however, improvements to sports buildings are required (to be considered in line with site management plan).
Natural Greenspace	0.72	6.73	-6.01		Falls below standard across majority of Ward.	Freeman's Common Nature Reserve is in need of significant improvement in terms of access and maintenance if it is to provide a public benefit. The site has obvious value for nature conservation, but is currently poor in terms of public access, being difficult to find.
Allotments	0.00	4.04	-4.04		No provision in ward	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	Routes along the river linking Castle Gardens with the city centre are key, there are also green links from Victoria Park, and important green walkways along New Walk.
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	The major cemetery within the ward is Welford Rd cemetery, which is currently under refurbishment with new paths, entrances and a visitor centre.
General	Waterside regeneration area falls within this ward, which is likely to provide additional open space.					



Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
CHARNWOOD WARD						
Parks & Gardens	0.00	5.33	-5.33	District Parks	Gap in access to north of Ward.	There are no parks and gardens within the ward.
				Local Parks	Gap in access to north of Ward.	
Informal open space	4.05	5.33	-1.28		Gap in the South – but this area covered by access to District / Local Parks.	There are four key amenity open spaces within the ward: Overton Road Open Space; Craven Recreation Ground; Waddesdon Walk Open Space and Morton Walk Open Space. All sites are in need of general improvement, particularly Craven Recreation Ground and Morton walk Open Space. Management plans should be developed for these sites, to guide on going improvements. These plans should be developed in consultation with local people to improve community ownership of these sites.
Children & Young People's space	0.67	0.85	-0.18	Children	Good access across Ward – some gaps in the east of Ward.	There are seven play areas across the ward, 6 LEAP's and one NEAP at Hastings Rd. Provision is reasonable, however, further specific details are required on the quality of each site to determine future priorities and investment. There is a ball court at Overton Rd which is in reasonable condition and well used.
				Young People	Falls below standard.	
Outdoor sports facilities	0.00	10.66	-10.66		Meets standard.	There are no facilities for outdoor sport within the ward.
Natural Greenspace	0.00	5.33	-5.33		Falls below standard across Ward.	There are no areas of natural green space within the ward.
	2.88	3.20	-0.32			
Allotments	N/A	N/A	N/A		Meets standard.	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	Waddesdon Walk open space is an important green link the cycle ways and walkway that leads north to Rushey Meade ward.
Cemetery						None present in ward.



Quality of open space			Provision (+/-)		Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard				
COLEMAN WARD						
Parks & Gardens	12.74	6.05	6.69	District Parks	Good access across the Ward.	Humberstone Park is a formal Park with a range of facilities for play, a skate park, natural areas and provision for sport. The park shows significant opportunity for improvement, and although a site management plan is in place, it is recommended that an improvement plan is developed for the park to guide its long term future and provision of facilities. The aim should be to bring this park up to green flag standard. There is also a park at Lily Marriot Gardens, which has a good play area, and quite a natural feel to the site, with plenty of woodland copses, hedgerows and a pond. The site is in need of improvement, particularly to site furniture, interpretation and footpaths. A site management plan is in place which should be implemented to guide improvements. Sparrow Park is a small park with a play area, some improvements are required, but these are not as significant a priority as Humberstone Park.
				Local Parks	Good access in east of Ward.	
Informal open space	0.19	6.05	-5.86		Limited provision – however, good access to District / Local Parks across Ward.	There is an area of amenity open space at Bridge Rd, which includes a play area, the site is in need of low key improvements, which should be implemented through a site management plan.
Children & Young People's space	0.78	0.97	-0.19	Children	Gap in access in centre of Ward.	There are larger play areas at Humberstone Park and Lily Marriot Gardens which are in reasonable condition with some new equipment. There are several play areas to the east of the ward, a mixture of LAP's and LEAP's. consideration should be given to the need to provide equipped play facilities at all of these sites.
				Young People	Meets access standard.	There are facilities, including a skate park at Humberstone park, any additional facilities located here should be set in context of the suggested improvement plan for the park. Lily Marriot Gardens has also incorporated provision for young people with a teen shelter and some equipment targeted at older age group.
Outdoor sports facilities	0.80	12.10	-11.30		Meets access standard.	Humberstone Park has provision for outdoor sport, including football and tennis, provision is reasonable, but improvements to associated buildings are required.
Natural Greenspace	2.35	6.05	-3.70		Good access to Rally Bank Nature Reserve.	There are areas of natural green space to the south of Humberstone Park (The Rally Bank Nature Reserve), which has a good range of habitat including woodland, grassland and wet areas. The site would benefit from interpretation.
Allotments	7.05	3.63	3.43		Meets access standard.	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	The Rally Bank Nature Reserve forms a valuable green corridor, there are no other areas in the ward.
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	None present.



Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
EVINGTON WARD						
Parks & Gardens	28.10	4.89	23.20	District Parks	Good access across the Ward	Evington Park is the major park in the ward, it has a range of good facilities which are well maintained, and currently has a Green Flag. Ongoing implementation of the management plan should be a priority.
				Local Parks	Gap in centre of ward – but this area has access to District Park	
Informal open space	1.10	4.89	-3.79		Falls below standard – however, there is good access	Evington Recreation Ground is the main amenity open space, this is in need of improving, and a management plan should be developed for this site. Key issues are entrances and provision for play.
Children & Young People's space	0.53	0.78	-0.25	Children	Gap in access to the south-west and east of the ward.	There is a reasonable facility at Evington Park, which could be extended to provide wider play value, particularly promoting natural play opportunities in the rest of the park. The facility at Evington Recreation Ground is very poor and has the potential to be removed due to its proximity to Evington Park.
				Young People	Falls below standard	There are no specific facilities for young people in the ward, however, Evington Park does have tennis courts, and could provide a location for specific facilities if required.
Outdoor sports facilities	13.97	9.79	4.18		Meets standard	The main facility for outdoor sport is at Evington Park, which are in reasonable condition.
Natural Greenspace	6.02	4.89	1.13		Falls below standard across ward – however, there is good access to District / Local Parks	There are significant areas of natural green space at Piggy's Hollow and the Arboretum, both could be improved with better access, signage and interpretation.
Allotments	6.82	2.94	3.89		Meets standard	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	There are important green corridors and links to green wedge across the ward, particularly in the south via Piggy's Hollow and The Arboretum
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	St. Deny's Church is a small pleasant natural churchyard which links Piggy's Hollow and The Arboretum.

Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
EYRES MONSELL WARD						
Parks & Gardens	0.00	5.61	-5.61	District Parks	Does not meet standard across the Ward	There are no Parks and Gardens in the ward.
				Local Parks	Does not meet standard across the Ward	
Informal open space	22.52	5.61	16.91		Reasonable access across the Ward	The open space in the ward is predominantly amenity open space, the majority of the sites are in need of improvement, Sturdee Road Recreation Ground and Featherstone Drive providing larger areas of space which have the potential for additional facilities and to be developed into more formal landscapes.
Children & Young People's space	0.85	0.90	-0.05	Children	Gaps in access in the north of the Ward	There are only four play areas within the ward, all have potential for improvement, the ones within the amenity open spaces (e.g. Featherstone and Sturdee Rd) with potential for expansion and provision of additional facilities.
				Young People	Falls below standard	There is ballcourt/ half MUGA and teen shelter at Hillsborough Road Recreation Ground, this site provides the best potential for any additional facilities if required.
Outdoor sports facilities	8.96	11.23	-2.27		Meets standard	There are facilities for outdoor sport in the open space adjacent to Sturdee Road Recreation Ground, provision is reasonable and predominantly for football.
Natural Greenspace	2.43	5.61	-3.18		Gaps in access in the north of the Ward	There are natural green space areas at Grange Spinney and Her Ladyship's Covert, the latter being in need of significant improvement.
Allotments	0.00	3.37	-3.37		Meets standard	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	There are no significant routeways or green corridors within the ward.
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	Saffron Hill Cemetery is within the ward which is well managed and maintained.



Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
FOSSÉ WARD						
Parks & Gardens	0.00	5.37	-5.37	District Parks	Meets standard across majority of the Ward	The Rally Park is a good linear park with a range of facilities including a BMX track and adventure play area, it would benefit from improved signage and maintenance of shrub borders and features. Tudor Park is a small urban garden which is in a poor condition, but could easily be improved with new planting, better entrances and paths.
				Local Parks	Gap in the north of the Ward	
Informal open space	8.42	5.37	3.05		Gap in the south of the Ward	Jean Drive is a backland site on a steep slope, and offers little opportunity for improvement. St. Helens has a play area which could be improved, and would benefit from better entrances and internal footpaths.
Children & Young People's space	0.62	0.86	-0.24	Children	Gap in access in the centre of the ward	There is a good facility at the Rally Park, however, the other sites within the ward are in fairly poor condition and would be in need of improvement.
				Young People	Good access in the centre of the Ward	There is a BMX track at the Rally Park which appears to be well used, this would provide an ideal site for any further provision if required.
Outdoor sports facilities	0.45	10.74	-10.29		Meets access standard	There are facilities for outdoor sport at The Rally Park, including junior football.
Natural Greenspace	0.00	5.37	-5.37		Gap in access across whole of the Ward	There are no areas of natural green space, however, there are natural features within the Rally Park.
Allotments	0.00	3.22	-3.22		Meets access standard	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	The Rally Park itself is an important green corridor; it would benefit from improved signage within the park and at entrances, with additional opportunity for interpretation signage of the site.
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	Not present in ward.
General	Waterside regeneration area falls within this ward, which is likely to provide additional open space.					

Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
FREEMEN WARD						
Parks & Gardens	0.00	4.99	-4.99	District Parks	Gap in access across majority of the Ward	As there are only three sites in the ward, analysis is presented by site. Aylestone Recreation Ground South: Urban Park with range of facilities, many for sport. There is a site management plan in place, which identifies the need for significant improvement of the site. However, it is recommended that an improvement plan is developed for this site, to provide strategic direction to future investment and use of the site. The aim should be to re-invest in the park in order that it is able to reach green flag status. Significant investment is needed at the site, therefore the plan should include an investment strategy. Elston Fields Recreation Ground: Amenity space with three play areas, an infant area, NEAP and ballcourt, all in reasonable condition. The site would benefit from 'formalising', with potential to create boundaries and entrances, a plan of improvement is required to co-ordinate reinvestment.
				Local Parks	Gap in access in the north and south of the Ward	
Informal open space	16.11	4.99	11.12		Gaps in access across the Ward	
Children & Young People's space	0.27	0.80	-0.53	Children	Gap in access particularly in north of ward	
				Young People	Gap in access across the Ward	
Outdoor sports facilities	3.09	9.98	-6.89		Meets access standard	
Natural Greenspace	1.66	4.99	-3.34		Gap in access across the majority of the Ward	
Allotments	7.38	2.99	4.39		Meets access standard	Meadow Gardens: Amenity space with LEAP, in need of improvement including boundaries, tree planting, footpaths, signage. Site really needs a plan for improvement and re-investment.
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	



Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
HUMBERSTONE & HAMILTON WARD						
Parks & Gardens	7.96	5.95	2.01	District Parks	Access in the south-west of the Ward - gap in access across rest of the Ward	Monks' Rest Gardens are in need of general improvement to access, horticulture and signage, there is a management plan in place which should be a priority for implementation in the ward. Humberstone Community Gardens are well maintained and provide a good local facility.
				Local Parks	Access only in the south of the Ward	
Informal open space	19.07	5.95	13.13		Gap in access across majority of the Ward	There are a number of amenity spaces within the ward, the two most significant, Netherhall Open Space and Keyham Lane Recreation Ground are both in need of improvement, and management plans should be developed and implemented for the sites to guide future improvement.
Children & Young People's space	0.81	0.95	-0.14	Children	Reasonable provision across the Ward – some gaps.	There are 9 equipped play areas across the ward, the most significant being at Netherall Recreation Ground and a site at Keyham Lane Recreation Ground. Provision across the ward is well distributed. Further work is required to determine priorities for investment in play across the ward.
				Young People	Meets access standard	There is a MUGA in Hamilton Park and a ballcourt at Armadale Drive both of which are in reasonable condition and well used.
Outdoor sports facilities	1.71	11.89	-10.18		Meets access standard	There are facilities for outdoor sport at Netherall Road Open Space, the whole site is in need of improvement and better maintenance, which should encompass provision for sport.
Natural Greenspace	18.54	5.95	-5.95		Gap in access across the Ward	There are no areas designated primarily as natural green space, there is however, areas of natural space at sites such as Netherall Open Space, Humberstone Recreation Ground and Monks' Rest Gardens.
Allotments	0.78	3.57	-2.79		Meets access standard	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	There are large tracts of open space to the west and north of the ward, including a large golf course and some farmland. As areas are developed here, consideration should be given to maintaining and creating routes through this area.
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	None present.

Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
KNIGHTON WARD						
Parks & Gardens	25.98	8.13	17.84	District Parks	Good access across Ward	As there are only three sites within the ward, a summary of each site follows. Knighton Park: A Green Flag Park with a range of excellent facilities, well maintained providing a major resource for the whole ward and performing a function as a District park. This park is important to the ward and the whole city, and should be a priority for ongoing investment and improvement in line with the well presented management plan. Church Lane Gardens: Small park with play area, opportunity for small scale improvements to entrances, shrubs and play. Chiltern Green Open Space: Amenity space with children's play facility, in need of low key improvements to paths and potential for additional planting. Facilities for young people could also be installed.
				Local Parks	Gaps in access across most of the Ward	
Informal open space	1.29	8.13	-6.84		Gaps in access across most of the Ward	
Children & Young People's space	1.05	1.30	-0.25	Children	Gaps in access across most of the Ward	
				Young People	Meets access standard	
Outdoor sports facilities	4.03	16.27	-12.23		Meets access standard	
Natural Greenspace	6.46	8.13	-1.67		Gap in access across the Ward – although Knighton Park provides access to Natural Greenspace	
Allotments	6.16	4.88	1.28		Meets access standard	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	



Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
LATIMER WARD						
Parks & Gardens	4.39	5.79	-1.40	District Parks	Gap in access to the east of the ward	Cossington Street Recreation Ground is the only Park in the ward, it has a floodlight playing field and facilities for play, perimeter paths and entrances. It is in reasonable condition, and a site management plan is in place to guide low key improvements.
				Local Parks	Gap in access to the south and east of the Ward	
Informal open space	4.30	5.79	-1.49		Gap in access across the Ward	Two key areas at St. Marks Open Space and Martin Street. St. Marks has a play area and a ballcourt, which are in reasonable condition. The site at Martin Street is in need of some improvement particularly to improve access.
Children & Young People's space	0.58	0.93	-0.35	Children	Reasonable access across the Ward	There are seven equipped play areas within the ward, only two are set within areas of open space, the rest within the housing area. The sites at Cossington Street Recreation Ground and St. Marks would offer the best potential for future re-investment. Consideration should be given to the need for providing all the smaller play areas within the housing areas.
				Young People	Meets access standard across the Ward	There are three areas provided, ballcourts at Orchardson Ave, Garfield Street and Cossington Street Recreation Ground, which would seem to be good provision for the ward.
Outdoor sports facilities	0.88	11.58	-10.70		Meets access standard	There are facilities for outdoor sport at Cossington Street Recreation Ground and Martin Street. The facility at Cossington is good, with good play areas and playing fields. The facilities at Martin Street could be improved.
Natural Greenspace	0.00	5.79	-5.79		Gap in access across the Ward	There are no areas of natural green space in the ward.
Allotments	0.00	3.47	-3.47		Meets access standard	There are no areas within the ward.
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	None present.
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	
General	Additional open space will be created as part of the Abbey Meadows Regeneration Area					



Quality of open space			Provision (+/-)		Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard				
NEW PARKS WARD						
Parks & Gardens	0.00	8.01	-8.01	District Parks	Good access across most of the Ward, gap in provision in the south west corner	Parts of Stokeswood Park have been identified as Park & Garden on the GIS database, however, this area is largely natural green space with informal footpaths running through areas of grassland and copse. The site, however, does show potential for significant improvement, particularly to entrances, footpaths and signage.
				Local Parks	Provision only in the north east corner of the ward	
Informal open space	5.14	8.01	-2.87		Provision falls below standard across the Ward	The amenity open spaces at Battersbee Road, Allextion Gardens and Sharmon Crescent are in need of improvement, these sites need management plans to guide future provision of facilities and to improve the infrastructure of the sites. Priorities include improved site furniture, better entrances, footpaths and signage.
Children & Young People's space	0.86	1.28	-0.42	Children	Gaps in provision in far the north and south of the Ward	There are a number of small LAP's around Dupont gardens, Yew Tree Avenue and Mulberry Drive which are all in close proximity. There is also a larger play area at Ryder Road (also includes provision for young people). Consideration should be given to rationalising provision in this part of the ward, choosing to invest in developing the facility at Ryder Road, rather than the small LAP's. The facility at Battersbee Road is in good condition, but the surrounding amenity space is in need of improvement. The play area at Sharmon Crescent is reasonable, but would benefit from more updated equipment.
				Young People	Meets access standard	
Outdoor sports facilities	7.50	16.02	-8.52		Meets access standard	Parts of Western Park fall within the ward, which has facilities for outdoor sport. Western Park has a site management plan, it is understood that improvements are required to the whole park, including sports pitches, buildings and fixed sports areas such as the tennis courts and bowling green.
Natural Greenspace	17.70	8.01	9.69		Provision falls below standard across the Ward	There is a significant area of natural green space at Stokeswood Park, which shows significant opportunity for improvement (see above).
Allotments	9.20	4.81	4.39		Meets access standard	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	The golf course to the west of the ward is a significant area of open space, and there is the potential for green links to it. Stokeswood Park is a valuable green corridor, which could be improved for access, particularly linking cycle ways together.
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	None within the ward.



Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
RUSHEY MEAD WARD						
Parks & Gardens	17.23	7.57	9.66	District Parks	No access across the Ward	Appleton Park is the key park in the ward, it is laid out on reclaimed landfill site and is still a 'developing' park. A site management plan is in place which identifies key improvements required at the site, including fencing of the play area, and improving the internal footpath network.
				Local Parks	Provision only in the south and centre of the Ward	
Informal open space	4.00	7.57	-3.57		Provision limited to the north of the Ward	There are amenity open space at Nagle Grove and Trevino Drive, these sites would benefit from management plans to guide low key improvements to soft and hard landscape features.
Children & Young People's space	1.12	1.21	-0.09	Children	Good access in the north of the Ward – gap in access elsewhere	There are facilities for juniors and infants at Appleton Park, which would benefit from fencing, and offers good opportunity to extend provision for the ward. There are two areas at the recreation ground, provision is reasonable, but they are in need of refurbishment. There are additional smaller facilities at Troon Way and Barnes Close.
				Young People	Falls below standard – existing provision in need up updating	There is a hard kick about area at Rushey Fields Recreation Ground, which is well used, but in need of refurbishment. This site offers potential for additional facilities for young people.
Outdoor sports facilities	2.45	15.13	-12.69		Meets standard	Parts of Rushey Fields Recreation Ground fall within the ward, the sports pitches are well used and in reasonable condition. There is a site management plan in place which identifies the need to improve the associated buildings.
Natural Greenspace	61.35	7.57	53.79		Access in the centre and north west of the Ward. Watermead Country Park contributes significant District provision	There are significant tracts of natural green space at Watermead Country Park, and also an important little area at Peebles Way. The facility at Watermead is a Green Flag park, and offers significant value as a regional facility and attraction. The nature reserve at Peebles Way, shows good signs of local involvement, and should continue to be developed as a local resource.
Allotments	4.00	4.54	-0.54		Meets standard	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	Watermead Country Park and Ecology Park are key green corridors located to the west and north of the ward (and City).
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	None within the ward.



Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
SPINNEY HILLS WARD						
Parks & Gardens	14.37	10.62	3.74	District Parks	Good access across the Ward	The key site, Spinney Hill Park is a large Victorian park, with a range of facilities including a staffed adventure play ground. The site has a management plan, but it is recommended that an improvement plan (or HLF type conservation management plan) is developed for the park to guide long term investment and restoration.
				Local Parks	Access limited to centre of the Ward	
Informal open space	1.72	10.62	-8.90		Poor access across the Ward	There is an area of amenity space at Kamloops Crescent, this is in need of some improvement, particularly to shrub borders and signage.
Children & Young People's space	1.62	1.70	-0.08	Children	Over provision in the centre and north-west of the ward, under provision in the south-east	There are over twenty equipped children's play areas all within close proximity, the majority of sites are small LAP's with few pieces of equipment. It is difficult to see how many play areas can be required, and this area is a priority for addressing in the Play Strategy. Consideration should be given to removing play equipment in key areas, and providing fewer, larger, better quality play facilities which the Council can afford to provide and maintain. Alternative uses should be sought for play areas which are de-commissioned.
				Young People	Good access across the Ward	There are facilities at Spinney Hill Park and Melbourne Street which are in good condition and well used. Provision for young people is a priority in this ward, which has the second highest percentage of 16-19 year olds in Leicester.
Outdoor sports facilities	0.00	21.25	-21.25		Meets the access standard	There are playing fields at Spinney Hill Park which are in reasonable condition, there is potential to improve the changing facilities.
Natural Greenspace	0.00	10.62	-10.62		No access across the Ward	There are no areas of natural green space within the ward.
Allotments	5.07	6.37	-1.31		Meets the access standard	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	There are no significant areas within the ward.
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	None present

Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
STONEYGATE WARD						
Parks & Gardens	0.00	10.62	-10.62	District Parks	Gap in access in the south-east of the Ward	A there are only a small number of sites within the ward, all of which are play areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medway Street Nursery School • Medway Street School • Cedar Road Play Area • Onslow Street Play Area The main priority for improvement is Onslow Street Play Area, which would benefit from improved entrances, signage needs improving, more seating, better play facilities and improved shrub beds.
				Local Parks	Gap in access across the Ward	
Informal open space	0.00	10.62	-10.62		Gap in access across the Ward	
Children & Young People's space	0.51	1.70	-1.19	Children	Provision limited to the north-west of the Ward	
				Young People	Falls below standard across the Ward	
Outdoor sports facilities	0.00	21.25	-21.25		Meets standard	
Natural Greenspace	0.00	10.62	-10.62		Gap in access across the Ward	
Allotments	1.22	6.37	-5.16		Meets standard	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	



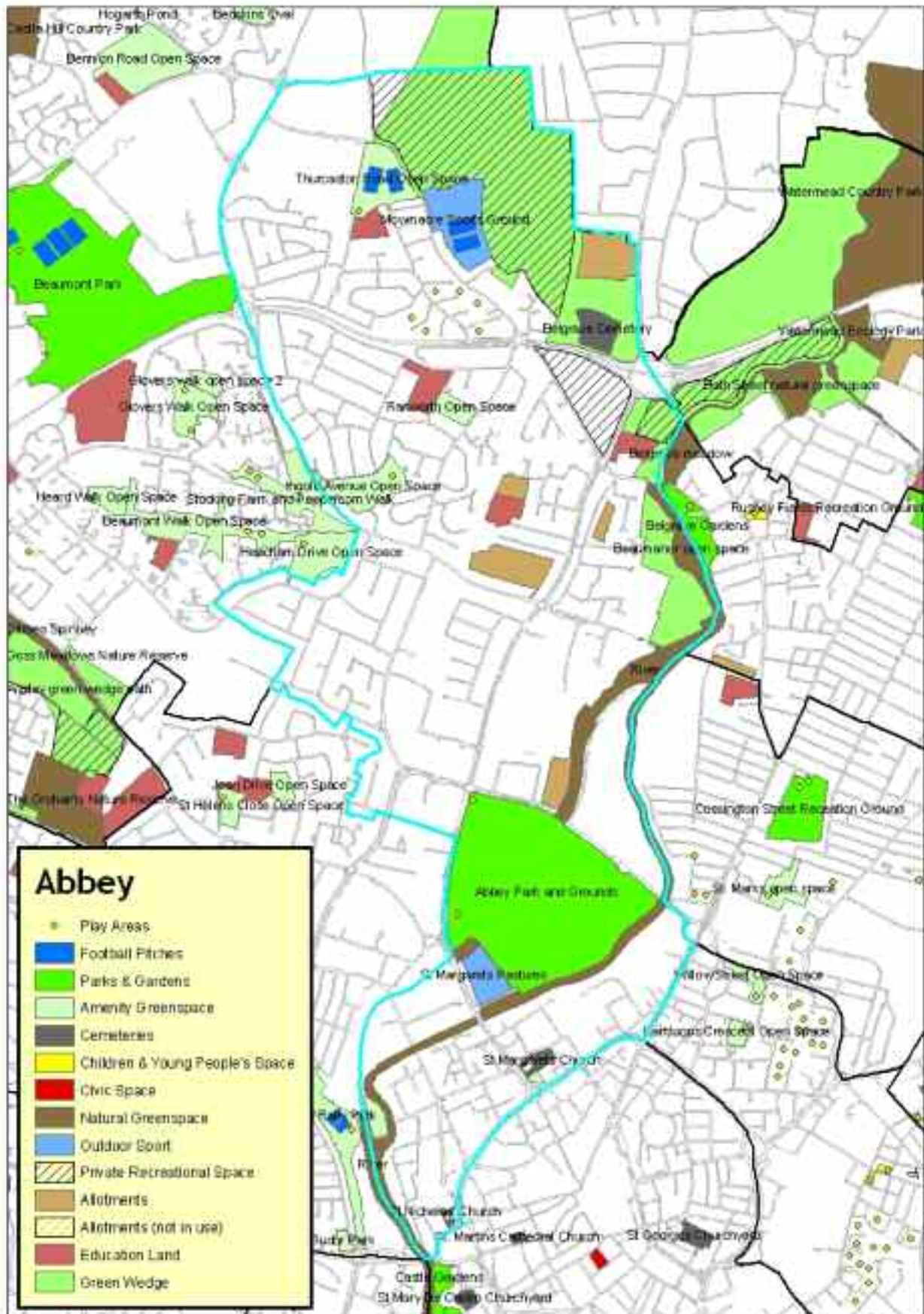
Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
THURNCOURT WARD						
Parks & Gardens	11.57	4.97	6.60	District Parks	Access limited to the west of the Ward	<p>There are only two sites within the ward, Ocean Road Open Space and Willowbrook Park. Both are linked and form part of an important green corridor that runs through the ward. They have a mixture of natural green space areas, 2 play areas, a ball court and sports pitches. The open space is a valuable facility within the ward, and is reasonable well maintained.</p> <p>As they are the only significant areas of open space within the ward, implementation of the site management plans to ensure ongoing improvement and development is a priority. There is potential to 'formalise' some of the areas, particularly at Willowbrook Park, by creating boundaries, entrances and improving internal access routes and signage.</p>
				Local Parks	Gaps in access in the centre and north-east of the Ward	
Informal open space	6.56	4.97	1.59		Access limited to the centre of the Ward	
Children & Young People's space	0.08	0.79	-0.71	Children	Access limited to the south-east of the Ward	
				Young People	Falls below standard across the Ward	
Outdoor sports facilities	3.07	9.94	-6.86		Meets access standard.	
Natural Greenspace	0.00	4.97	-4.97		Gap in access across the Ward	
Allotments	1.18	2.98	-1.80		Meets access standard.	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	

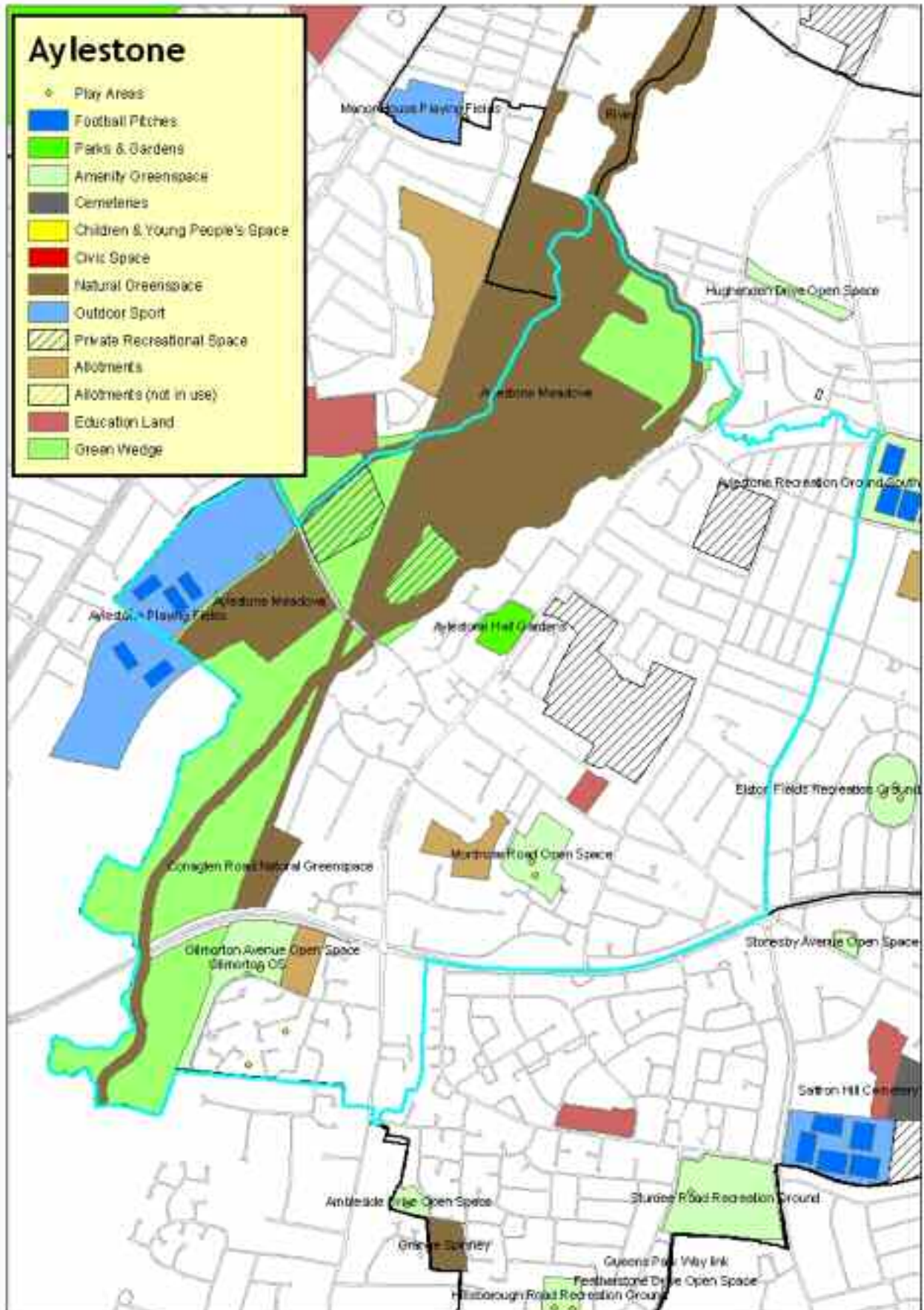
Quality of open space					Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)			
WESTCOTES WARD						
Parks & Gardens	2.00	4.33	-2.32	District Parks	Gap in access across the majority of the Ward	<p>There are two main sites within the ward, Bede Park and Manor House NC. The most significant park is Bede Park, which is a new park with a good range of facilities, including play and cycle ways. The park requires some attention to detail in terms of minor vandalism (e.g. graffiti), there is also potential for additional tree planting and enhanced shrub beds. There is a site management plan in place which should be implemented to ensure ongoing improvement of the site.</p>
				Local Parks	Gap in access in the south of the Ward	
Informal open space	0.00	4.33	-4.33		Gap in access across the Ward	
Children & Young People's space	0.39	0.69	-0.30	Children	Good provision across the Ward	
				Young People	Gap in access across the Ward	
Outdoor sports facilities	3.35	8.65	-5.30		Meets access standard.	
Natural Greenspace	0.00	4.33	-4.33		Gap in access across the Ward	
Allotments	0.00	2.60	-2.60		Gap in access across the Ward	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A		N/A	

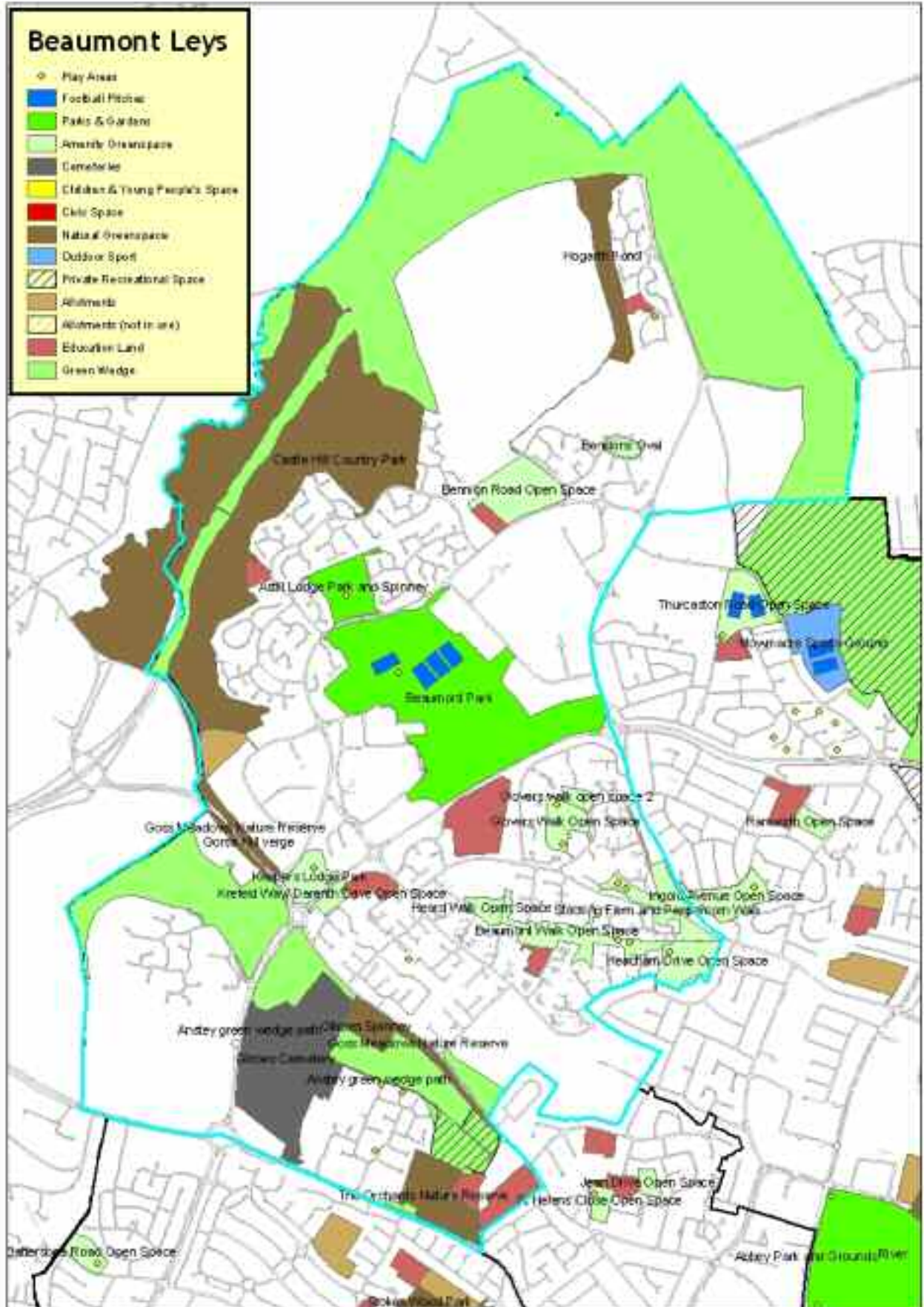


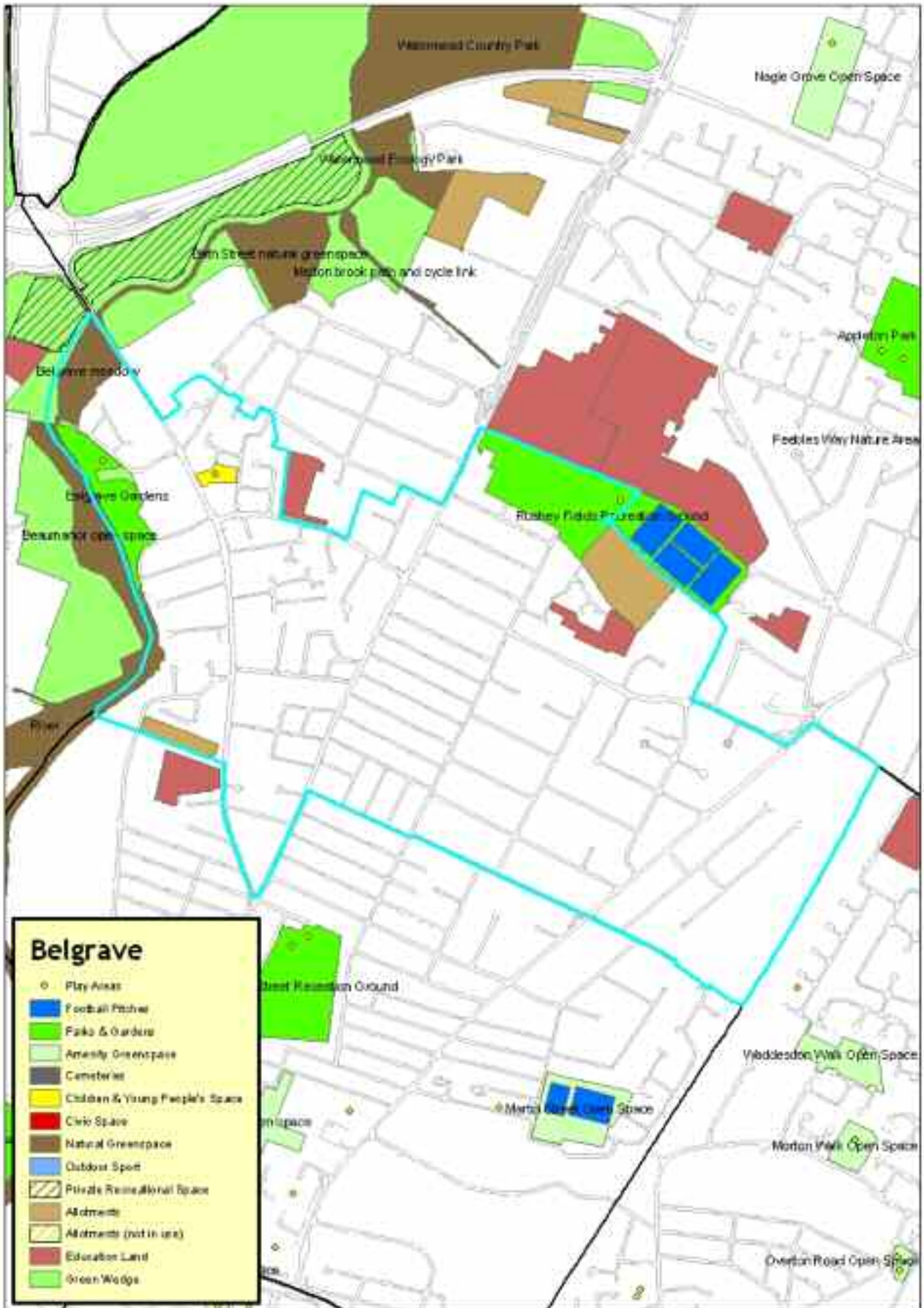
Quality of open space				Access	Quality
Typology	Existing	Required Standard	Provision (+/-)		
WESTERN PARK WARD					
Parks & Gardens	68.36	4.33	64.04	District Parks	<p>As there is only a small number of sites within the ward, analysis of quality is made on a site by site basis.</p> <p>St. Paul's Pocket Park: Small park with equipped play area, there is a need to improve access to the site (site next to a busy junction), would also benefit from improved entrances.</p> <p>Western Golf Course: Large golf course with areas of natural green space. No significant issues in terms of opportunity for improvements.</p> <p>Western Park: Large park with range of facilities and functions, there is a site management plan in place which identifies a range of issues associated with the site. The park is in need of re-investment, and whilst the management plan will guide this, it is felt that the numerous issues involved with the site and the scale of improvements required that a park improvement plan should be developed. The park is one of the largest in Leicester, and should be a priority for investment, aiming to achieve green flag status through a co-ordinated programme of re-investment and management.</p> <p>Fosse Park: Another park within the ward, with a good range of facilities, it would benefit from some refurbishment e.g. repair fencing on MUGA, repair benches and install signage. A site management plan is in place for this park, and this should be implemented to ensure ongoing improvement of the site.</p> <p>Westcotes Gardens: Another small Park and Garden, the focus on being the provision of horticulture and trees, with a small play area. The site has a management plan, which should be implemented to ensure ongoing improvement and development of the site, key improvements to the site furniture and soft landscaping are priorities.</p>
				Local Parks	
Informal open space	0.00	4.33	-4.33		
Children & Young People's space	1.57	0.87	0.70	Children	
				Young People	
Outdoor sports facilities	0.00	8.65	-8.65	Meets access standard.	
Natural Greenspace	0.00	4.33	-4.33	Gap in access across the Ward	
Allotments	2.73	2.60	0.13	Meets access standard.	
Routeway/Green Corridor	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Cemetery	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

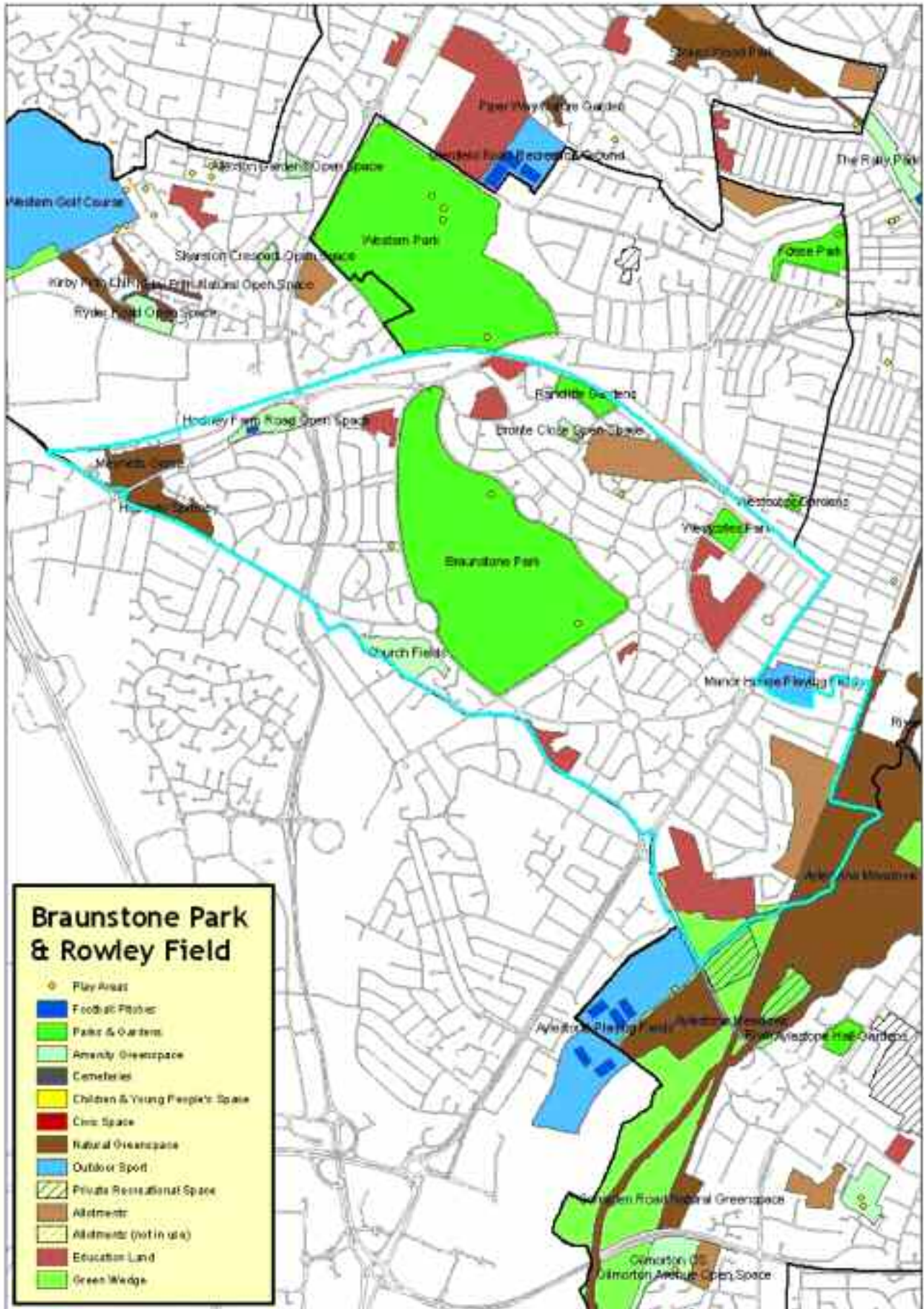
Appendix 2 Maps Showing Open Space Provision By Ward

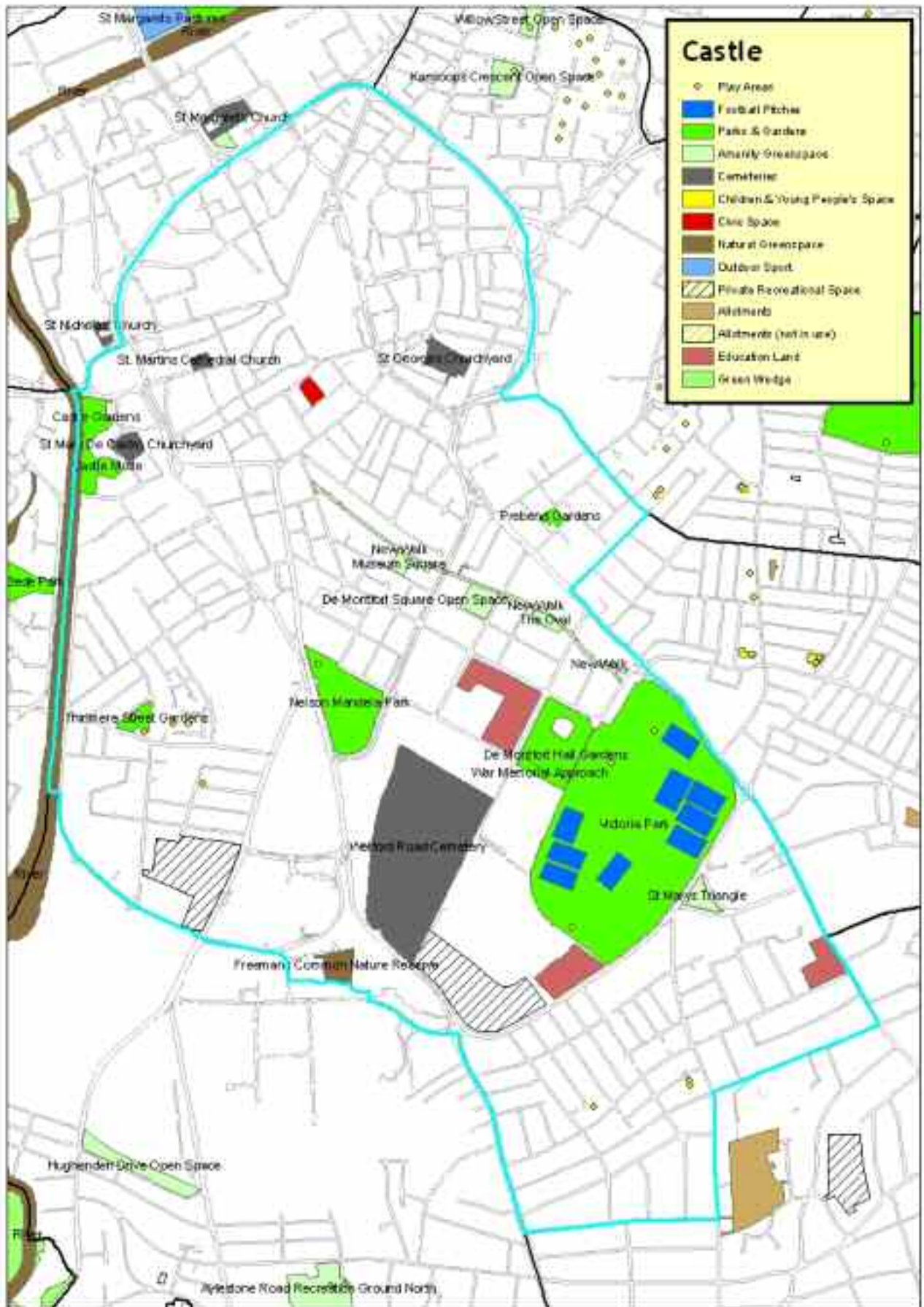


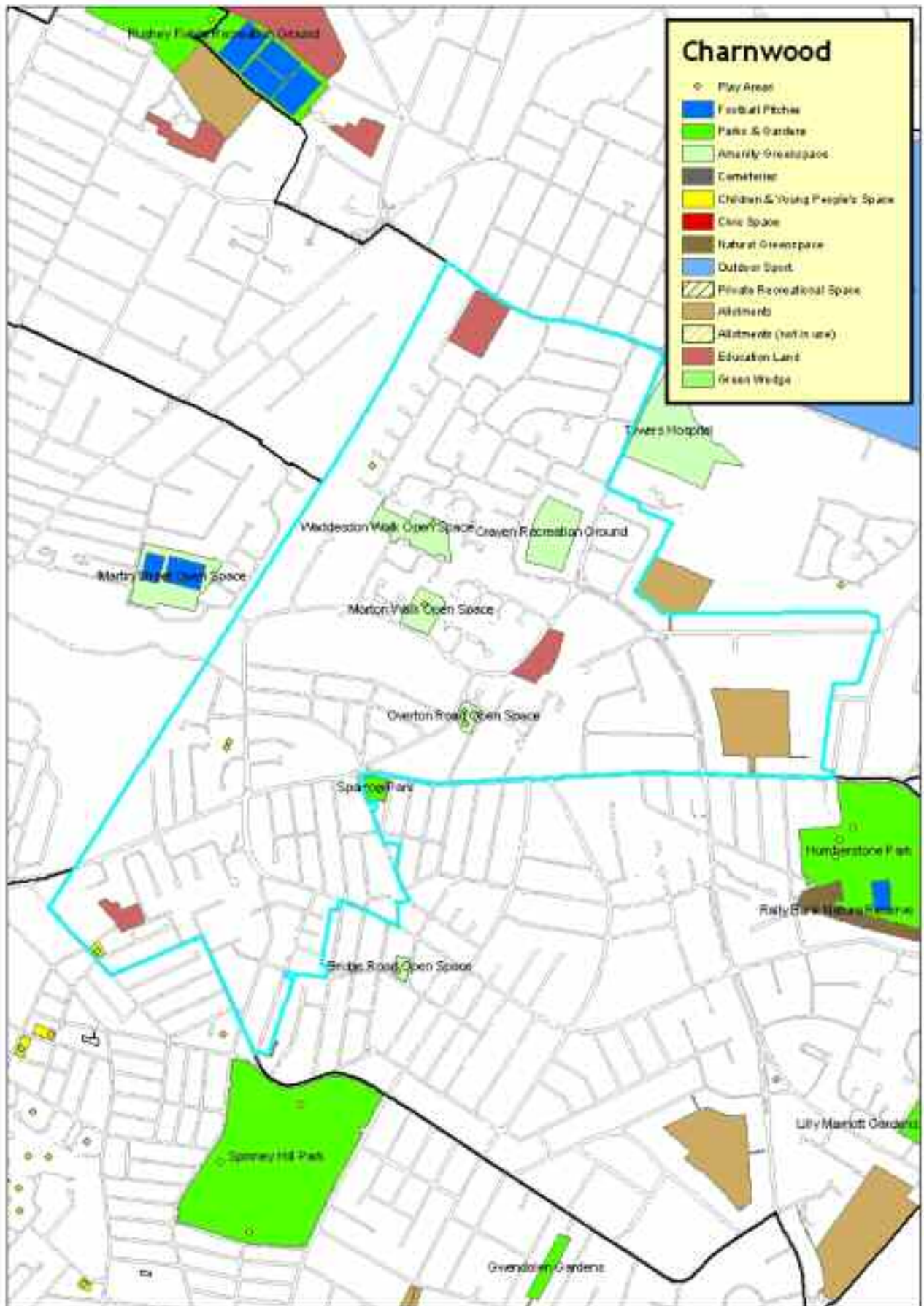


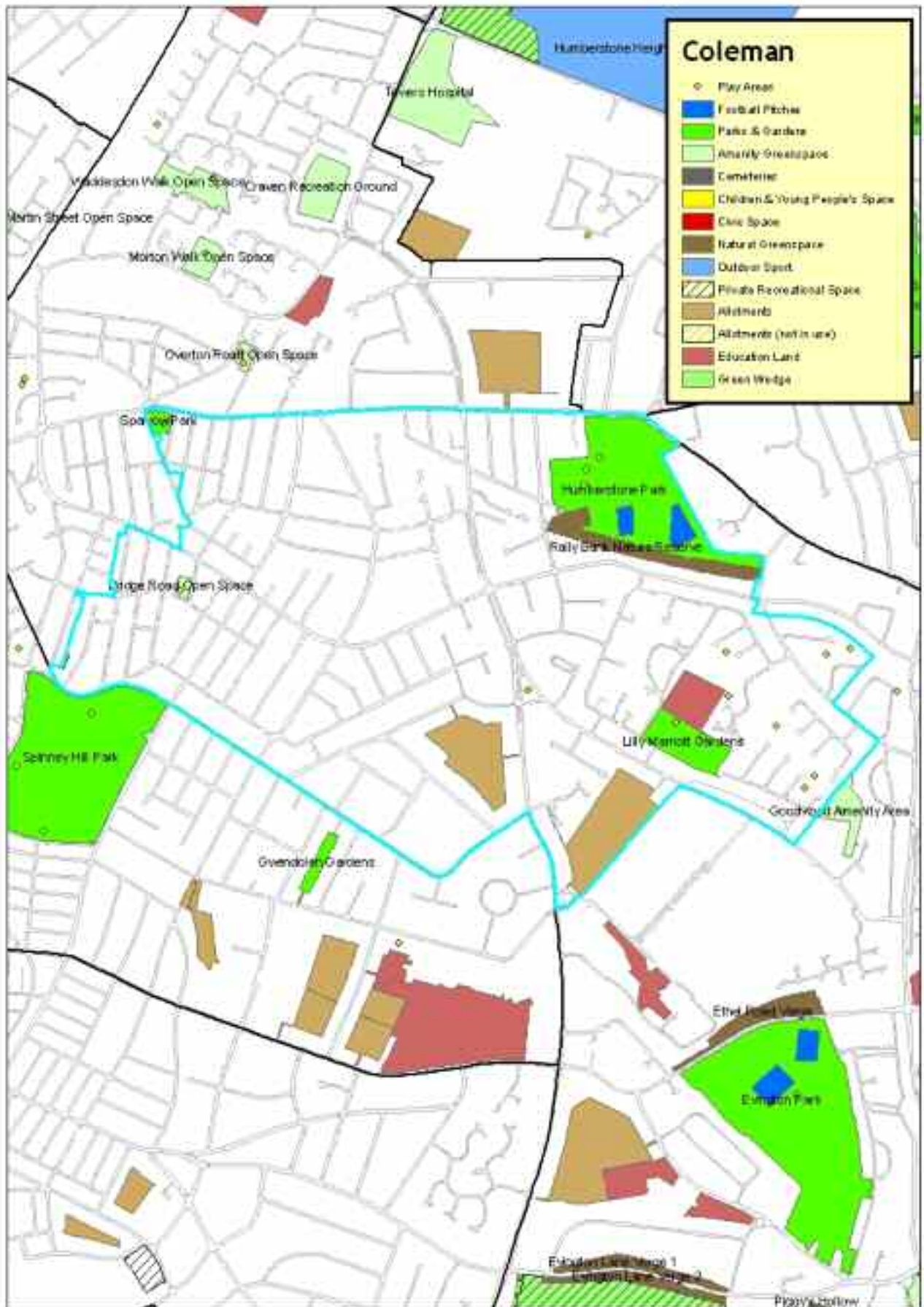


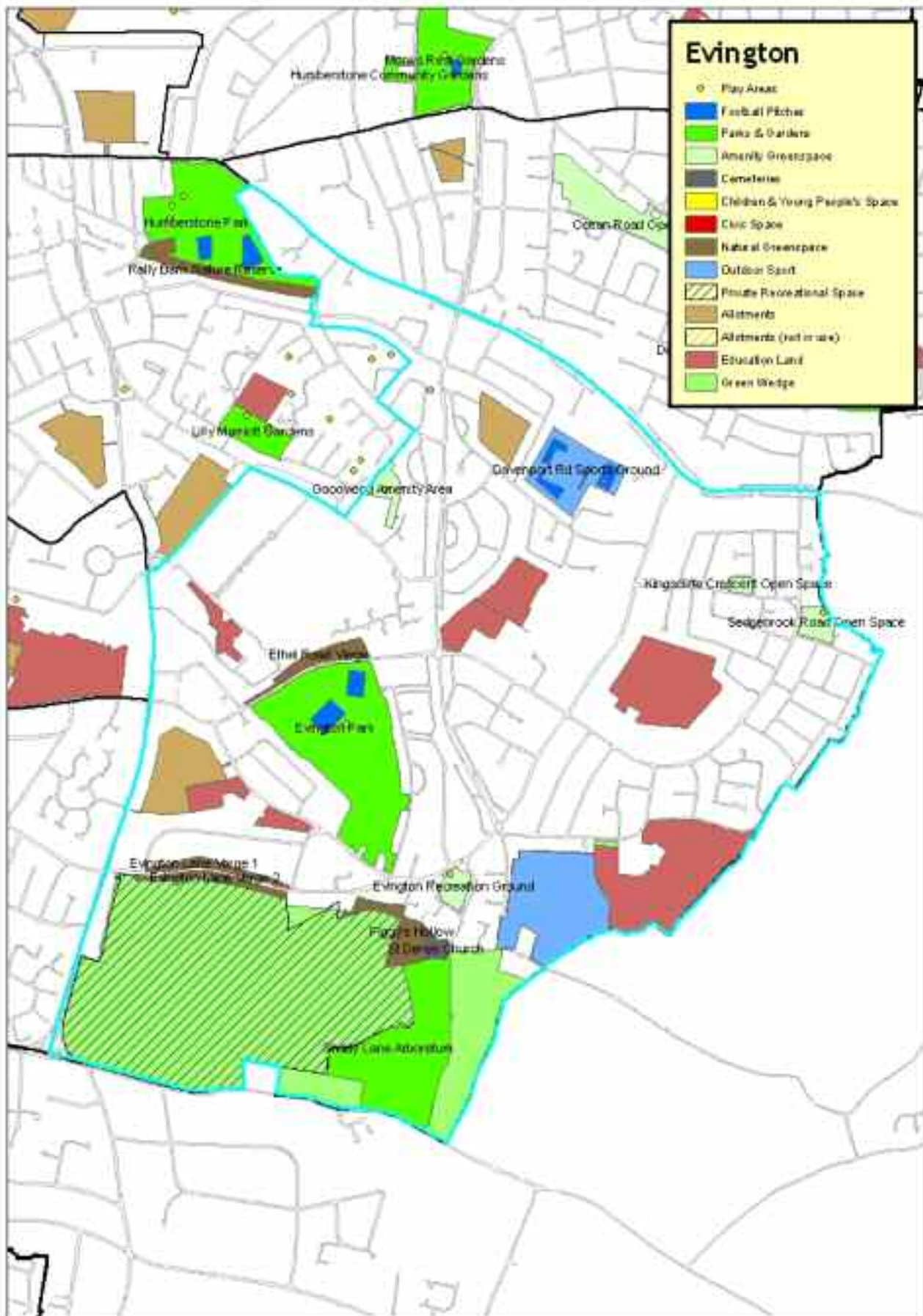


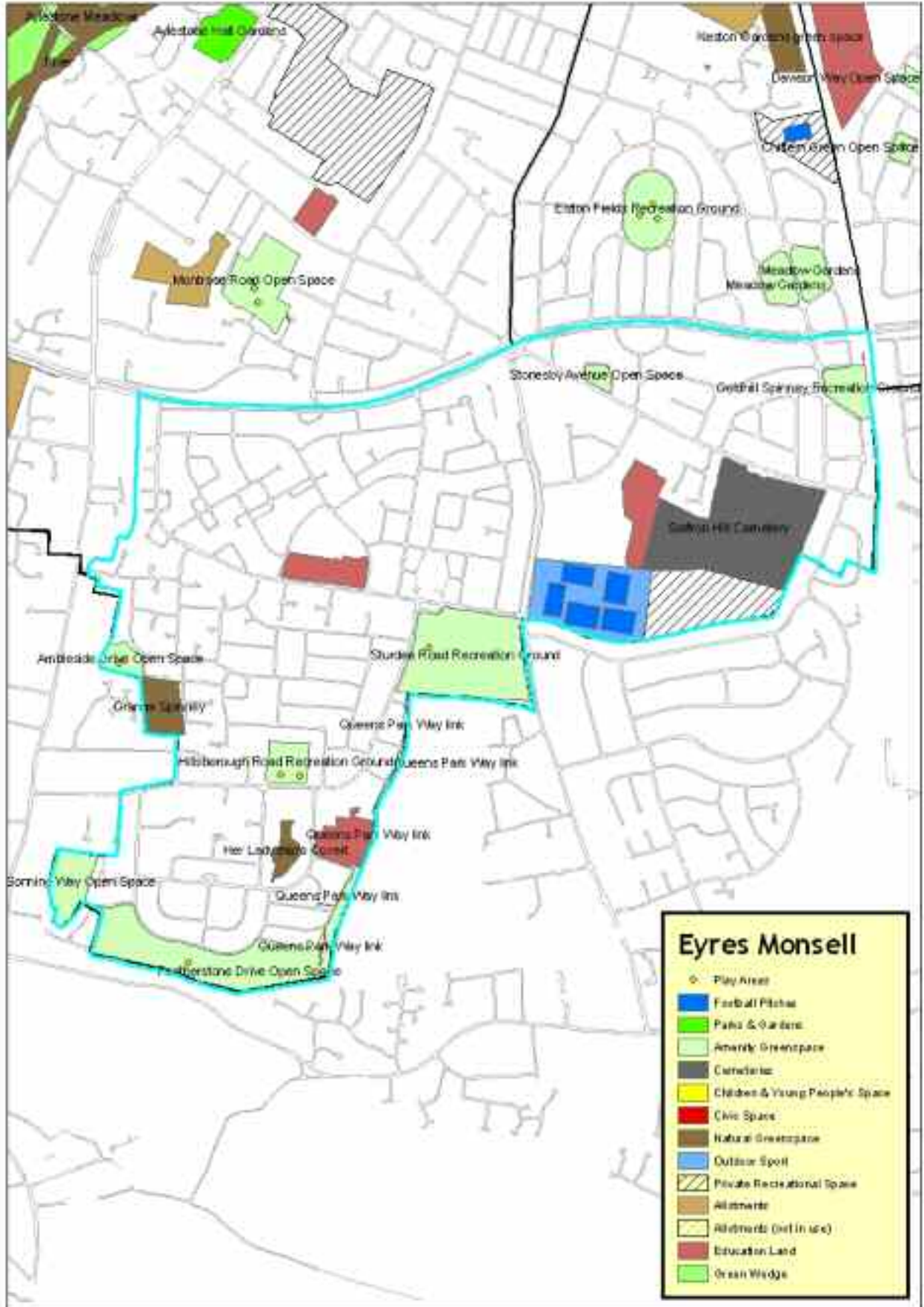


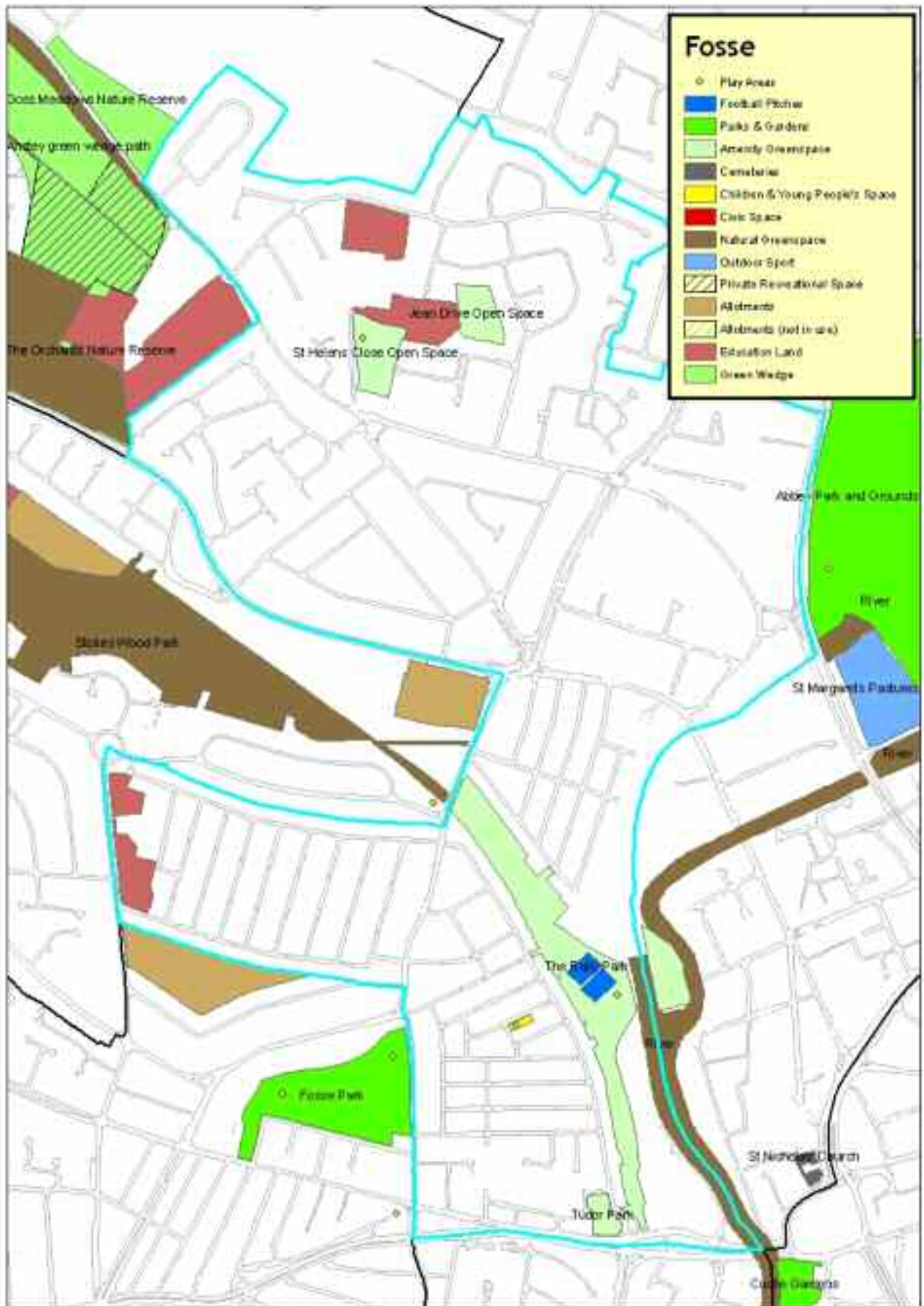


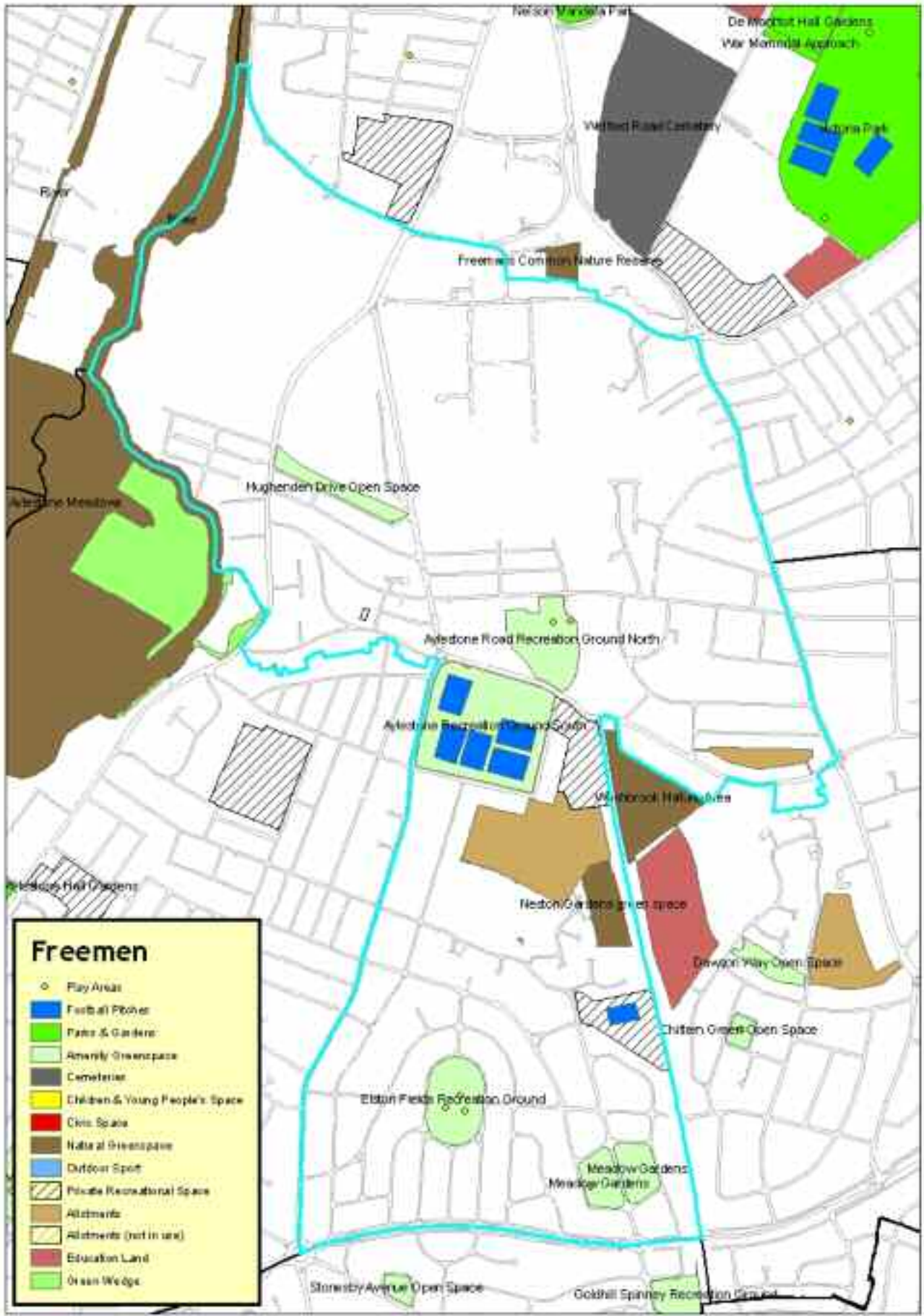


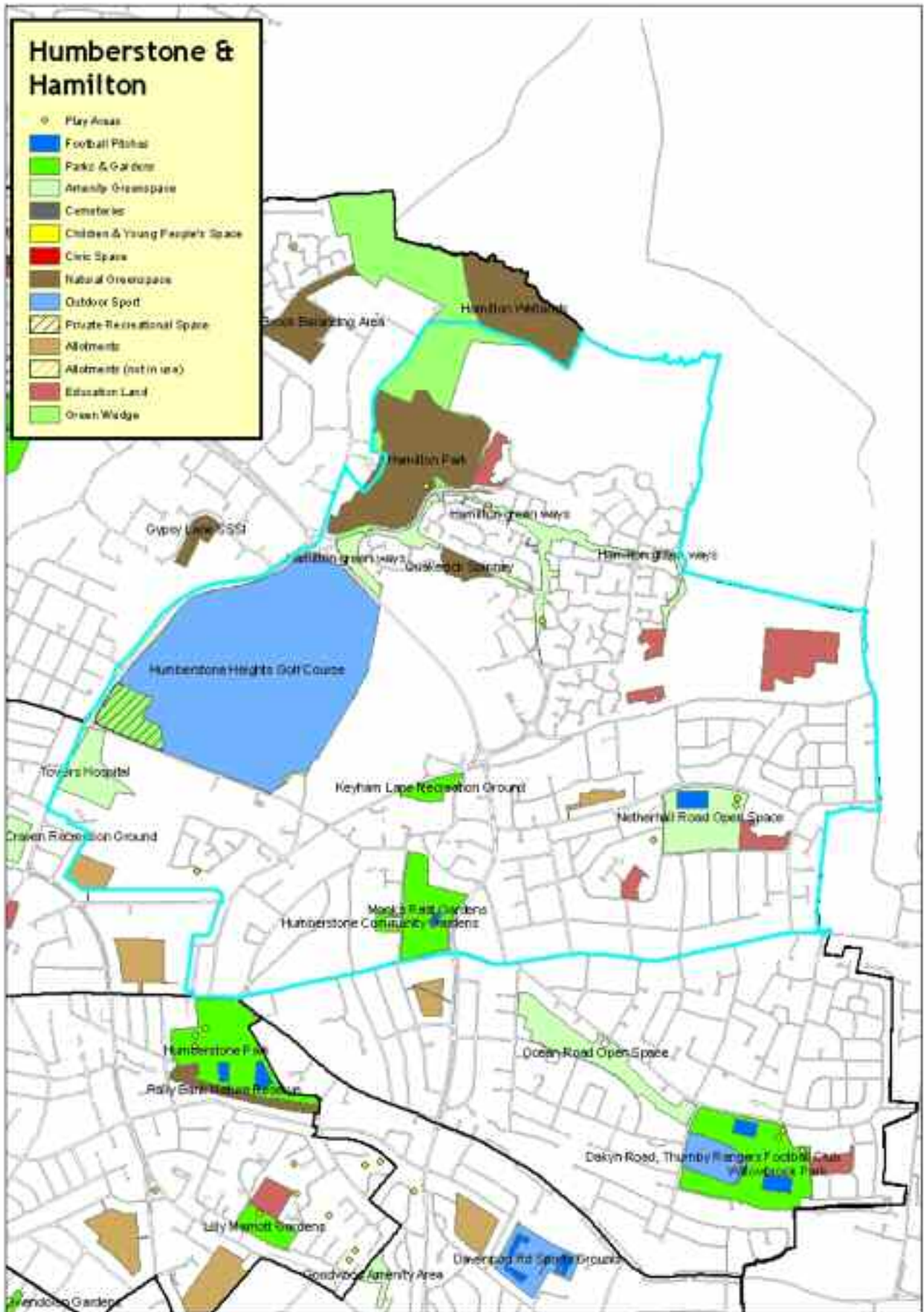


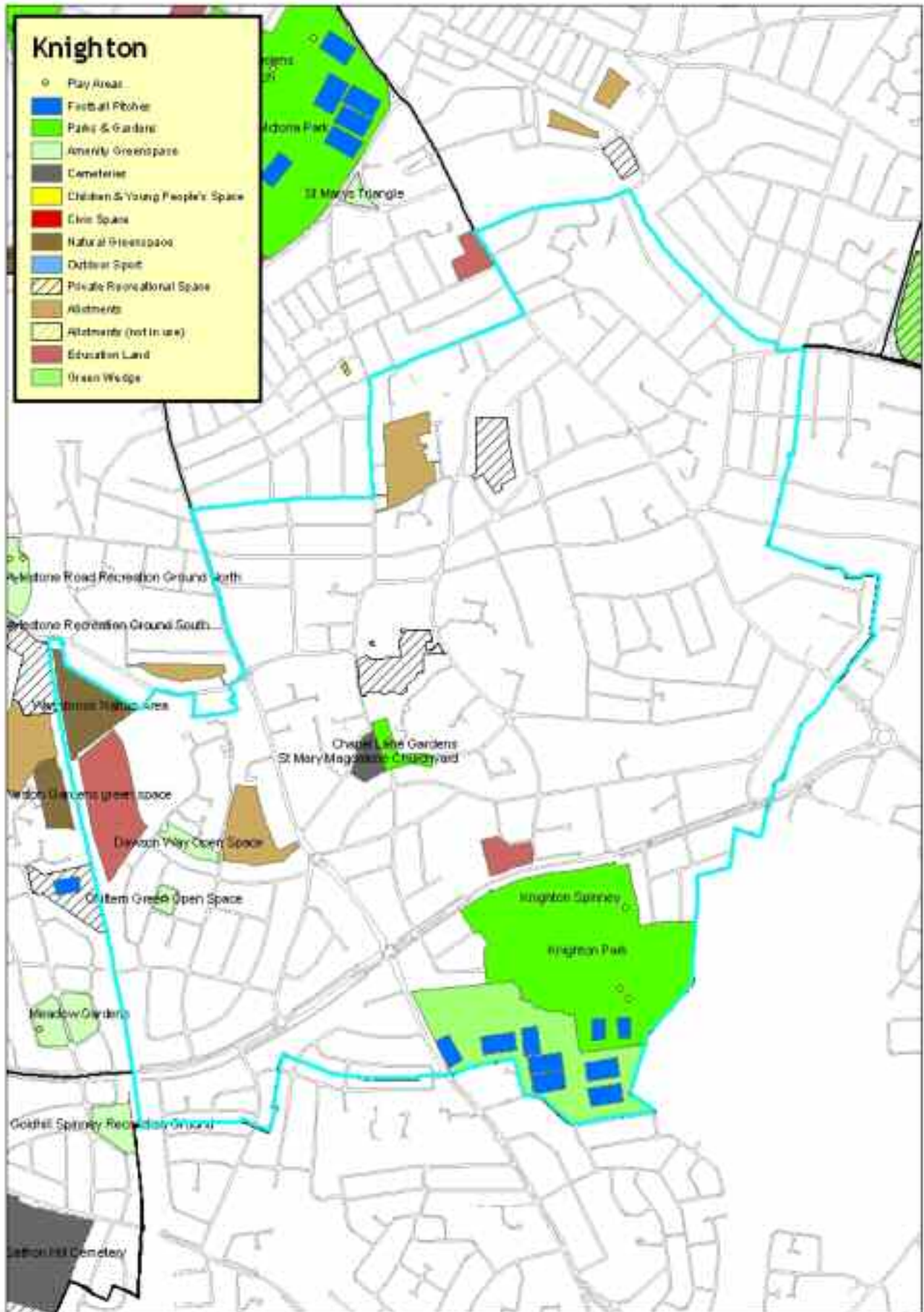


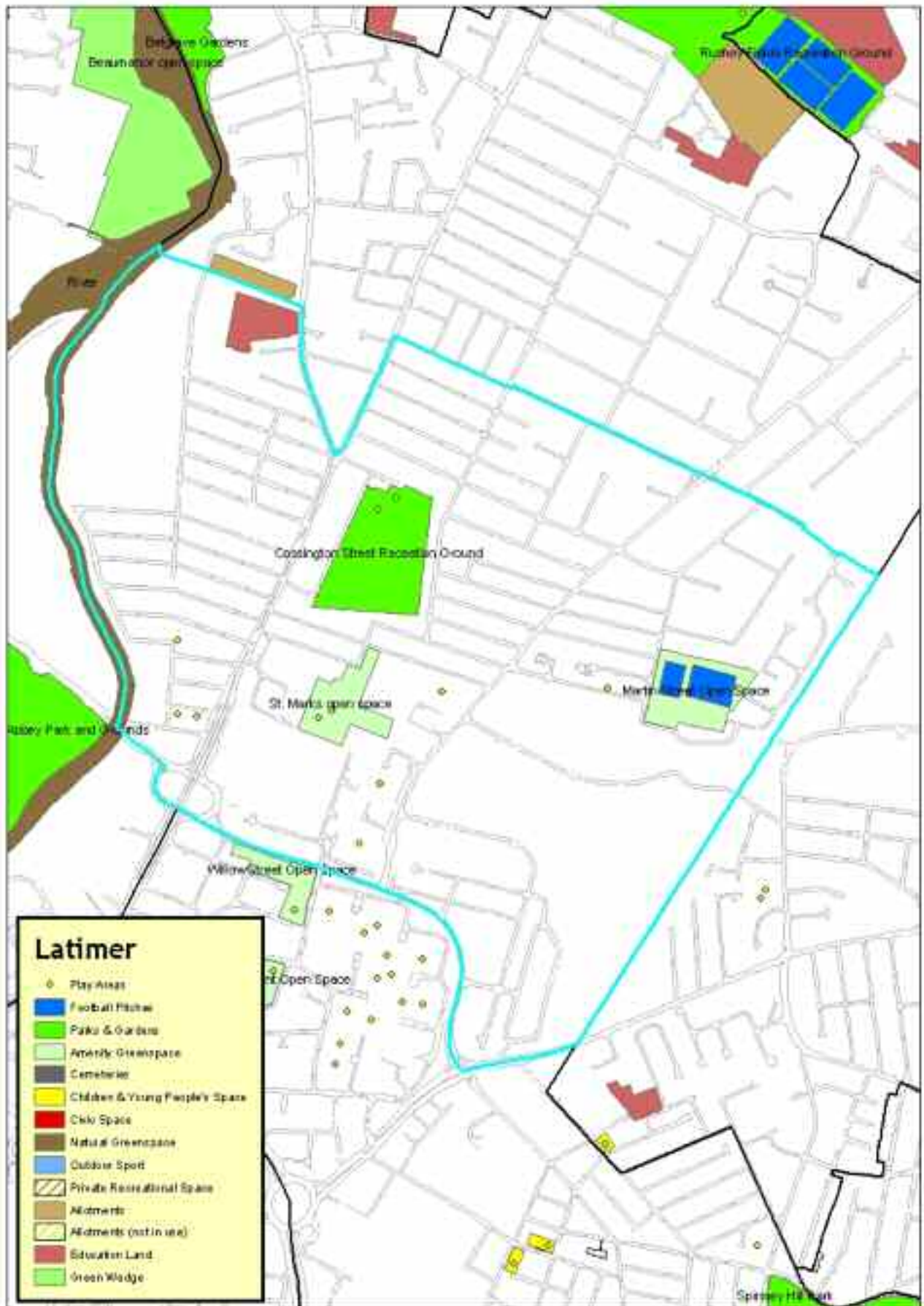


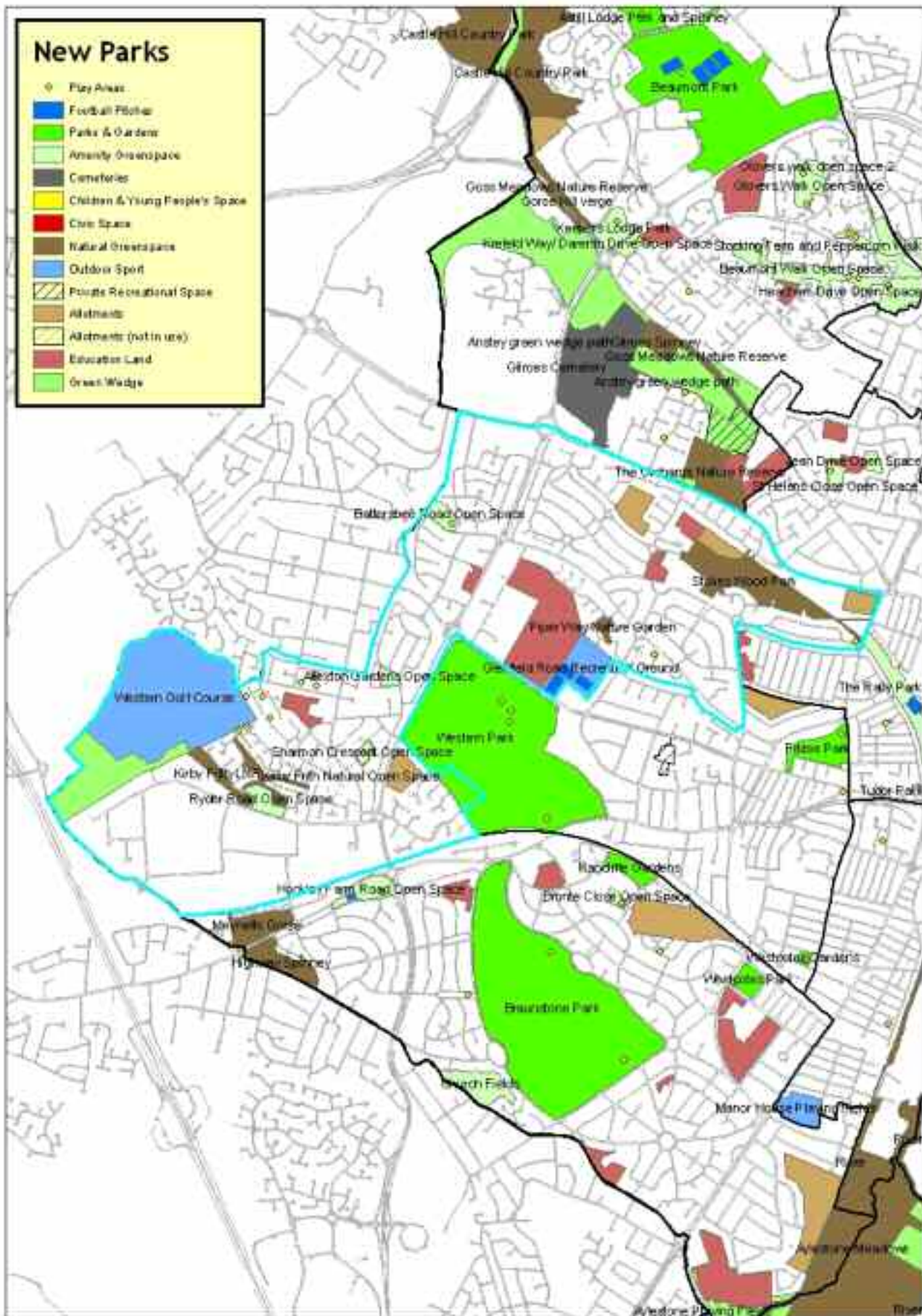


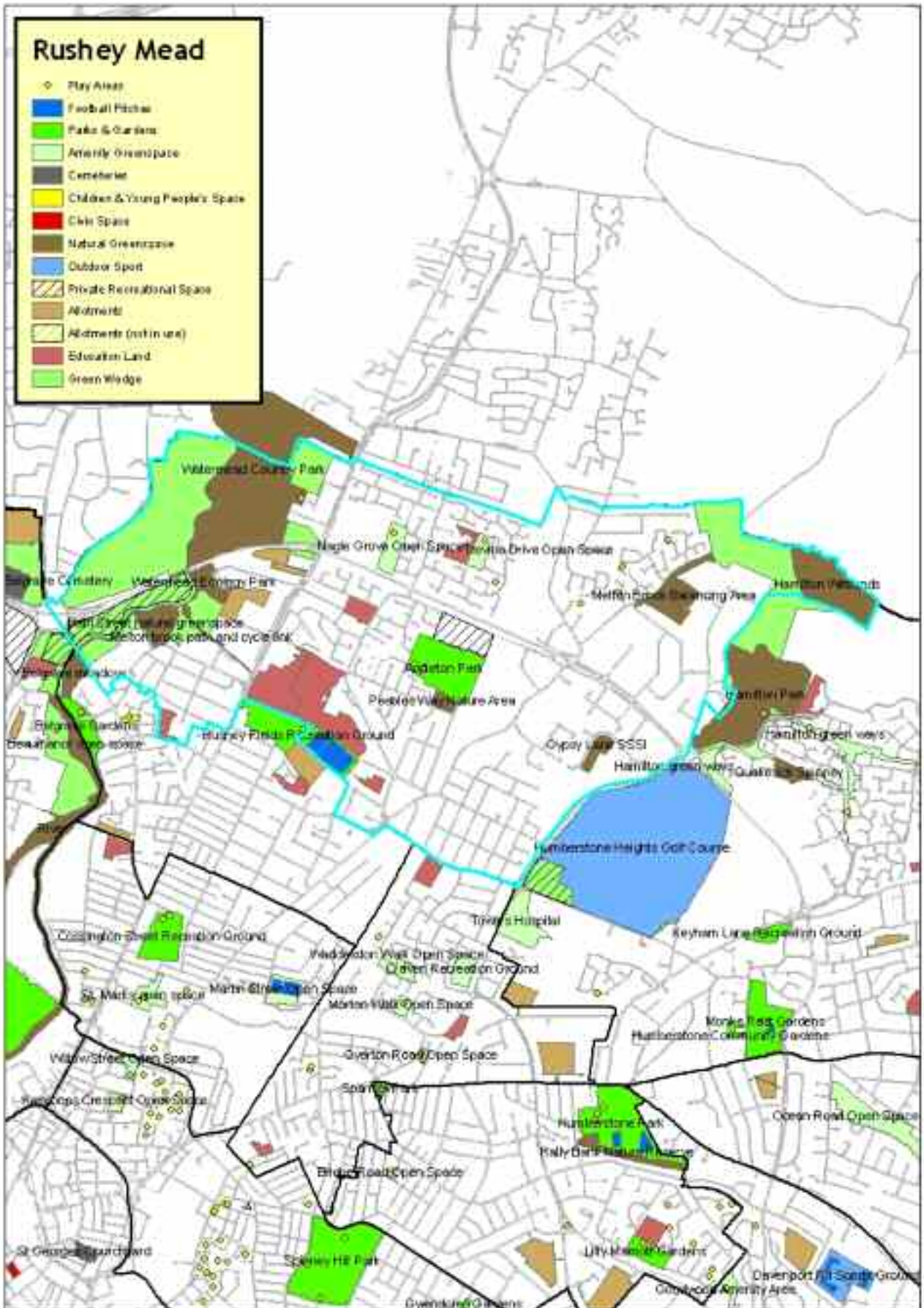


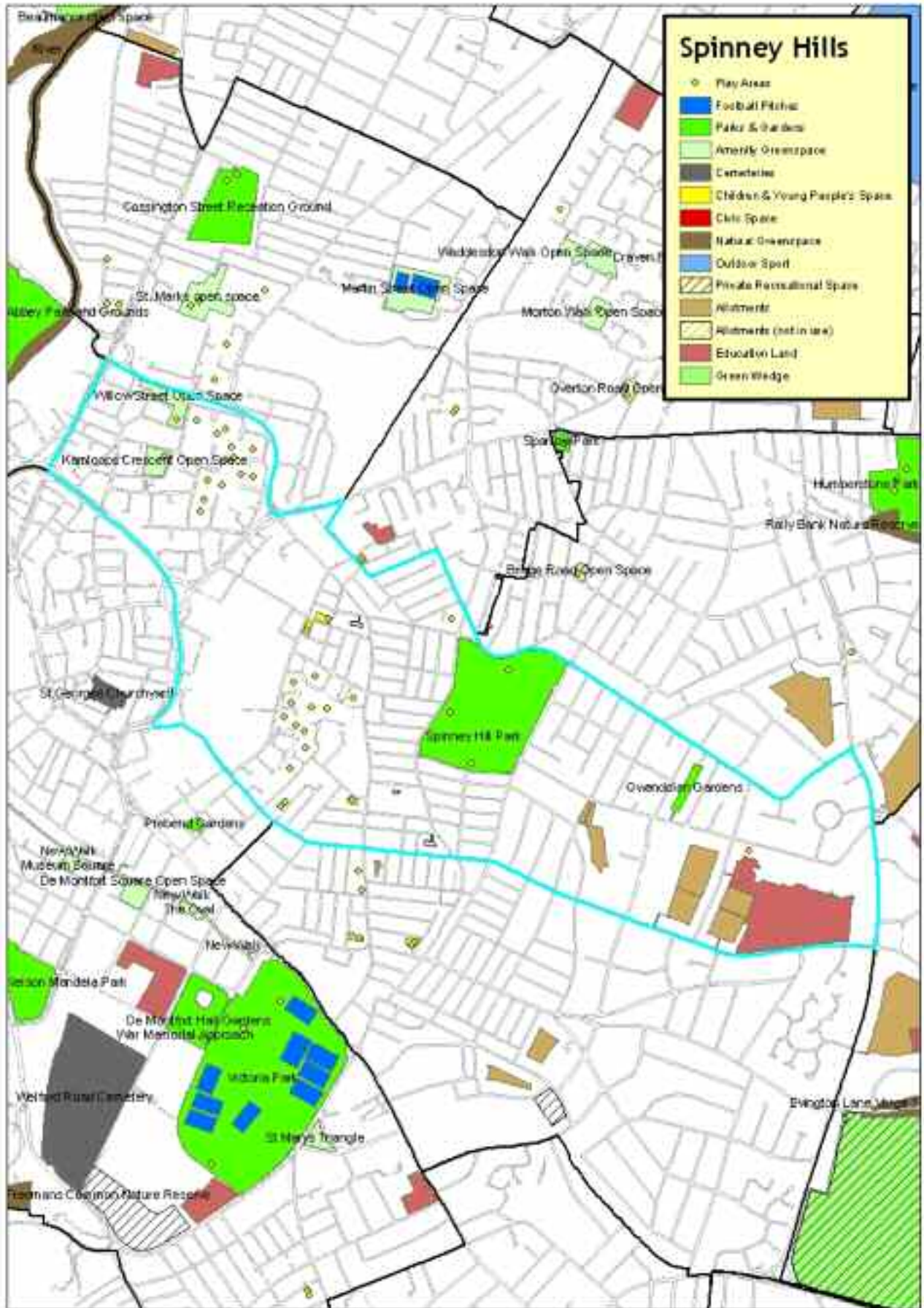


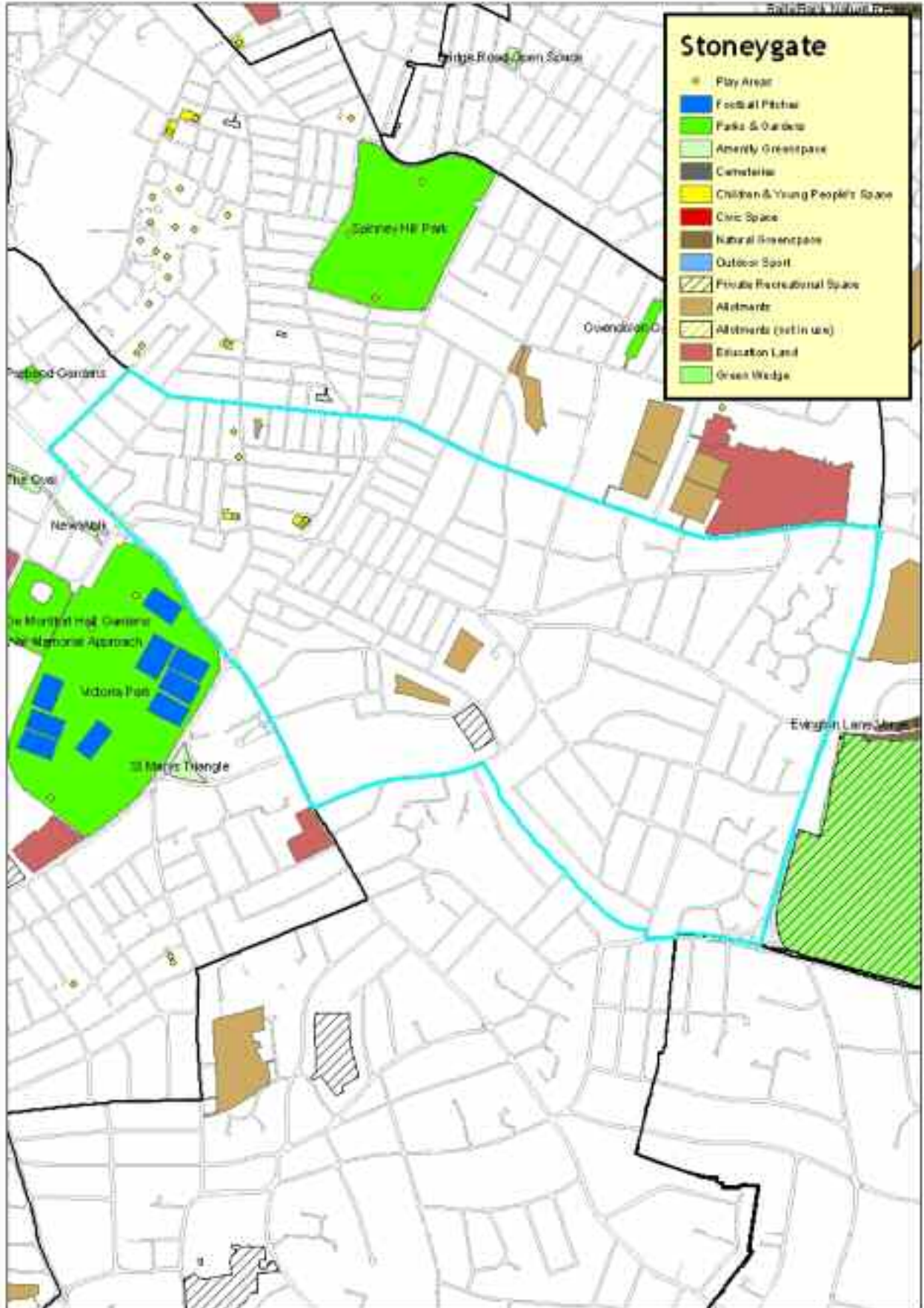


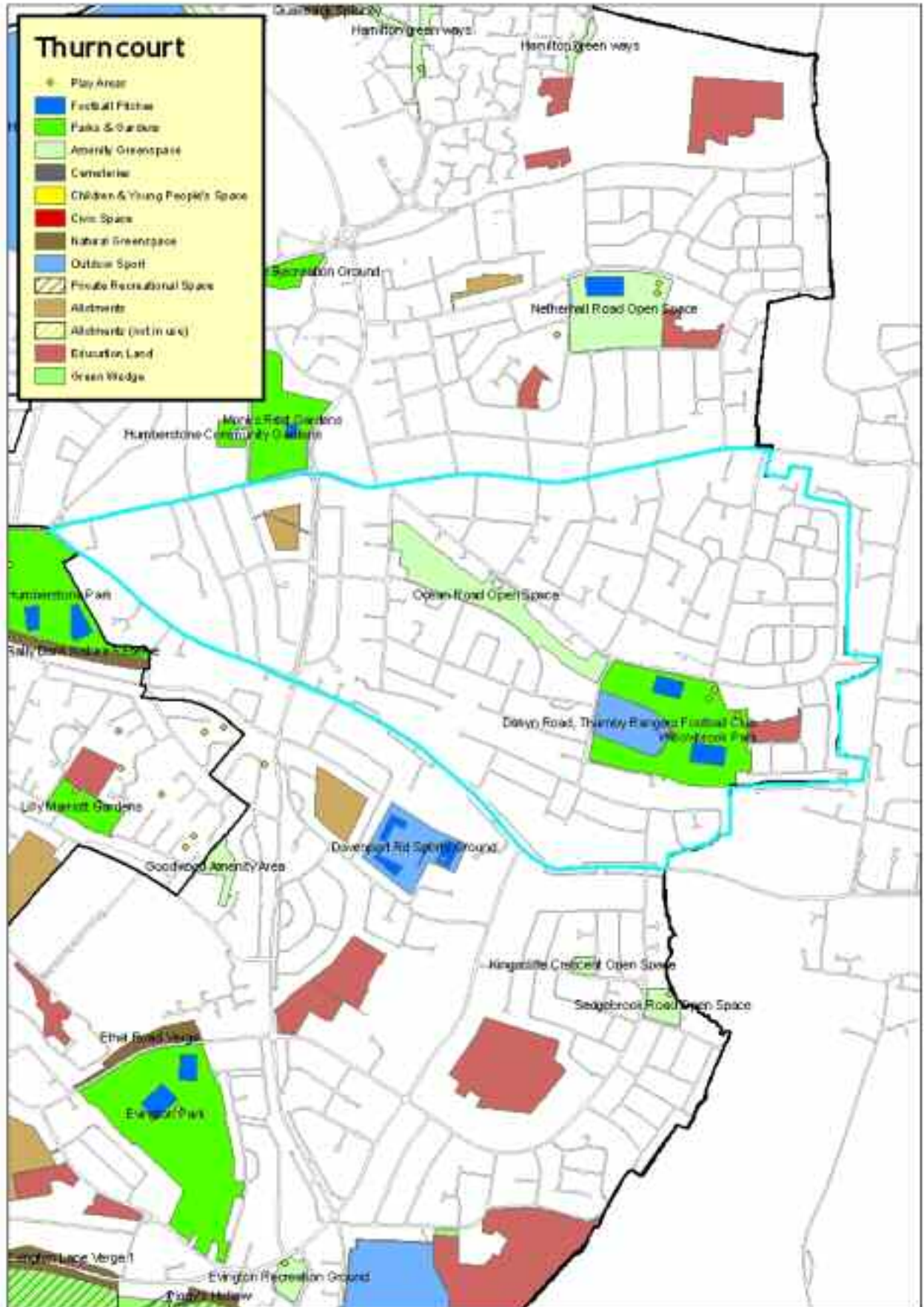


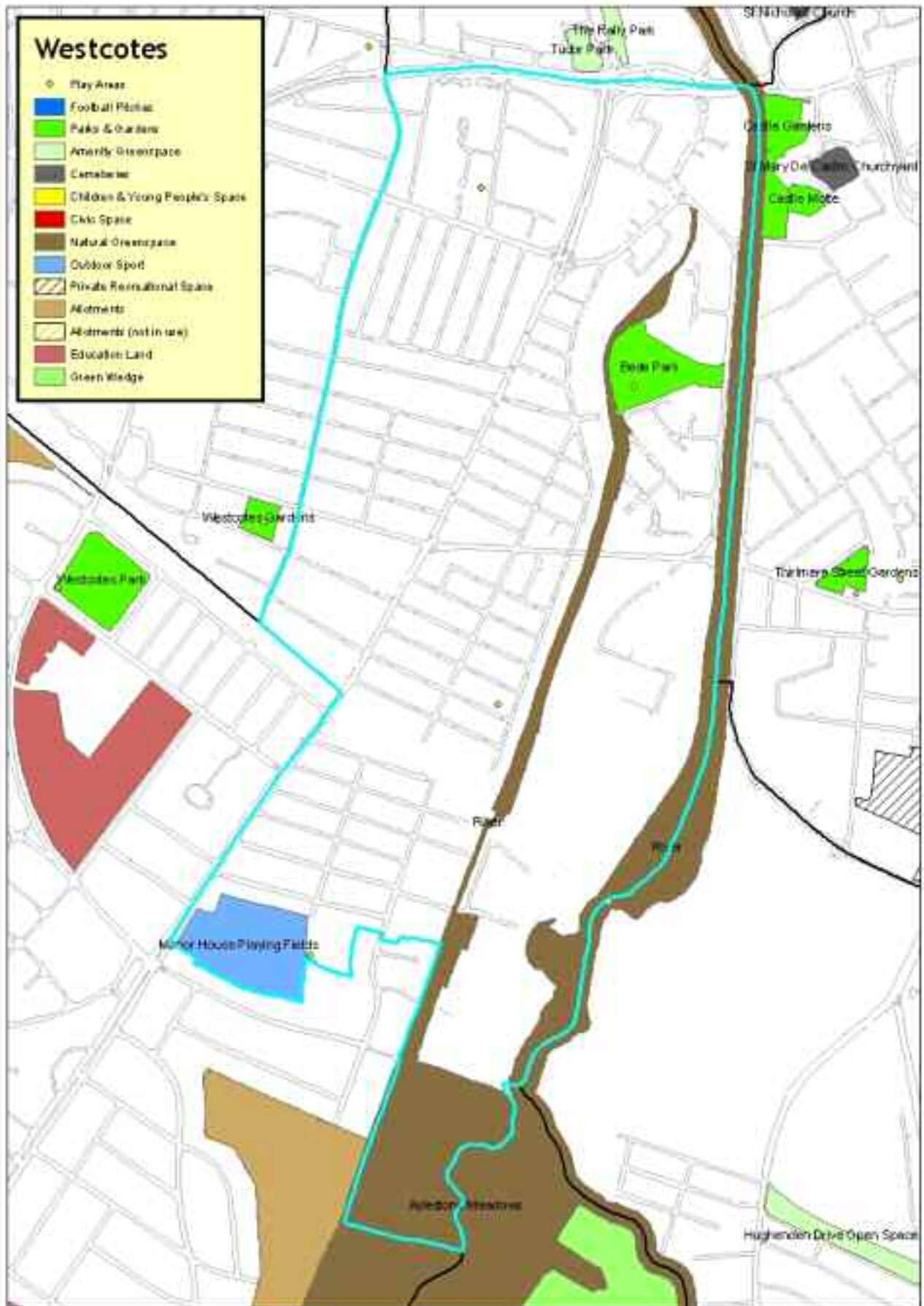


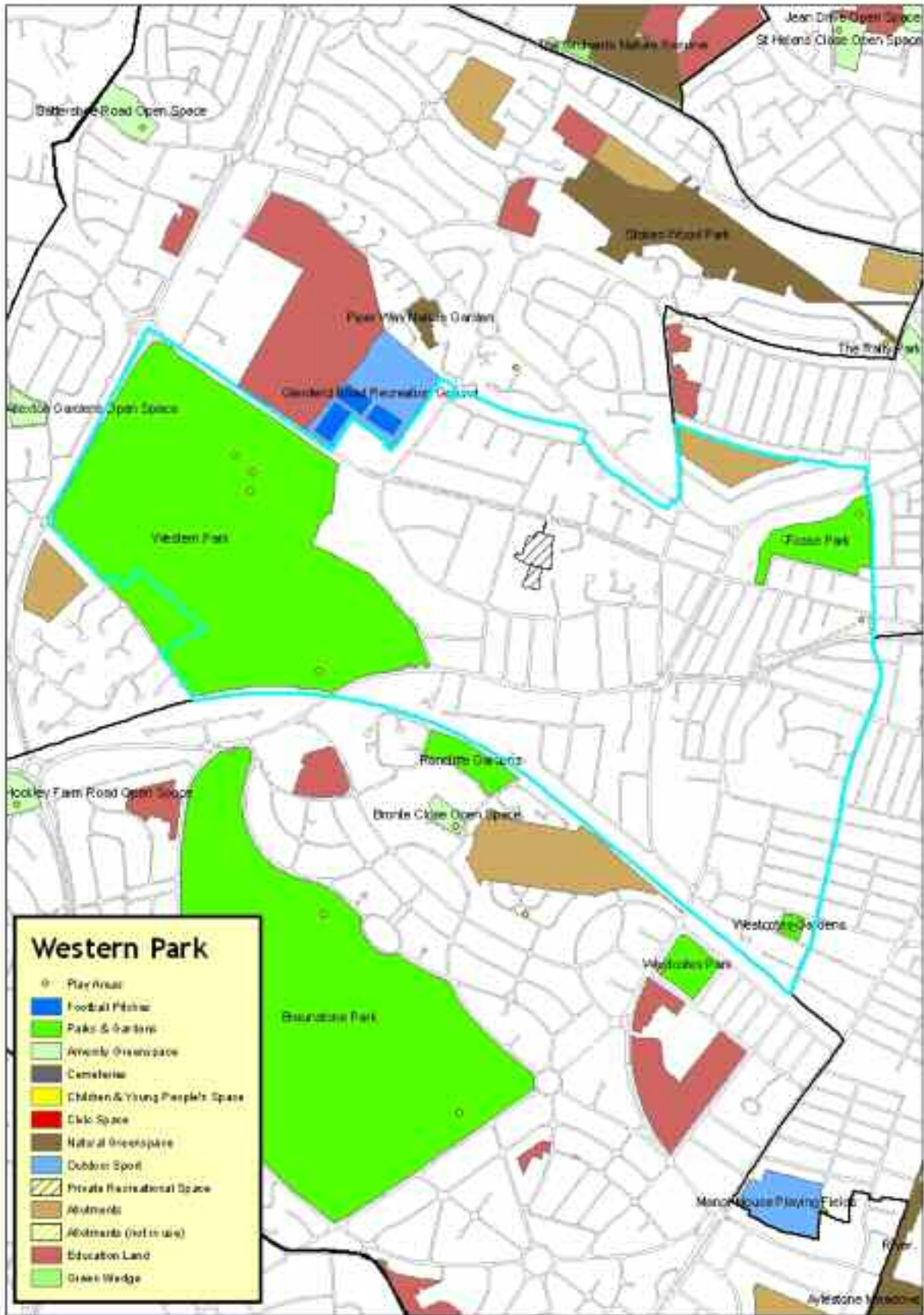




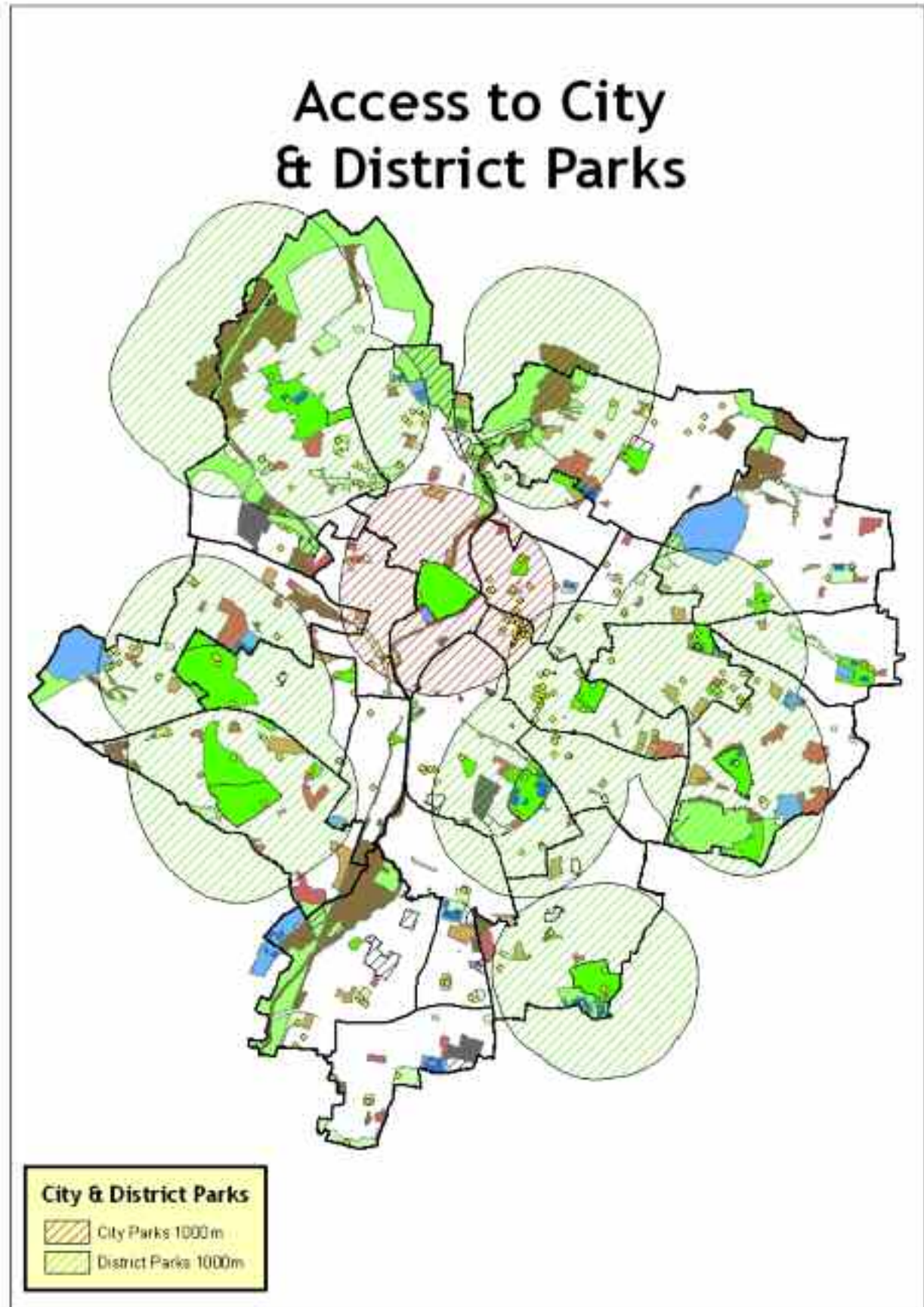






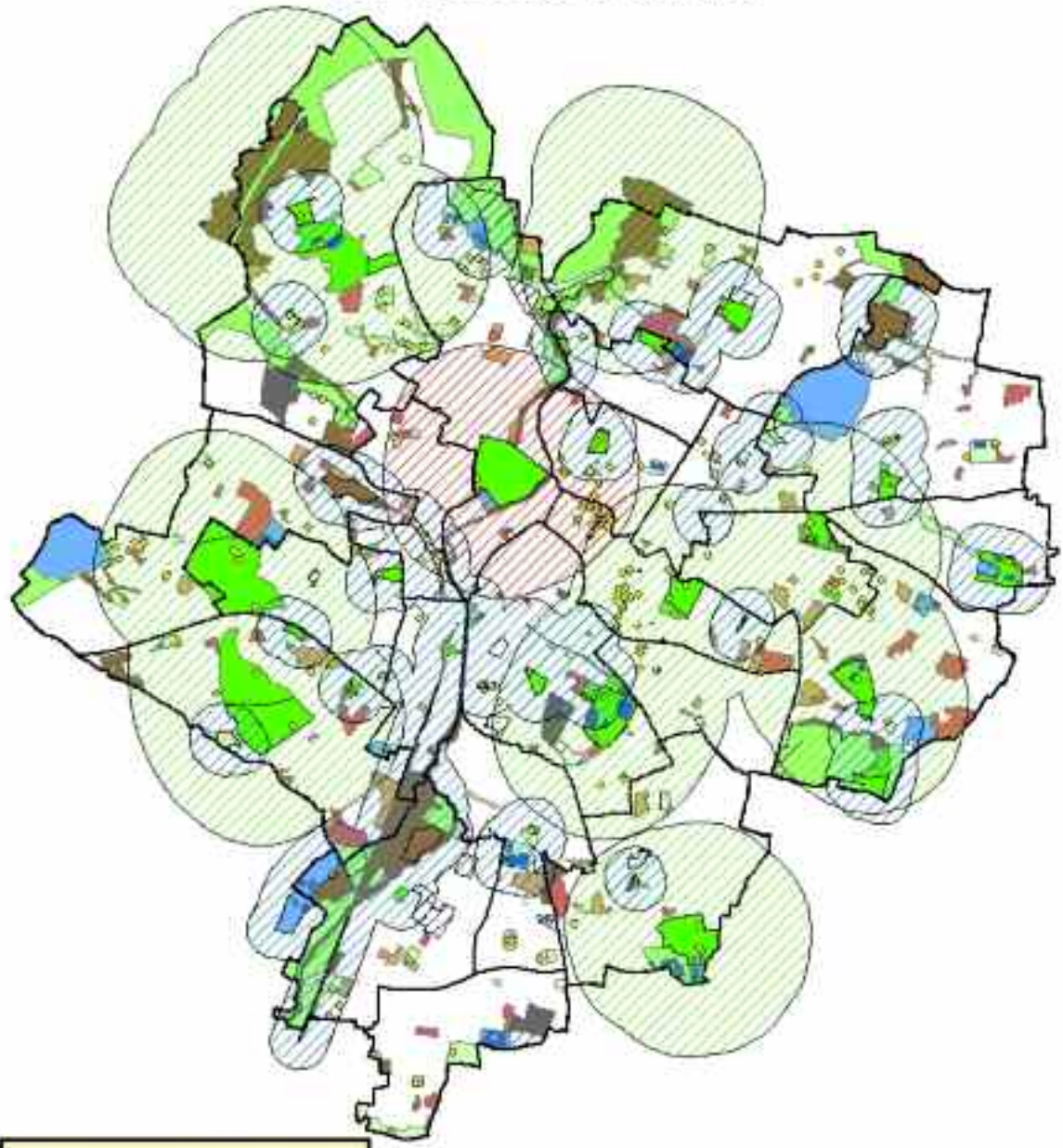


Appendix 3 Maps Showing Access To Open Space Across The City



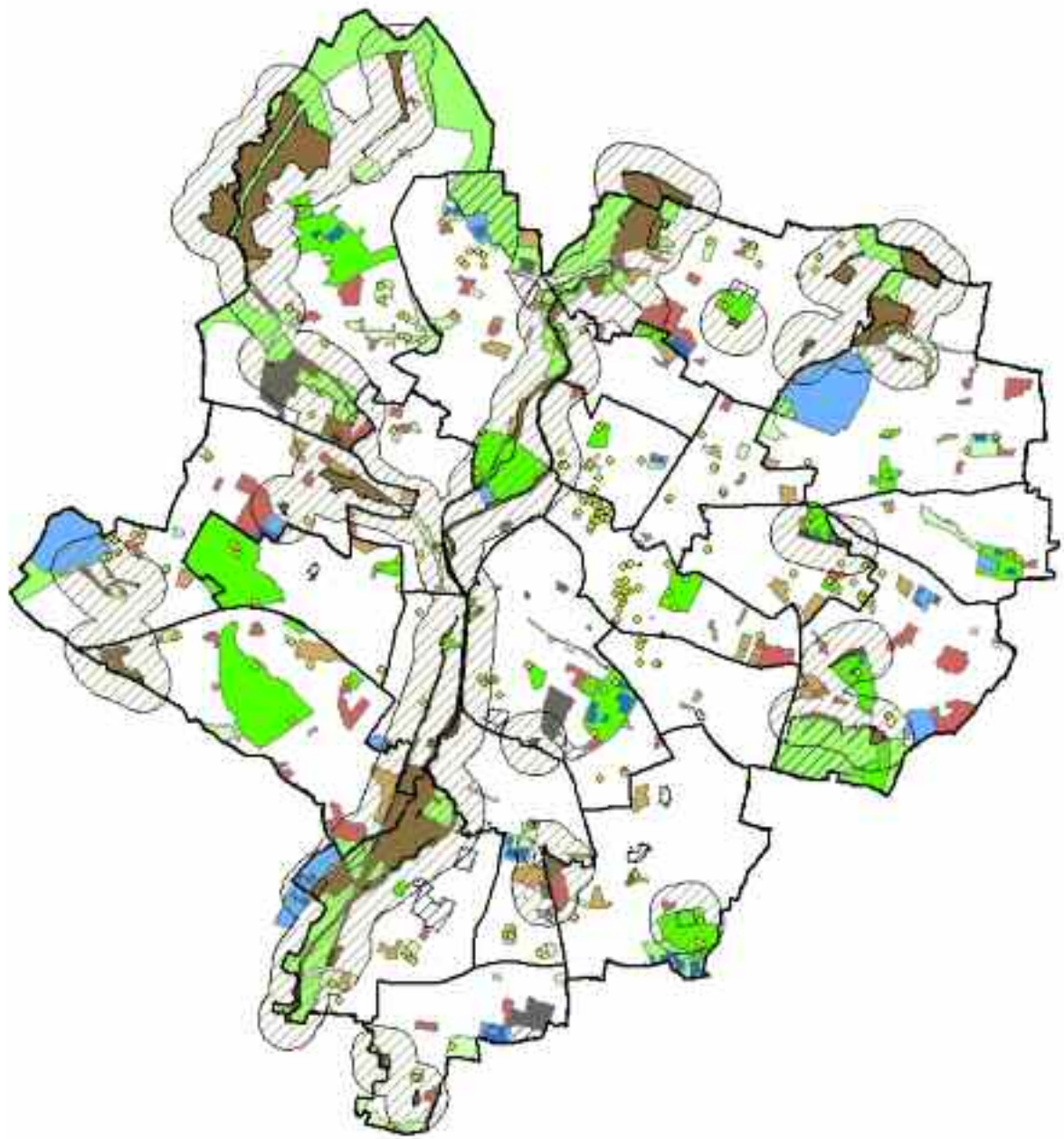


Access to City, District & Local Parks





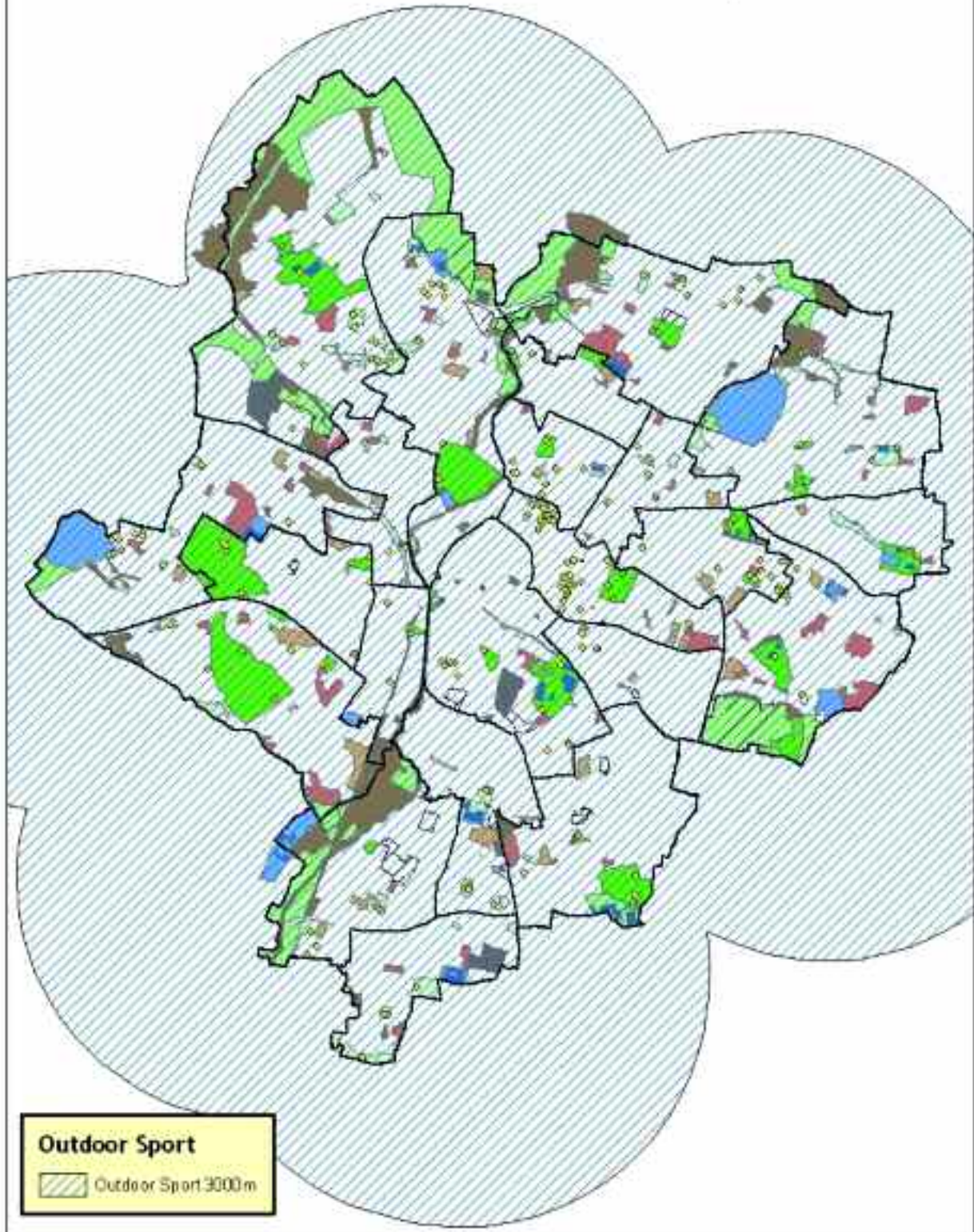
Access to Natural Greenspace



Natural Greenspace
Natural Greenspace 300m

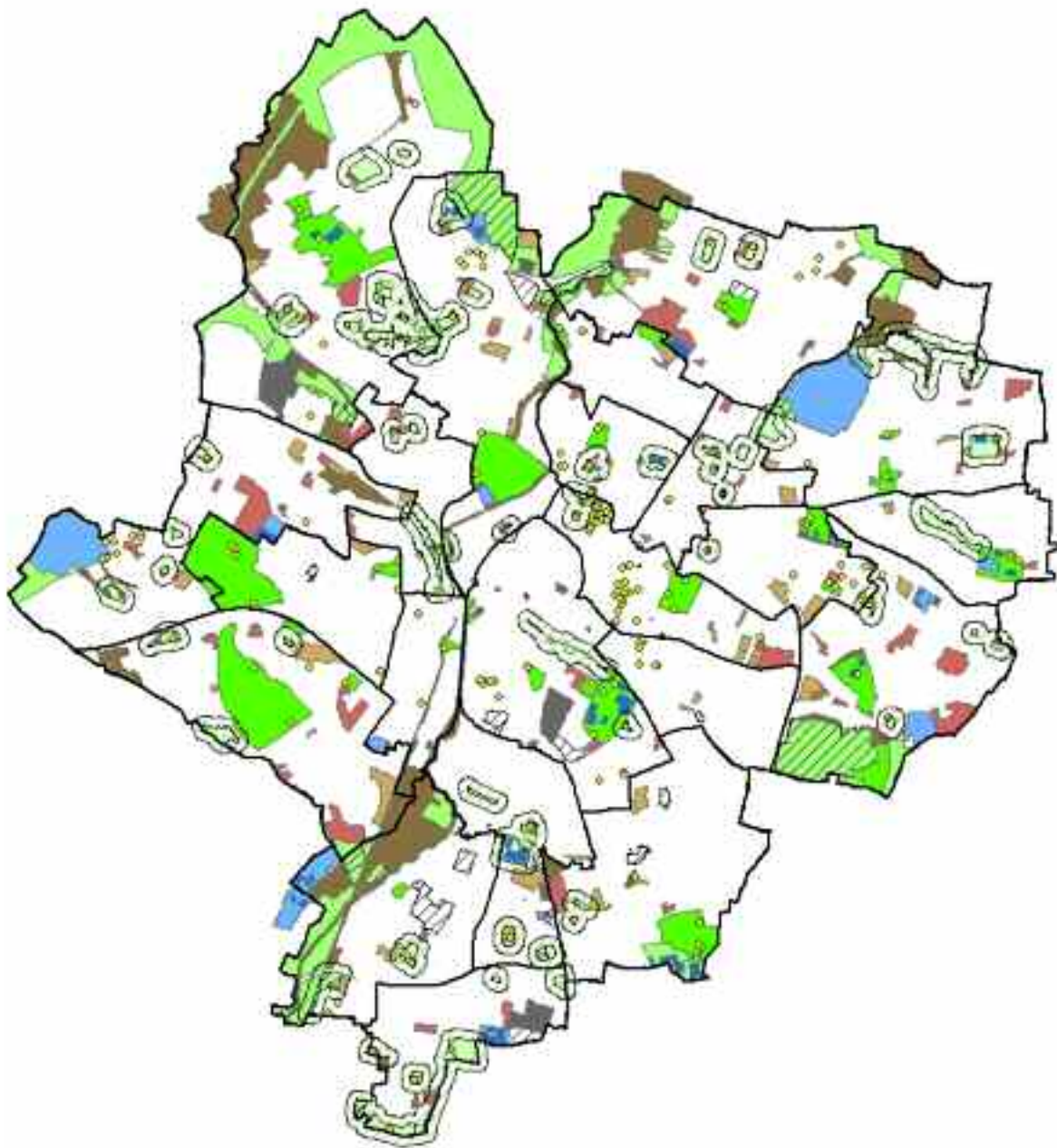


Access to Outdoor Sport

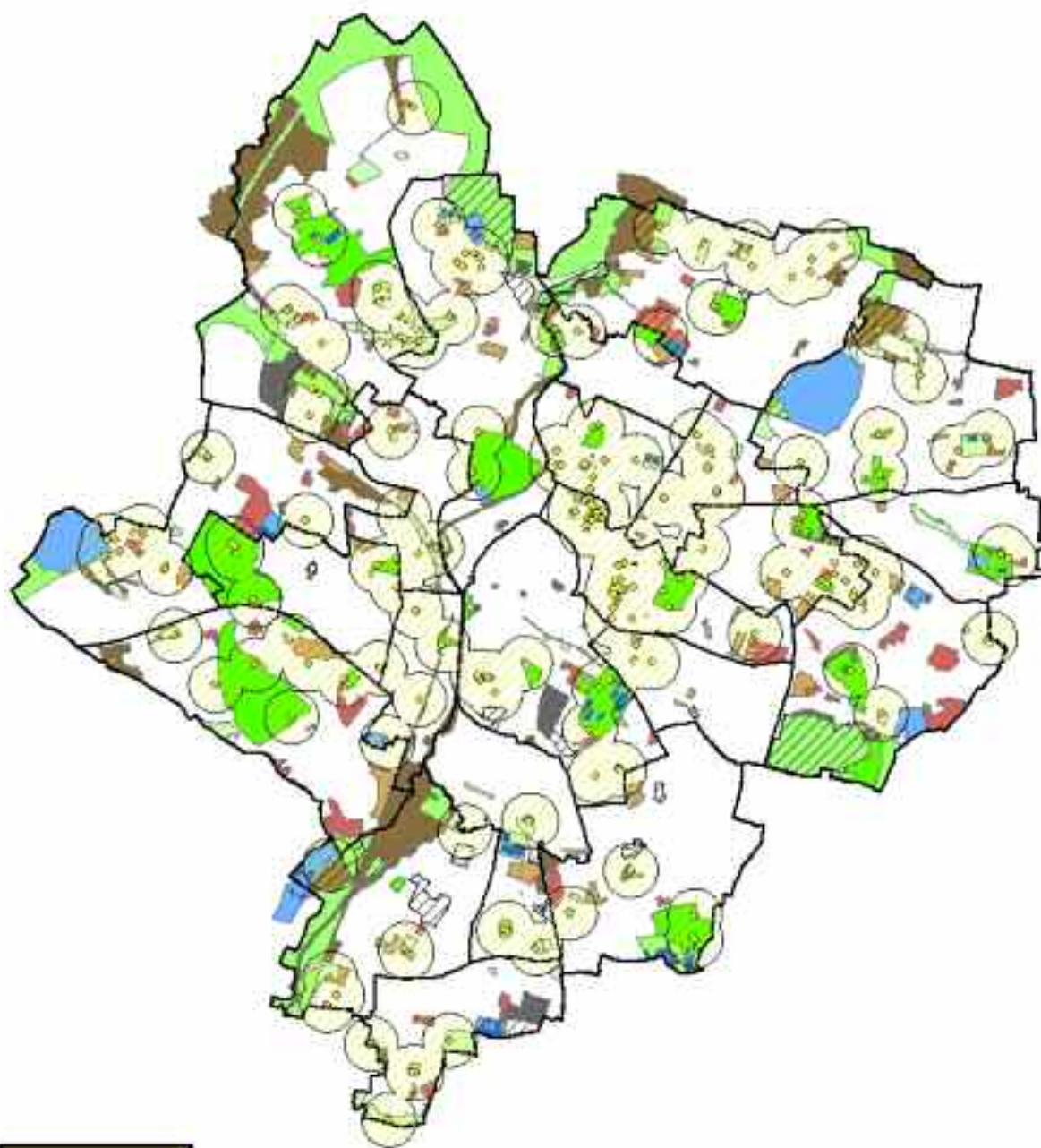




Access to Amenity Greenspace



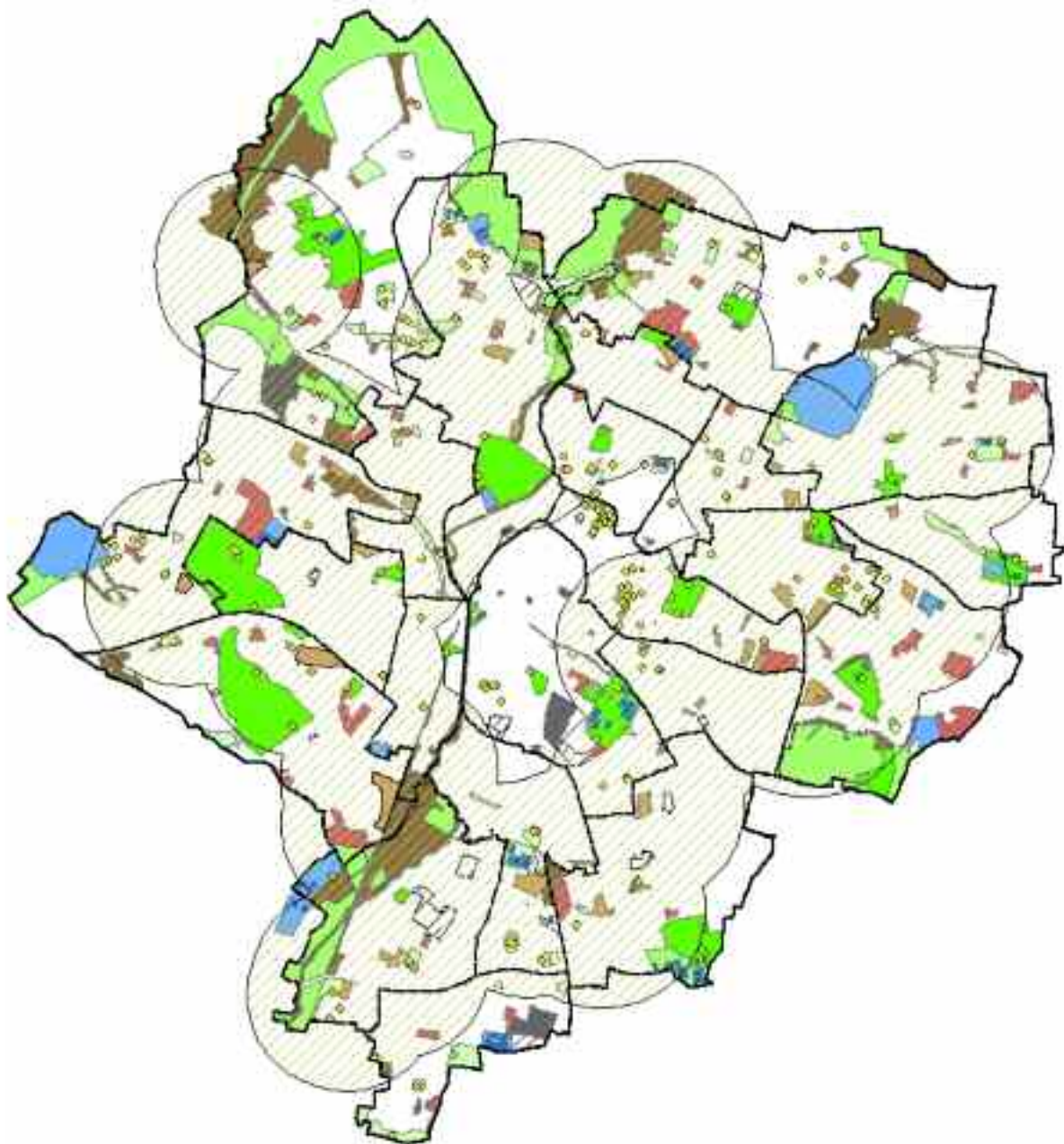
Access to Children & Young People's Provision



Play
Play 300m



Access to Allotments



Allotments

 Allotments 1000m

