



GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL
OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT REPORT
APRIL 2016

Integrity, Innovation, Inspiration

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Glossary.....	4
PART 1: INTRODUCTION.....	2
1.1 Report structure	3
1.2 National context	4
1.3 Local context.....	4
PART 2: METHODOLOGY	5
2.1 Analysis areas.....	5
2.2 Auditing local provision (supply)	6
2.3 Quality and value	7
2.4 Quality and value thresholds	9
2.5 Identifying local need (demand).....	10
2.6 Accessibility standards	10
PART 3: GENERAL OPEN SPACE SUMMARY	12
3.1 Usage.....	12
3.2 Accessibility.....	16
3.3 Availability	17
3.4 Quality.....	17
3.5 Value.....	19
3.6 Summary.....	21
PART 4: PARKS AND GARDENS	22
4.1 Introduction	22
4.2 Current provision	22
4.3 Accessibility.....	23
4.4 Quality.....	25
4.5 Value.....	27
4.6 Summary.....	27
PART 5: NATURAL AND SEMI-NATURAL GREENSPACE	28
5.1 Introduction	28
5.2 Current provision	28
5.3 Accessibility.....	29
5.4 Quality.....	33
5.5 Value.....	34
5.6 Summary.....	35
PART 6: AMENITY GREENSPACE.....	36
6.1 Introduction	36
6.2 Current provision	36
6.3 Accessibility.....	36
6.4 Quality.....	41
6.5 Value.....	43
6.6 Summary.....	44
PART 7: PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE	45
7.1 Introduction	45
7.2 Current provision	45
7.3 Accessibility.....	46
7.4 Quality.....	50
7.5 Value.....	54
7.6 Summary.....	55
PART 8: ALLOTMENTS	56

8.1 Introduction	56
8.2 Current provision	56
8.3 Accessibility.....	57
8.4 Quality.....	60
8.5 Value.....	61
8.6 Summary.....	62
PART 9: CEMETERIES/CHURCHYARDS.....	63
9.1 Introduction	63
9.2 Current provision	63
9.3 Accessibility.....	63
9.4 Quality.....	65
9.5 Value.....	66
9.6 Summary.....	67
PART 10: CIVIC SPACE.....	68
10.1 Introduction	68
10.2 Current provision	68
10.3 Accessibility.....	68
10.4 Quality.....	70
10.5 Value.....	71
10.6 Summary.....	71
APPENDIX 1: EXAMPLE ONLINE SURVEY	72
APPENDIX 2: ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY RETURNS	77

Glossary

DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
DDA	Disability Discrimination Act
DPD	Development Plan Document
FIT	Fields in Trust
FOG	Friends of Group
GBC	Gravesham Borough Council
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
KKP	Knight, Kavanagh and Page
LDF	Local Development Framework
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
MUGA	Multi-use Games Area (an enclosed area with a hard surface for variety of informal play)
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NSALG	National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PPS	Playing Pitch Strategy
RoSPA	Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents
SOA	Super Output Areas
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

This is the Open Space Assessment Report prepared by Knight Kavanagh & Page (KKP) for Gravesham Borough Council (GBC). It focuses on reporting the findings of the research, consultation, site assessments, data analysis and GIS mapping that underpin the open space study.

The Assessment Report provides detail with regard to what provision exists in the area, its condition, distribution and overall quality. It considers the demand for provision based upon population distribution and consultation findings. The Recommendation Paper (to follow the assessment report) will give direction on the future requirements for provision of accessible, high quality and sustainable open spaces.

In order for planning policies to be 'sound' local authorities are required to carry out a robust assessment of need for open space, sport and recreation facilities. We advocate that the methodology to undertake such assessments should still be informed by best practice including the Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) Companion Guidance; *Assessing Needs and Opportunities* published in September 2002.

Although PPG17 has now been replaced by the National Planning Policy Framework, (NPPF), assessment of open space facilities is still normally carried out in accordance with the Companion Guidance as it remains the only national advice on the conduct of an open space assessment. It also still reflects the Government policy objectives for open space, sport and recreation, as set out in PPG17. The long-term outcomes aim to deliver:

- ◀ Networks of accessible, high quality open spaces and sport and recreation facilities, in both urban and rural areas, which meet the needs of residents and visitors that are fit for purpose and economically and environmentally sustainable.
- ◀ An appropriate balance between new, and the enhancement of existing, provision.
- ◀ Clarity and reasonable certainty for developers and landowners in relation to the requirements and expectations of local planning authorities in respect of open space and sport and recreation provision.

In accordance with best practice recommendations a size threshold of 0.2 hectares has been applied to the inclusion of some typologies within the study. This means that, in general, sites that fall below this threshold are not audited. The table below details the open space typologies included within the study:

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Table 1.1: Open space typology definitions

	Typology	Primary purpose
Greenspaces	Parks and gardens	Accessible, high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.
	Natural and semi-natural greenspaces	Wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness. Includes urban woodland and beaches, where appropriate.
	Amenity greenspace	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.
	Provision for children and young people	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, MUGAs, skateboard areas and teenage shelters.
	Allotments	Opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social inclusion.
	Green corridors	Walking, cycling or horse riding, whether for leisure purposes or travel, and opportunities for wildlife migration.
	Cemeteries, disused churchyards and other burial grounds	Quiet contemplation and burial of the dead, often linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.
Civic spaces	Civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians	Providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events.

1.1 Report structure

Open spaces

This report considers the supply and demand issues for open space provision across Gravesham. Each part contains relevant typology specific data. Further description of the methodology used can be found in Part 2. The report as a whole covers the predominant issues for all open spaces originally defined in 'Assessing Needs and Opportunities: A Companion Guide to PPG17'; it is structured as follows:

Part 3: General open space summary	Part 7: Provision for children/young people
Part 4: Parks and gardens	Part 8: Allotments
Part 5: Natural/ semi-natural greenspace	Part 9: Cemeteries/churchyards
Part 6: Amenity greenspace	Part 10: Civic space

Associated strategies

The study sits alongside the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy (ISF) and Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) which are also being undertaken by KKP (provided in separate reports). The open space typology of formal outdoor sports is covered within the associated PPS. The PPS is undertaken in accordance with the methodology provided in Sport England's Draft Guidance 'Developing a Playing Pitch Strategy' for assessing demand and supply for outdoor sports facilities (2013).

1.2 National context

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF sets out the planning policies for England. It details how these are expected to be applied to the planning system and provides a framework to produce distinct local and neighbourhood plans, reflecting the needs and priorities of local communities.

It states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It establishes that the planning system needs to focus on three themes of sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. A presumption in favour of sustainable development is a key aspect for any plan-making and decision-taking processes. In relation to plan-making the NPPF sets out that Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs.

Under paragraph 73 of the NPPF, it is set out that planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. Specific needs and quantitative and qualitative deficiencies and surpluses in local areas should also be identified. This information should be used to inform what provision is required in an area.

As a prerequisite paragraph 74 of the NPPF states existing open space, sports and recreation sites, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

- ◀ An assessment has been undertaken, which has clearly shown the site to be surplus to requirements.
- ◀ The loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location.
- ◀ The development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the needs for which clearly outweigh the loss.

1.3 Local context

This study and its findings are important in their contribution to the Council's Core Strategy. The Council is also in the process of working towards its Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD). The findings will therefore help to form an integral part of identifying and regulating the open space infrastructure. Through recognising open space provision in plan form, it can be assessed in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility, whilst strengthening its presence in planning policy for the future and maximising opportunities for investment.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

PART 2: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Analysis areas

For mapping purposes and audit analysis, Gravesham is divided into two analysis areas (reflecting the geographic and demographic nature of the area).

These allow more localised assessment of provision in addition to examination of open space surplus and deficiencies at a more local level. Use of analysis areas also allows local circumstances and issues to be taken into account. The area is therefore, broken down as follows:

Table 2.1: Population by analysis area

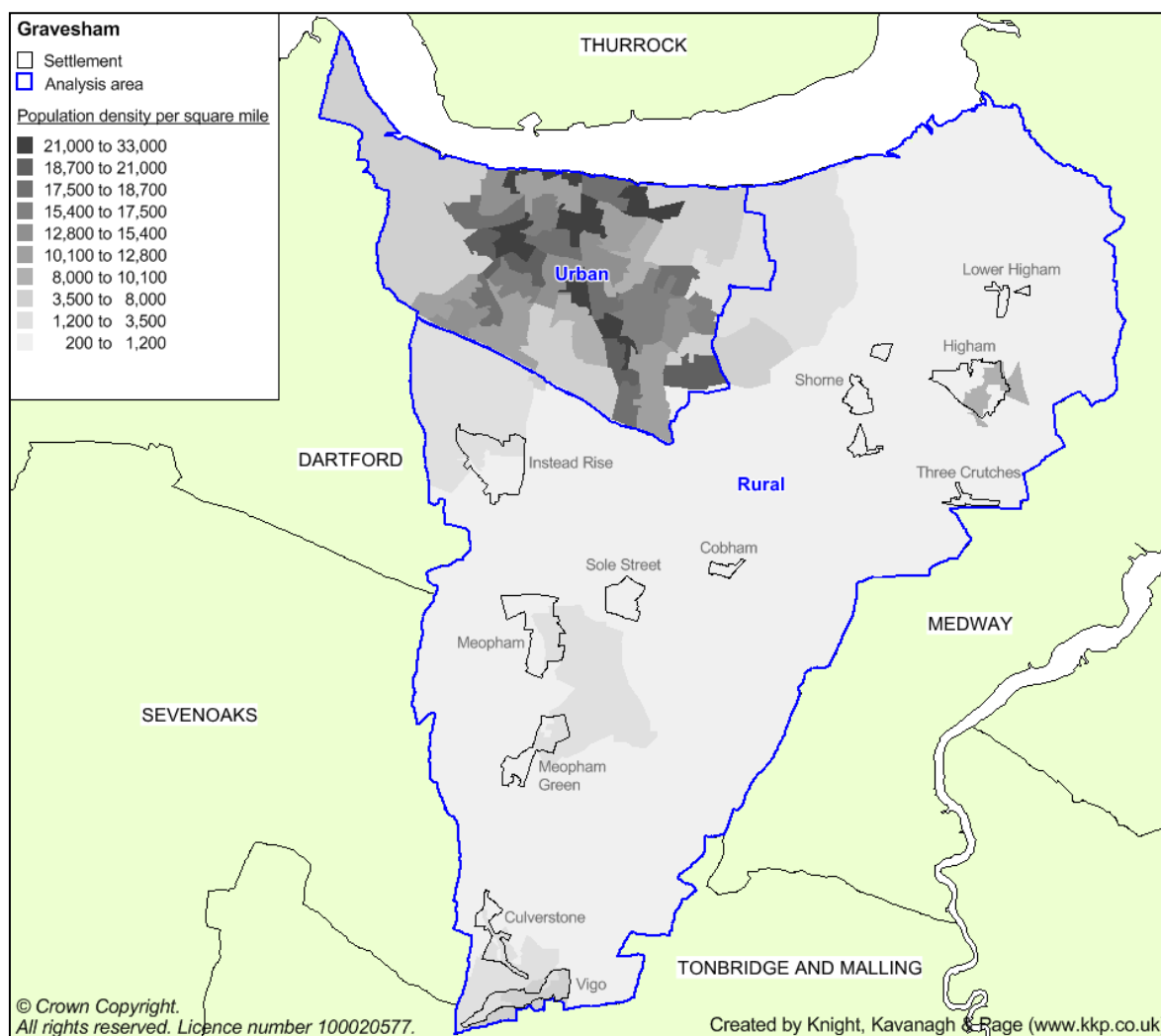
Analysis area	Ward	Population (2014)*
Rural	Higham	20,819
	Istead Rise	
	Meopham North	
	Meopham South and Vigo	
	Shorne, Cobham and Luddesdown	
Urban	Central	84,442
	Chalk	
	Coldharbour	
	Northfleet North	
	Northfleet South	
	Painters Ash	
	Pelham	
	Riverside	
	Riverview	
	Singlewell	
	Westcourt	
	Whitehill	
	Woodlands	
GRAVESHAM		105,261

Figure 2.1 overleaf shows the map of analysis areas with population density.

* Source: ONS 2014 Ward population estimates for England, mid-2014

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Figure 2.1: Analysis areas in Gravesham



Source: Annual 2014 Mid-Year Population Estimates for the UK, ONS

2.2 Auditing local provision (supply)

The site audit for this study was undertaken by the KKP Field Research Team. In total, 189 open spaces (including provision for children and young people) are identified, mapped and assessed to evaluate site value and quality. Each site is classified based on its primary open space purpose, so that each type of open space is counted only once. The audit, and the report, utilise the following typologies in accordance with the Guidance:

1. Parks and gardens
2. Natural and semi-natural greenspace
3. Amenity greenspace
4. Provision for children and young people
5. Allotments
6. Cemeteries/churchyards
7. Civic space

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The provision of formal outdoor sports is contained within the associated PPS. The amount and quality of such provision is not included in the total figures for open space (as a different methodology is prescribed).

In accordance with best practice recommendations a size threshold of 0.2 hectares has been applied to the inclusion of some typologies within the study. This means that, in general, sites that fall below this threshold are not audited. However, any sites below the threshold (i.e. those that are identified through consultation as being of significance) are included. The table below details the threshold for each typology:

Typology	Size threshold
Parks and gardens	no threshold applied
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	0.2 ha
Amenity greenspace	0.2 ha
Provision for children and young people	no threshold applied
Allotments	no threshold applied
Cemeteries/churchyards	no threshold applied
Civic space	no threshold applied

Database development

All information relating to open spaces is collated in the project open space database (supplied as an Excel electronic file). All sites assessed, identified and assessed as part of the audit are recorded on it. The database details for each site are as follows:

Data held on open spaces database (summary)
◀ KKP reference number (used for mapping)
◀ Site name
◀ Ownership
◀ Management
◀ Typology
◀ Size (hectares)
◀ Site visit data

Sites are primarily identified by KKP in the audit using official site names, where possible, and/or secondly using road names and locations.

2.3 Quality and value

Quality and value are fundamentally different and can be unrelated. For example, a high quality space may be inaccessible and, thus, be of little value; however, a rundown (poor quality) space may be the only one in an area and thus be immensely valuable. As a result, quality and value are also treated separately in terms of scoring. Each type of open space receives separate quality and value scores. This also allows for application of a high and low quality/value matrix to further help determine prioritisation of investment and to identify sites that may be surplus within and to a particular open space typology.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Analysis of quality

Data collated from site visits is initially derived upon those from the Green Flag Award scheme (a national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales, operated by Keep Britain Tidy). This is utilised to calculate a quality score for each site visited. Scores in the database are presented as percentage figures. The quality criteria used for the open space assessments carried out are summarised in the following table.

Quality criteria for open space site visit (score)

- ◀ Physical access, e.g., public transport links, directional signposts,
- ◀ Personal security, e.g., site is overlooked, natural surveillance
- ◀ Access-social, e.g., appropriate minimum entrance widths
- ◀ Parking, e.g., availability, specific, disabled parking
- ◀ Information signage, e.g., presence of up to date site information, notice boards
- ◀ Equipment and facilities, e.g., assessment of both adequacy and maintenance of provision such as seats, benches, bins, toilets
- ◀ Location value, e.g., proximity of housing, other greenspace
- ◀ Site problems, e.g., presence of vandalism, graffiti
- ◀ Healthy, safe and secure, e.g., fencing, gates, staff on site
- ◀ Maintenance and cleanliness, e.g., condition of general landscape & features
- ◀ Groups that the site meets the needs of, e.g., elderly, young people
- ◀ Site potential

Criteria for assessing the provision for children and young people are also built around Green Flag. It is a non technical visual assessment of the site, including general equipment and surface quality/appearance plus an assessment of, for example, bench and bin provision. This differs, for example, from an independent RosPA review, which is a more technical assessment of equipment in terms of play and risk assessment grade.

Analysis of value

Site visit data plus desk based research is calculated to provide value scores for each site identified. Value is defined in the Companion Guide relation to the following three issues:

- ◀ Context of the site i.e. its accessibility, scarcity value and historic value.
- ◀ Level and type of use.
- ◀ The wider benefits it generates for people, biodiversity and the wider environment.

The value criteria set for audit assessment is derived as:

Value criteria for open space site visits (score)

- ◀ Level of use (observations only), e.g., evidence of different user types (e.g. dog walkers, joggers, children) throughout day, located near school and/or community facility
- ◀ Context of site in relation to other open spaces
- ◀ Structural and landscape benefits, e.g., well located, high quality defining the identity/ area
- ◀ Ecological benefits, e.g., supports/promotes biodiversity and wildlife habitats
- ◀ Educational benefits, e.g., provides learning opportunities on nature/historic landscapes
- ◀ Social inclusion and health benefits, e.g., promotes civic pride, community ownership and a sense of belonging; helping to promote well-being
- ◀ Cultural and heritage benefits, e.g., historic elements/links (e.g. listed building, statues)
- ◀ Amenity benefits and a sense of place, e.g., attractive places that are safe and well maintained; helping to create specific neighbourhoods and landmarks
- ◀ Economic benefits, e.g., promotes economic activity and attracts people from near and far

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Value - non site visit criteria (score)

- ◀ Designated site such as Local Wildlife Sites or SSSI
- ◀ Educational programme in place
- ◀ Historic site
- ◀ Listed building or scheduled monument on site
- ◀ Registered 'friends of' group to the site

Play provision for children and young people is scored for value as part of the audit assessment. Value, in particular is recognised in terms of size of sites and the range of equipment it hosts. For instance, a small site with only one or two items is likely to be of a lower value than a site with a variety of equipment catering for wider age ranges.

2.4 Quality and value thresholds

To determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by guidance); the results of the site assessments are colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The primary aim of applying a threshold is to identify sites where investment and/or improvements are required. It can also be used to set an aspirational quality standard to be achieved at some point in the future and to inform decisions around the need to further protect sites from future development (particularly when applied with its respective value score in a matrix format).

The baseline threshold for assessing quality can be set around 66%; based on the pass rate for Green Flag criteria (site visit criteria also being based on Green Flag). This is the only national benchmark available for quality of parks and open spaces. However, the site visit criteria used for Green Flag is not appropriate for every open space typology as it is designed to represent a sufficiently high standard of site. Quality thresholds are, thus, worked out so as to better reflect average scores for each typology. Consequently the baseline threshold for certain typologies is amended to better reflect this.

For value there is no national guidance on the setting of thresholds. The 20% threshold applied is derived from our experience and knowledge in assessing the perceived value of sites. Whilst 20% may initially seem low it is relative score - designed to reflect those sites that meet more than one aspect of the criteria used for assessing value (as detailed earlier). The table below sets out the quality and value scores for each typology.

Table 2.2: Quality and value thresholds by typology

Typology	Quality threshold	Value threshold
Parks and gardens	60%	20%
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	40%	20%
Amenity greenspace	45%	20%
Provision for children and young people	50%	20%
Allotments	40%	20%
Cemeteries/churchyards	45%	20%
Civic space	50%	20%

2.5 Identifying local need (demand)

Consultation to identify local need for open space provision has been carried out via a combination of face-to-face meetings, surveys and telephone interviews. It has also been conducted with key local authority officers (in respect of each typology). An online Parks and Open Spaces Survey was created and used to gather the wider views of local people; a total of 209 responses were returned. In addition, an online survey aimed at primary school aged children was also published; of which a total of 129 responses were returned. The findings of the consultation and survey carried out are used, reviewed and interpreted to further support the results of the quality and value assessment. A summary of the survey findings are set out in Part 3.

2.6 Accessibility standards

Accessibility standards for different types of provision are a tool to identify communities currently not served by existing facilities. It is recognised that factors that underpin catchment areas vary from person to person, day to day and hour to hour. For the purposes of this process this problem is overcome by accepting the concept of 'effective catchments', defined as the distance that is willing to be travelled by the majority of users.

Guidance on appropriate walking distance and times is published by Fields In Trust (FIT) in its document *Beyond the Six Acre Standard* (2015). These guidelines have been converted in to an equivalent time period in the table below.

Table 2.3: FIT walking guidelines

Open space type	Walking guideline	Approximate time equivalent
Parks & Gardens	710m	9 minute
Amenity Greenspace	480m	6 minute
Natural & Semi-natural Greenspace	720m	9 minute

However, in order to make accessibility standards more locally specific to Gravesham, we propose to use data from the survey consultation to set appropriate catchments. The following distances are recorded from the survey in relation to how far individuals are willing to travel to access different types of open space provision.

Table 2.4: Accessibility standards to travel to open space provision

Typology	Applied standard
Parks and gardens	15 minute walk time (1,200m)
	30 minute drive time
Natural and semi-natural	10 minute walk time (800m)
	30 minute drive time
Amenity greenspace	5 minute (400m) walk time
Provision for children and young people	10 minute walk time (800m)
Allotments	15 minute walk time (1,200m)
Cemeteries	No standard set
Civic spaces	No standard set

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Most typologies are set as having a walk time accessibility standard. For certain typologies, such as amenity greenspace, accessibility is deemed to be more locally based. Subsequently a shorter accessibility standard has been applied.

For other forms of provision such as parks and gardens and natural and semi-natural greenspace a willingness to travel further is highlighted. Therefore a drive time catchment has also been applied.

No standard is set for the typologies of cemeteries or civic spaces. It is difficult to assess such typologies against catchment areas due to their nature and usage. For cemeteries, provision should be determined by demand for burial space.

PART 3: GENERAL OPEN SPACE SUMMARY

This section describes generic trends and findings from the quality and value ratings for each typology in Gravesham. It also includes a summary of the 209 responses from the Parks and Open Spaces Survey and the 129 responses from the primary school aged children survey (further information is set out in the Appendices 1 and 2). Site specific and typology issues are covered in the relevant sections later in the report.

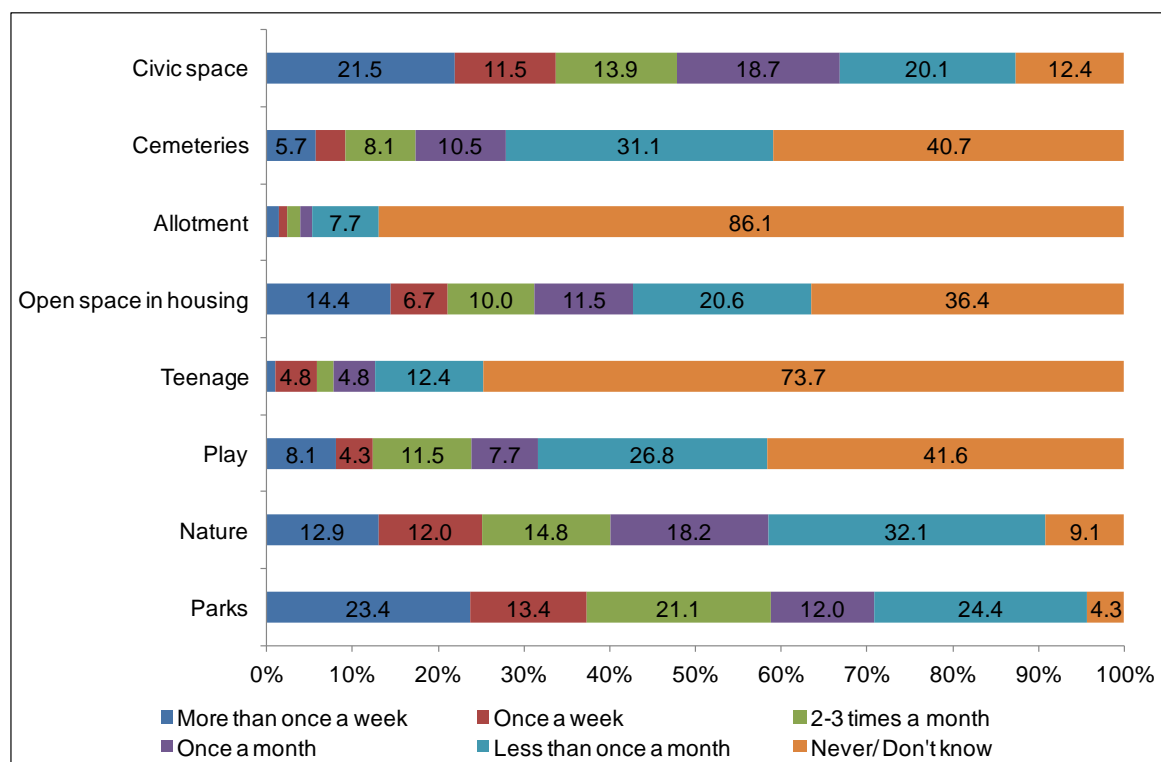
3.1 Usage

The Parks and Open Spaces Survey participants were asked how often they visit each type of open space. Most respondents identify visiting typologies such as parks (23.4%) and civic spaces (21.5%) more than once a week; an indication to their popularity.

Other popular open spaces include open space in housing. Provision such as cemeteries and nature areas are visited on a less frequent basis with more respondents 31.1% and 32.1% respectively stating they visit these types of sites less than once a month. This is relatively typical of these types of open space.

Other typologies have a more mixed rate of usage. For the typologies such as allotments (86.1%) and teenage provision, for example skate parks and youth shelters (73.7%), the majority of respondents indicate they never access such sites. For the latter this may represent lack of awareness or interest in provision of this type. It is not uncommon for allotments to receive percentages of this kind as they are a niche form of open space provision; only attracting use from those with a specific interest.

Figure 3.1; Frequency of visits to open space in the previous 12 months



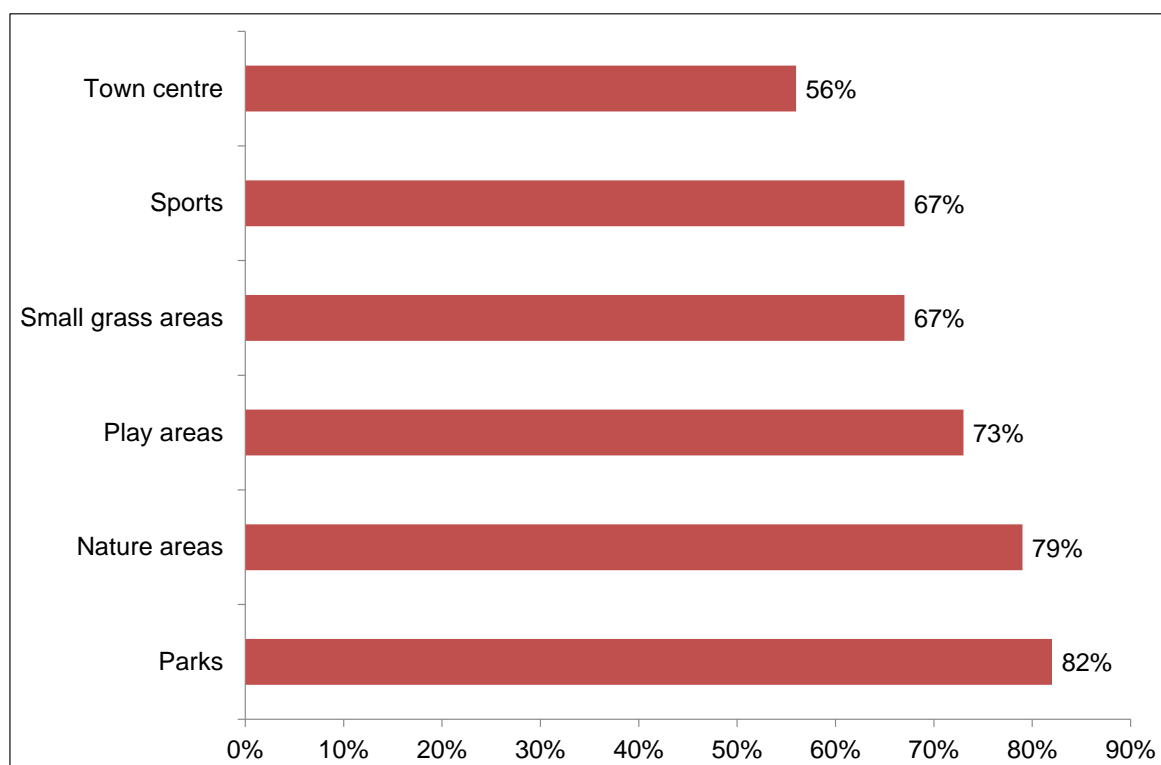
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From the returns several sites are specifically cited as being the most frequently visited:

- ◀ Jeskyns Country Park
- ◀ Woodlands Park
- ◀ Shorne Country Park
- ◀ Camer Country Park
- ◀ Trosley Country Park
- ◀ Windmill Hill Park
- ◀ Riverside Leisure Area

Children responding to the primary school aged survey state they like to visit open spaces such as parks (82%) and nature areas (79%) more so than other types of provision.

Figure 3.2: Open space children like to visit



Reasons for visiting

Respondents suggest the most popular reason for visiting an open space in Gravesham is to exercise (49.3%). This is closely followed by reasons such as to relax/contemplate (48.3%) and to take a shortcut/pleasant route (45.0%).

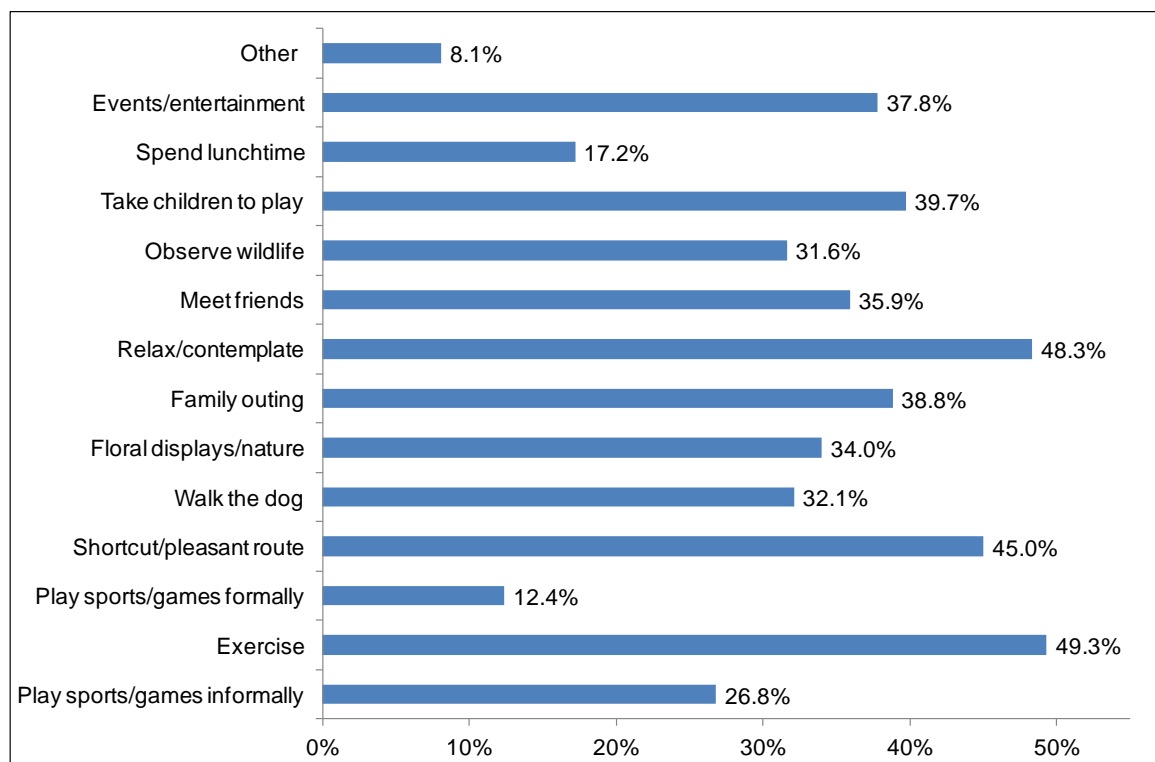
Other common reasons for visiting open spaces include taking children to visit and use play facilities (39.7%), for a family outing (38.8%), to meet friends (35.9%) and to enjoy floral displays/nature (34.0%).

Such responses may also correspond with why provision such as parks and gardens and natural and semi-natural greenspace are cited as popular forms of provision to visit.

The results also highlight the role of open spaces in the context of social interaction and healthy living as well as the value of sites as focal points for local communities.

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Figure 3.3: Reasons for visiting open space sites in previous 12 months



The most common reason given by children for visiting open space is to play (72%). Meeting friends (64%) is also a common reason for children to visit open space provision.

Table 3.1: Children's reason for visiting open spaces

Play	Exercise	Walk the dog	Visit with family	Meet friends	See wildlife	Other
72%	53%	53%	54%	64%	57%	23%

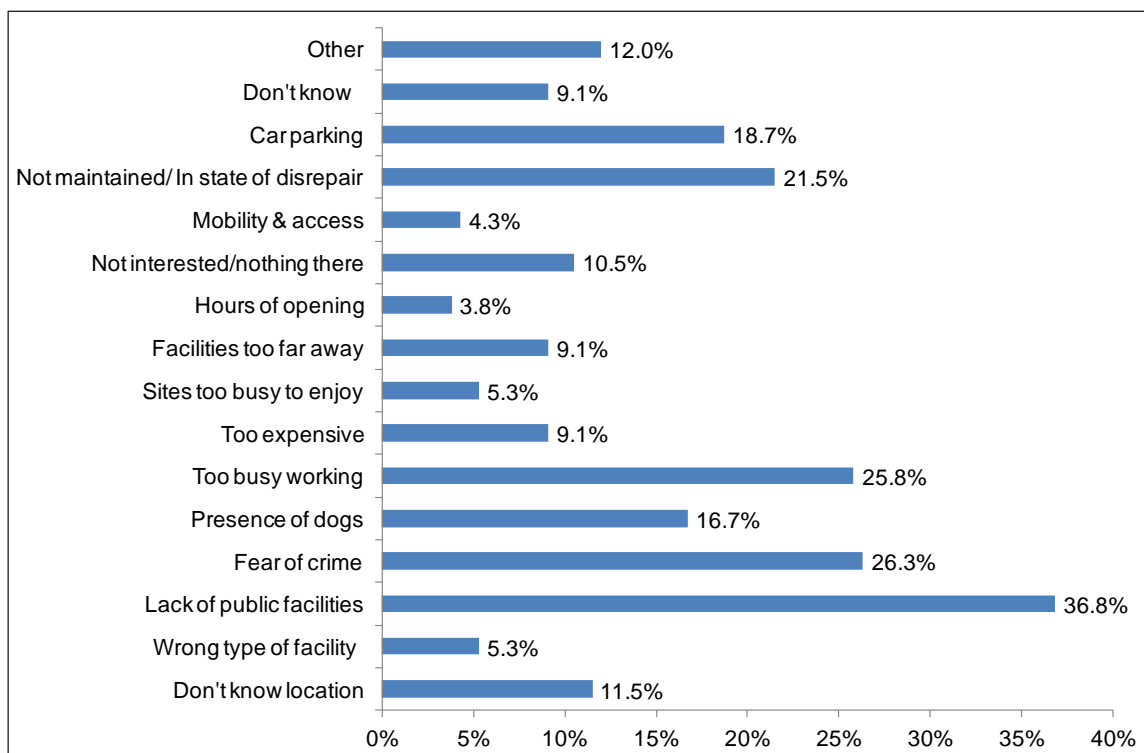
As part of the Parks and Open Spaces Survey, respondents were asked what the main reasons might be which prevent them from using open spaces. A lack of public facilities at sites such as toilets or a cafe was the most common reason given (36.8%). Postcode data from these respondents tells us that the majority (66%) are from the Gravesend and Northfleet postcode areas; DA11 and DA12.

Both areas are served by open spaces such as parks and gardens; however, there are parts of Northfleet which are not served by parks and gardens provision. The results may also be a reflection towards the view of respondents on quality of facilities at parks; which is discussed further in the parks section later in the report.

Other common responses include fear of crime (26.3%), people being too busy (25.8%) and sites being perceived to not being maintained and/or in a state of disrepair (21.5%).

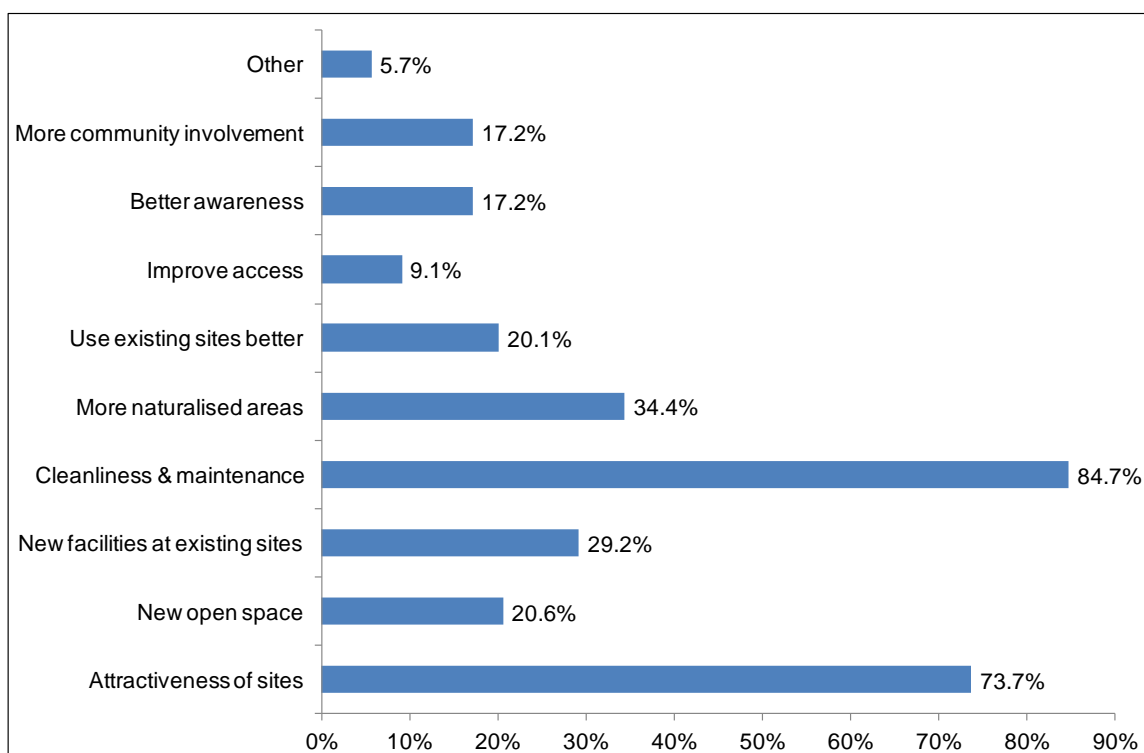
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Figure 3.4: Reasons preventing use of open space sites in previous 12 months



The two most common answers by participants for improvements to open spaces are about cleanliness and maintenance (84.7%) and improving attractiveness of existing sites (73.7%). Providing more naturalised areas (34.4%) is the third most common answer.

Figure 3.5: Site improvements



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3.2 Accessibility

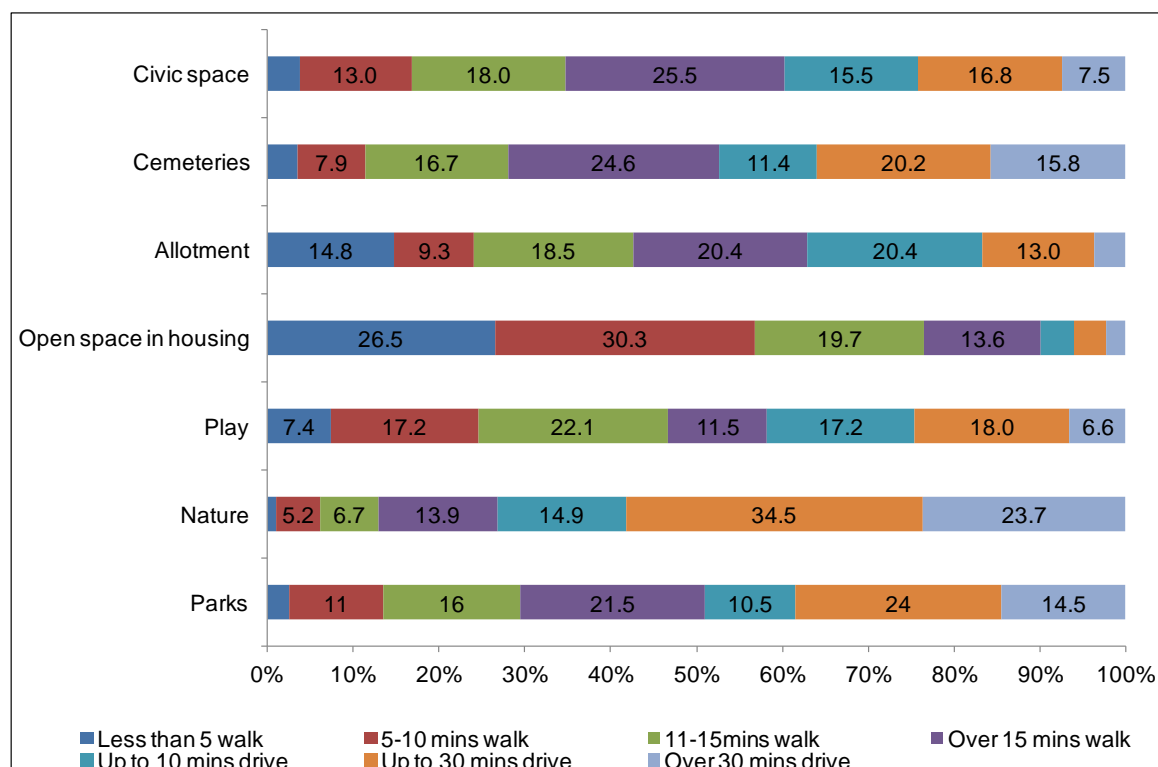
Results from the Parks and Open Space Survey shows that most individuals prefer to travel by walking in order to access different types of open space provision.

A preference can be seen to walk in order to access provision particularly for open space/grassed areas in housing estates. The majority of respondents (90.2%) indicate willing to walk to provision of this type; with a less than five minute walk (26.5%) and 5-10 minute walk (30.3%) most common.

There is however for some typologies a clear willingness to travel a greater distance by transport. For instance, respondents indicate more of a willingness to also travel up to 30 minutes by transport in order to access nature sites (34.5%), parks (24%) and cemeteries (20.2%). This is likely to reflect the urban/rural characteristic of the Borough as well as the location of certain prominent sites (e.g. the prominent country parks in the area).

A higher proportion of don't know responses is received for the typologies of teenage provision and allotments. This is not unusual as both forms of open space provision have a niche user attraction. Therefore it can be expected, to some extent, for the general public to not have a strong opinion.

Figure 3.6: Time willing to travel to open space sites (%)



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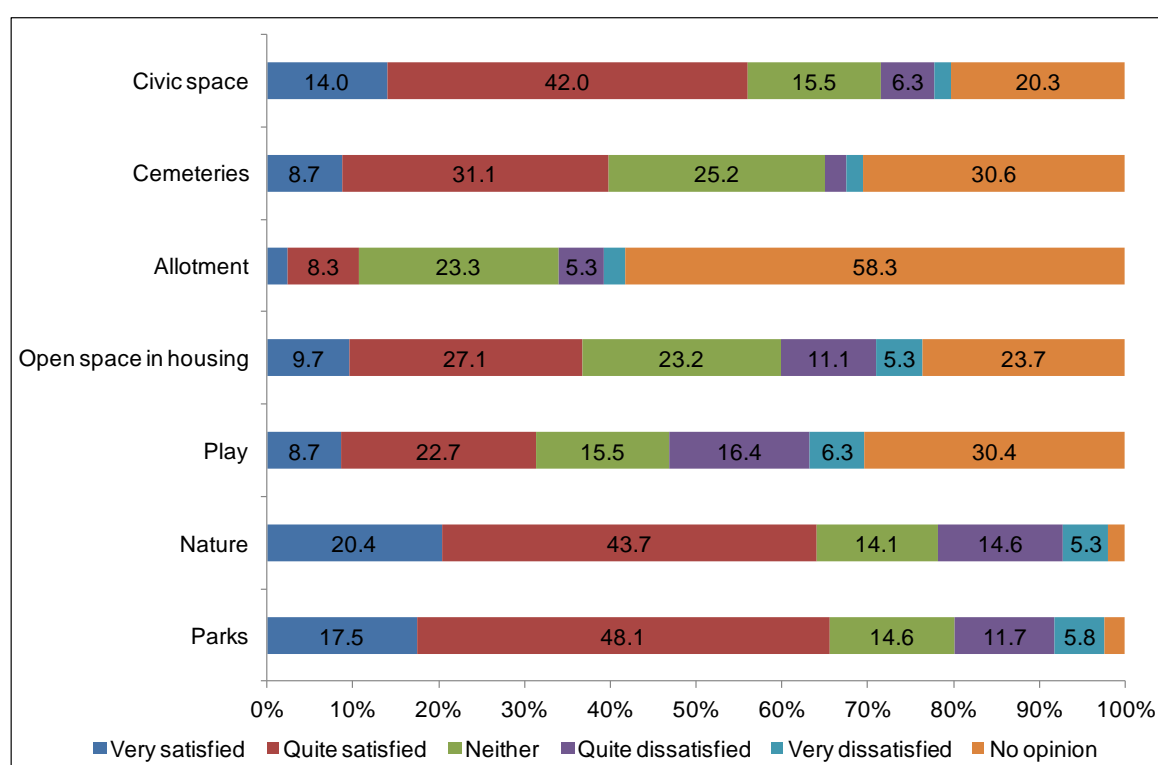
3.3 Availability

For most typologies respondents generally consider the availability i.e. the amount of provision, to be either quite or very satisfactory.

Typologies such as parks, nature areas and civic space are viewed as predominantly being to a satisfactory level in terms of availability. All three receive a higher proportion of responses for being quite satisfactory; parks (48.1%), nature areas (43.7%) and civic space (42.0%).

A high proportion of respondents have no opinion on the availability of allotments. As noted earlier this is a niche form of provision and tends to not stimulate much consideration in the wider public eye other than for its specific users.

Figure 3.7: Satisfaction with availability of open spaces (%)



3.4 Quality

The methodology for assessing quality is set out in Part 2. Table 3.2 summarises the results of all the quality assessments for open spaces across Gravesham.

Most assessed open spaces in Gravesham (61%) rate above the quality thresholds set. Proportionally there are a higher percentage of parks and gardens (100%) and cemeteries/churchyards (87%) that rate above the threshold for quality. This is a reflection of their excellent appearance and high standard.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Quality of other open space typologies is mixed with a greater proportion of sites rating below the thresholds set. This is thought to reflect the difference in the wide range of ancillary facilities and general quality of such sites. Any site specific quality issues are highlighted in the typology specific sections later in the report.

Observations from the site visit audit, supported from the consultation, highlights that provision for children and young people is in some instances regarded as being tired and containing dated equipment. Council budget availability means that repairs and replacement to play equipment cannot be proactive. Instead a general approach of retaining the current stock of provision with removal of any unusable pieces is currently implemented.

Table 3.2: Quality scores for all open space typologies

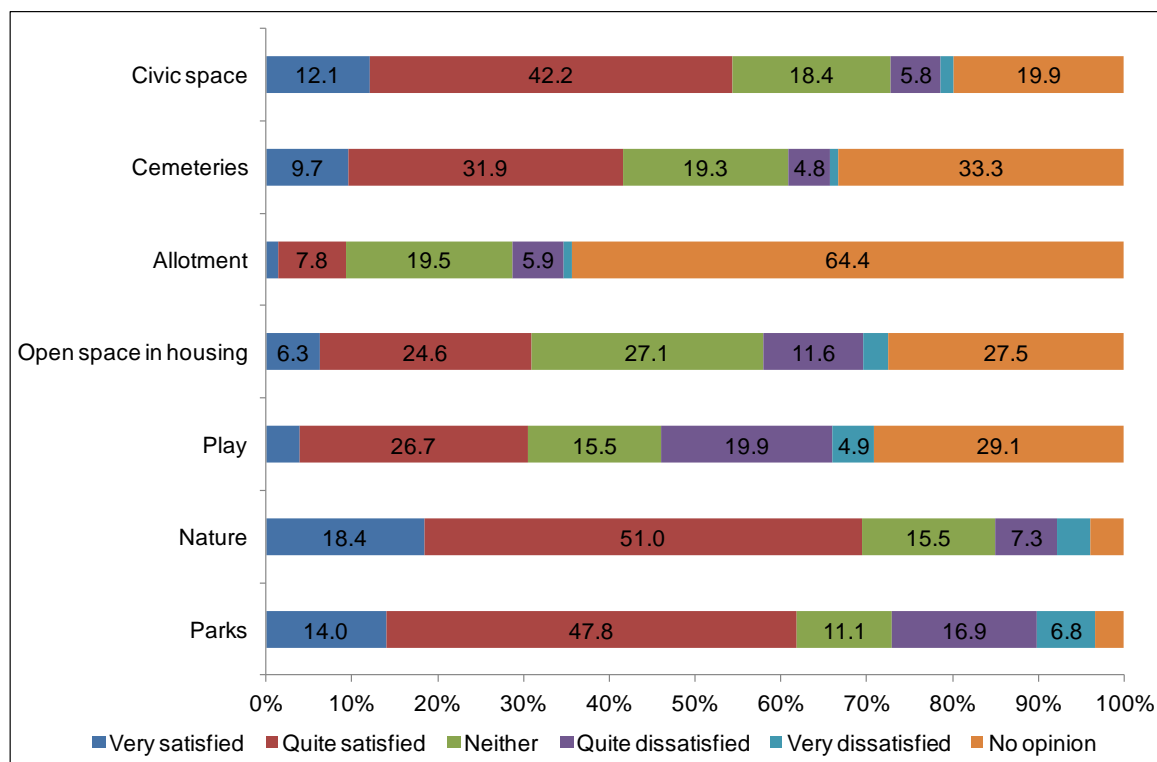
Typology	Threshold	Scores			No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Allotments	40%	21%	38%	60%	10	12
Amenity greenspace	45%	10%	47%	76%	30	47
Cemeteries/churchyards	45%	34%	49%	58%	2	13
Provision for children & young people	50%	24%	55%	82%	22	29
Civic space	50%	36%	50%	71%	2	1
Natural & semi-natural greenspace	40%	14%	44%	89%	8	8
Park and gardens	60%	61%	65%	75%	-	5
TOTAL	-	10%	48%	89%	74	115

Nearly all typologies are viewed by respondents as being quite satisfactory in terms of quality; with the exception of allotments and amenity greenspace provision. Both typologies receive a higher percentage for respondents being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (19.5% and 27.1% respectively). However, results overall are still generally positive.

Open space types viewed as being very and quite satisfactory includes nature areas, parks and civic space; a reflection to their popularity and frequency of use.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 3.8: Satisfaction with quality of open spaces



Children responding to the primary school aged survey were asked their views on the cleanliness and tidiness of sites. Most respondents (61%) thought sites were very clean and tidy. Approximately a fifth of children (21%) consider sites to not be very clean or tidy.

Table 3.4: Children's view on tidiness of sites

Very clean and tidy	Not very clean or tidy	Did not answer
61%	21%	18%

3.5 Value

The methodology for assessing value is set out in Part 2 (Methodology). The table below summarises the results of the value assessment for open spaces across Gravesham.

A high value site is considered to be one that is well used by the local community, well maintained (with a balance for conservation), provides a safe environment and has features of interest; for example play equipment and landscaping. Sites that provide for a cross section of users and have a multi-functional use are considered a higher value than those offering limited functions and that are thought of as bland and unattractive.

The majority of sites (87%) are assessed as being above the threshold for value. That nearly all typologies rate high for value reflects their role in and importance to local communities and environments.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

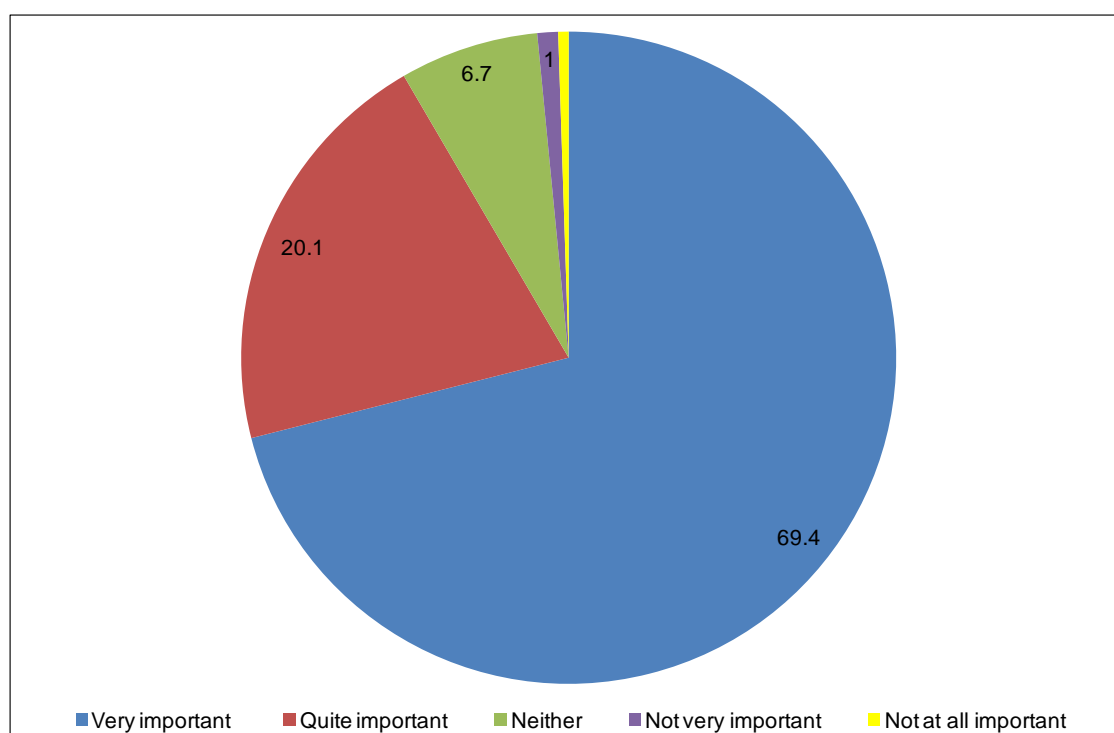
Amenity greenspaces have a slightly higher proportion of low value provision. This reflects a lack of ancillary features at some sites leading to a lack of recreational use in comparison to other sites. The typology also contains a number of smaller sized sites. However, the value these provide in offering a visual and recreational amenity as well as a break in the built form can still be important.

Table 3.3: Value scores for all open space typologies

Typology	Threshold	Scores			No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score	Low	High
Allotments	20%	12%	25%	41%	4	18
Amenity greenspace		6%	28%	55%	17	60
Cemeteries/churchyards		20%	29%	41%	-	15
Provision for children & young people		15%	38%	60%	1	50
Civic space		19%	34%	45%	1	2
Natural & semi-natural greenspace		13%	31%	52%	1	15
Park and gardens		41%	47%	57%	-	5
TOTAL	20%	6%	31%	60%	24	165

The majority of survey respondents (89.5%) view open spaces as being either very important (69.4%) or quite important (20.1%); reflecting the high value placed on such provision, and the importance of the continuing presence and availability of open spaces.

Figure 3.9: Importance of open spaces (%)

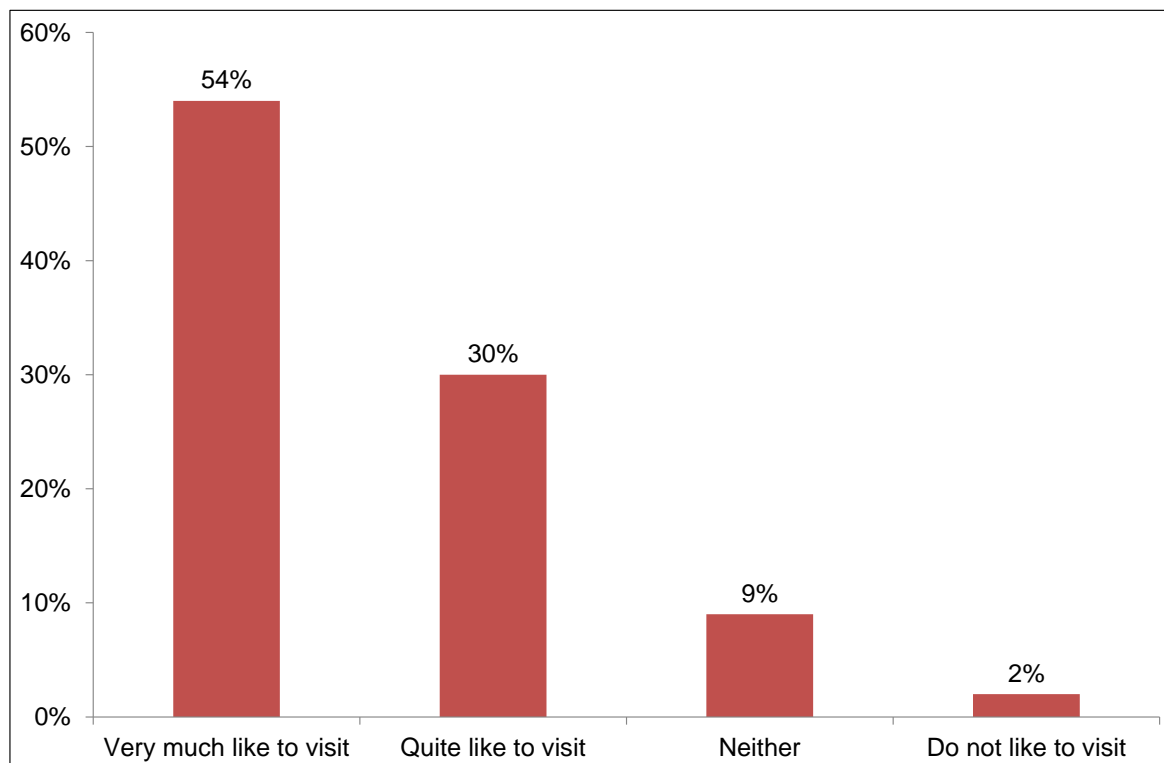


GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

The primary school aged survey also asked children how much they like visiting open space provision as a means to gauge the importance of such provision.

Over half of children respondents (54%) state they very much like to visit, followed by a further 30% that quite like to visit open space. Only a small percentage of children identify they do not like to visit (2%) or neither liking nor disliking (9%).

Figure 3.10: How much children like to visit open space



3.6 Summary

General summary

- ◀ In total 189 sites in Gravesham are identified as open space provision. This is equivalent to over 797 hectares.
- ◀ Accessibility standards set for typologies are mixed. For certain typologies, such as play or amenity greenspace, lower walk times (10 and 5 minutes) are applied. For others, like natural greenspace and parks respondents show a willingness to travel further.
- ◀ Most open spaces (61%) rate above the thresholds set for quality. Most noticeably, more parks and gardens and cemeteries score above the thresholds for quality than others.
- ◀ Provision for children and young people is highlighted in some instances as being tired and dated in appearance. Several sites are noted as containing dated equipment.
- ◀ The majority of all open spaces (87%) are assessed as being above the threshold for value. This reflects the importance of open space provision and its role offering social, environmental and health benefits.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

PART 4: PARKS AND GARDENS

4.1 Introduction

This typology covers urban parks and formal gardens (including designed landscapes), which provide accessible high quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events. The provision of country parks is included within the typology of natural and semi-natural greenspace due to their greater role in conservation and environmental education.

4.2 Current provision

There are five sites classified as parks and gardens in Gravesham, the equivalent of over 20 hectares. No site size threshold has been applied and, as such, all sites have been included within the typology.

Table 4.1: Distribution of parks by analysis area

Analysis area	Parks and gardens		
	Number of sites	Total hectares	Current standard (ha per 1,000 population)
Rural	-	-	-
Urban	5	20.44	0.24
GRAVESHAM	5	20.44	0.19

All sites classified as parks and gardens are located in the Urban Analysis Area. Subsequently it has a current standard of 0.24 hectares of parks provision per 1,000 head of population. No park sites are identified in the Rural Analysis Area. This is not unusual given the population density and characteristics of the two analysis areas.

The Riverside Leisure Area is the largest park site in Gravesham at 6.36 hectares. Other sites such as Woodlands Park (5.58 hectares), Wombwell Park (4.31 hectares) and Windmill Hill and Gardens (3.32 hectares) are also of a reasonable size. The smallest site is Penn Green at 0.87 hectares.

Other types of open space such as country parks also contribute to the perception of parks and gardens provision. There are four country parks identified in Gravesham; Camer, Jeskyns, Shorne Woods and Trosley. These are of a significant size, particularly Jeskyns (149 hectares) and Shorne Woods (129 hectares), and provide an important contribution and secondary function to the provision of parks as well as general open space.

Given their location they are of special importance to the more rural parts of the Borough. For the purpose of the study such sites are identified and categorised by their primary role; which for country parks is to provide opportunities and access to natural greenspace and their associated activities (e.g. access to nature, walking). More detail on these sites is set out in Part 5.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

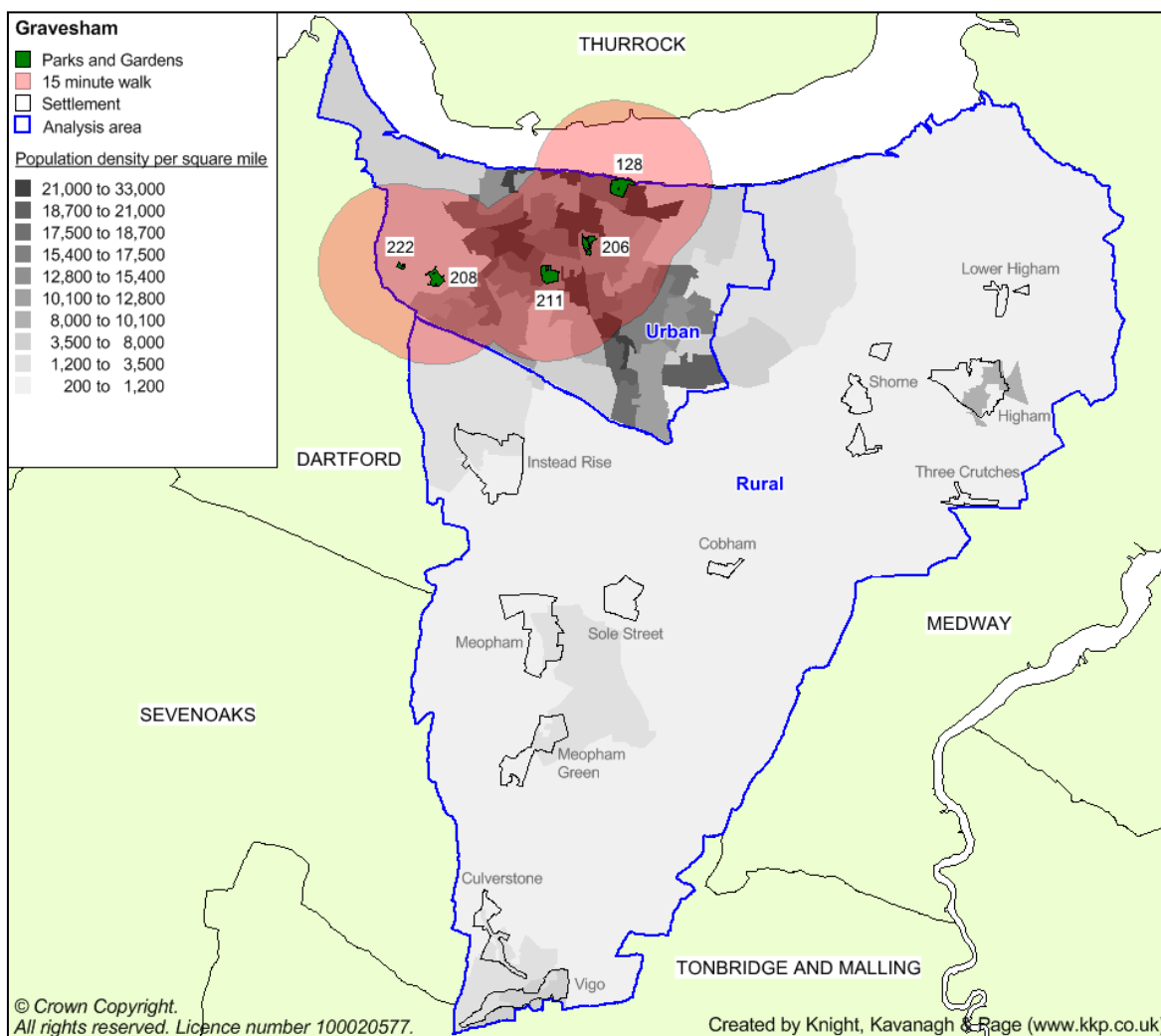
4.3 Accessibility

Consultation and findings from the Gravesham Parks and Open Spaces Survey found that most respondents (24%) signal they are willing to travel up to 30 minutes by transport in order to access a park. This is likely to be a reflection to the presence of the country parks located in the more rural areas of the Borough.

Of those respondents willing to walk in order to access provision, most are willing to travel over a 15 minute walk (21.5%). This was followed by an 11-15 minute walk (16%).

For the purpose of mapping, a 15 minute walk time and a 30 minute drive time have been applied. This is greater than the nine minute walk time equivalent recommended by FIT guidance. Figure 4.1 and 4.2 show the standards applied to parks and gardens to help inform where deficiencies in provision may be located.

Figure 4.1: Parks and gardens mapped against analysis area



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Figure 4.2: Parks and gardens with 30 minute drive time mapped against analysis area

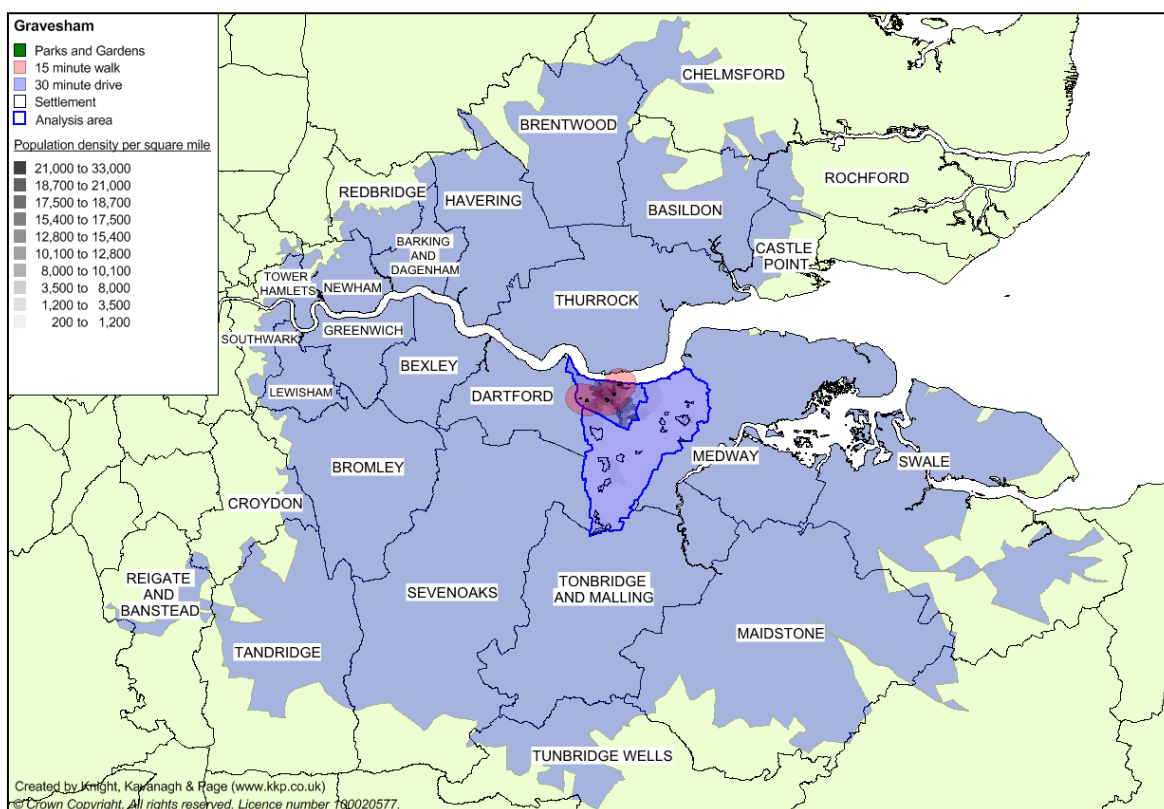


Table 4.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Settlement	Quality score	Value score
128	Riverside Leisure Area	Urban	Gravesend/Northfleet	74.9%	57.3%
206	Windmill Hill and Gardens	Urban	Gravesend/Northfleet	61.9%	45.5%
208	Wombwell Park	Urban	Gravesend/Northfleet	60.9%	40.9%
211	Woodlands Park	Urban	Gravesend/Northfleet	61.7%	48.2%
222	Penn Green	Urban	Gravesend/Northfleet	63.6%	41.8%

No settlements within the Rural Analysis Area are covered by the 15 minute walk time catchment distance of a park; as no parks are located in the rural area. Further to this, there is a gap in the catchment mapping in the Urban Analysis Area noted to the south east of Gravesend. However, the whole of the authority is covered by the 30 minute drive time catchment which nearly a quarter of respondents (24%) said they are willing to travel in order to access parks provision.

In addition, the area of Gravesend is covered by the catchments of other open space provision particularly amenity greenspace. For example, the identified gap is served by large sites such as Cascades Leisure Park and The Warren. It is unlikely that new forms of parks provision are thought to be required to meet such a catchment gap. It is important for these sites to be maintained and able to offer a role and activities similar to parks provision.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Furthermore, no issue with regard to a deficiency in the amount of parks and gardens is highlighted either through consultation or via the results of the Parks and Open Spaces Survey. Nearly half of all respondents (48%) rate being quite satisfied with the amount of parks in the Borough. A further 18% state they are very satisfied. Further supporting the existing amount of provision is the small percentage of respondents that are either quite dissatisfied (12%) or very dissatisfied (6%).

Those dissatisfied with the amount of parks provision tend to be from the Northfleet area of the Borough. A handful of comments highlight a perception to a lack of parks in the Northfleet area. This is a small minority accounting for approximately 4% of all respondents to the survey. In terms of quantity two sites are identified as being within the Northfleet area of Gravesham; Penn Green (0.87 hectares) and Wombwell Park (4.31 hectares). Proportionally this accounts for a quarter of provision in the Urban Analysis Area. It is therefore understandable why the perception towards a lack of provision is apparent for some. Mapping demonstrates that the area is mostly well served in terms of accessibility by the catchments of existing provision. There is a slight gap to the north western edges of the area. The option of extending the recreational offer and ensuring a high quality of other forms of open space such as amenity greenspace (e.g. Northfleet Urban Country Park and Rosherville Open Space) is recommended.

Four of the five park sites are owned and managed by the Council as part of its portfolio of open spaces. The other park site, Penn Green, is maintained privately as part of the Springhead Park development. Sites receive regular visits which include regimes such as grass cutting, weeding and general site preservation (e.g. bench refurbishment, path checks). The Riverside Leisure Area is the only site highlighted as having staff based onsite.

4.4 Quality

To determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by the Companion Guidance); scores from site assessments are colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table overleaf summarises the results of the quality assessment for parks in Gravesham. A threshold of 60% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of how the quality scores and thresholds are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 4.3: Quality ratings for parks by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <60%	High >60%
Rural	154	-	-	-	-	-	-
Urban	154	61%	65%	75%	14%	-	5
GRAVESHAM	154	61%	65%	75%	14%	-	5

All five park and garden sites rate above the threshold; demonstrating the generally high standard of existing provision.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

The Riverside Leisure Area is the highest rating site with a score of 75% for quality. It is observed as having an excellent level of maintenance and general appearance. The site contains a number of additional features including a play area, cafe and toilets; all maintained to a good standard. It is the only park to have onsite staff.

Penn Green is a relatively new park site; being provided since the previous Open Space Study in 2009. It is comparatively a small pocket park in the Northfleet area that is maintained to a high level. The site has plenty of seating and also contains a range of play equipment.

Observations from the site audit and comments from the Parks and Open Spaces survey are noted in relation to quality for both Wombwell Park and Woodlands Park. Both score slightly lower for overall maintenance and cleanliness compared to other sites as part of the audit assessment. However, overall both still rate above the threshold for quality. This is generally reflected in the comments received from the survey results. These highlight the potential and desire from some respondents for a better quality of facilities at the sites.

It is highlighted by the Council that Woodlands Park is due to undergo improvement works to the existing play area and toilet facilities on site. Both are considered to be dated and in need of renovation. Refurbishments should be complete in 2016.

The Woodlands Park site is the most frequently mentioned park facility from the results of the survey. Windmill Hill and Gardens is also often cited by respondents as a popular park to visit.

Most respondents to the Parks and Open Spaces Survey are generally satisfied with the quality of parks provision. Nearly half view quality as quite satisfactory (48%) with a further 14% rating provision as very satisfactory. There are a small percentage of respondents that are either quite dissatisfied (17%) or very dissatisfied (7%). Related comments generally reflect a desire from respondents for all park sites to reach their full potential as high quality community facilities.

There are currently no Green Flag Award sites identified in Gravesham. The Green Flag Award scheme is licensed and managed by Keep Britain Tidy. It provides national standards for parks and greenspaces across England and Wales. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) highlight the importance placed on Green Flag status as an indicator of high quality.

For Gravesham, the Riverside Leisure Area is recognised by the Council as having the best potential to achieve Green Flag Award status. No plans are currently in place however it is a long term aspiration.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

4.5 Value

To determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by the Companion Guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the value assessment for parks in Gravesham. A threshold of 20% is applied in order to identify high and low value. Further explanation of how the value scores are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 4.4: Value scores for parks by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Rural	110	-	-	-	-	-	-
Urban	110	41%	47%	57%	16%	-	5
GRAVESHAM	110	41%	47%	57%	16%	-	5

All parks are assessed as being of high value from the site visit assessments. This is fully supported from the findings of the consultation. Several comments cite the importance and role parks provide to the area and to peoples everyday lives. All sites rating above the threshold demonstrate the high social inclusion, health benefits and sense of place that parks and gardens in Gravesham offer.

Similar to results for quality, the Riverside Leisure Area rates the highest for value. The site is recognised for its range and accessible features including a play area, fishing and cafe. The site is also host to a number of events and displays. These added benefits provide a greater level of use and opportunity to recreational activities.

One of the key aspects of the value placed on parks provision is that they can provide opportunities for local communities and people to socialise. The ability for people to undertake a range of different activities such as exercise, dog walking or taking children to the play area are frequently recognised.

4.6 Summary

Parks and gardens

- ◆ Five sites are classified as parks and gardens totalling over 20 hectares.
- ◆ Catchment gaps are noted to parts of the urban area. However, this is thought to be sufficiently serviced by other forms of open space which provide opportunities for recreation; ensuring these sites are to a sufficient quality is recommended.
- ◆ Consultation highlights some concern towards the standard of provision at both the Wombwell Park and Woodlands Park sites. The latter is to undergo investment in order to improve the play and toilet facilities on site.
- ◆ All parks score above the threshold for quality and value; a reflection to the social interaction, health benefits and sense of place sites offer. The Riverside Leisure Area is especially highlighted as an excellent site.
- ◆ It is considered that new parks provision is not needed. The focus should be on continuing to improve the quality and facilities at existing sites where feasible.

PART 5: NATURAL AND SEMI-NATURAL GREENSPACE

5.1 Introduction

The natural and semi-natural greenspace typology can include woodland (coniferous, deciduous, mixed) and scrub, grassland (e.g. down-land, meadow), heath or moor, wetlands (e.g. marsh, fen), wastelands (including disturbed ground), and bare rock habitats (e.g. cliffs, quarries, pits) and commons. Such sites are often associated with providing wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.

5.2 Current provision

In total 16 sites are identified as natural and semi-natural greenspace, totalling over 675 hectares of provision. These totals may not include all provision in the area as a site size threshold of 0.2 hectares has been applied. Sites smaller than this are likely to be of less or only limited recreational value to residents.

Table 5.1: Distribution of natural and semi-natural greenspace by analysis area

Analysis area	Natural and semi-natural greenspace		
	Number	Size (ha)	Current standard (ha per 1,000 population)
Rural	15	674.61	32.40
Urban	1	1.16	0.01
GRAVESHAM	16	675.77	6.42

A further six sites have been identified as existing in Gravesham. However, these have been excluded from the study due to not being publically accessible open spaces. The six sites and the reason for their exclusion are:

- ◀ Cobham Park – private members golf course
- ◀ Court Wood – not accessible
- ◀ Elbows Wood – not accessible
- ◀ Great Crabbles Wood – not accessible
- ◀ Luxon Wood – not accessible
- ◀ Strawberry Hill – not accessible

The majority of provision, 15 out of the 16 sites, is located in the Rural Analysis Area (675 hectares). Only one site is identified in the Urban Analysis Area; Wallis Park Woodland. Subsequently the Rural Analysis Area has the greater proportion of provision per 1,000 population with 32.40 hectares. This is significantly higher than the Urban Analysis Area (0.01 hectares per 1,000 population). The location and distribution of sites is not surprising given the strong distinguishing characteristics of the urban and rural areas of the Borough.

A significant proportion of the total amount of natural and semi-natural greenspace in the Borough (74%) can be attributed to four large sites located in the area. This includes sites such as Jeskyns Country Park (149 hectares), Shorne Woods Country Park (129 hectares), Shorne Marshes (152 hectares) Cobham Woods (74 hectares).

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

It is important to recognise that other open spaces such as parks and amenity greenspace may also provide some opportunities and activities associated with natural and semi-natural greenspace. The authority also borders the River Thames to the north; whilst this is not categorised as an open space it is likely to provide some opportunities to activities such as walking, cycling and nature watching.

In addition, sites located outside the boundary of Gravesham also provide an important role to the provision and access of natural and semi-natural greenspace. Sites such as the RSPB Cliffe Pools Nature Reserve in Medway, Leybourne Lakes in Tonbridge and Malling, Lullingstone Country Park in Kent and even Greenwich Park in London are highlighted as being regularly visited.

Designations

In terms of national designations, there are no sites recognised in Gravesham as local nature reserves (LNRs). There are, however, five sites designated as Sites of Special Scientific Importance (SSSI). Such sites are recognised for their high natural importance for current and future generations. The five sites in Gravesham are:

- ◀ Cobham Woods
- ◀ Great Crabbles Wood
- ◀ Halling to Trottscliffe Escarpment
- ◀ Shorne and Ashenbank Woods
- ◀ South Thames Estuary and Marshes

Great Crabbles Wood, Halling to Trottscliffe Escarpment and South Thames Estuary and Marshes are not included in the study as they are not managed in a way which specifically encourages public accessibility to them.

5.3 Accessibility

Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt) provides a set of benchmarks for ensuring access to places near to where people live. They recommend that people living in towns and cities should have:

- ◀ An accessible natural greenspace of at least two hectares in size, no more than 300 metres (five minutes walk) from home.
- ◀ At least one accessible 20 hectare site within two kilometres of home.
- ◀ One accessible 100 hectare site within five kilometres of home.
- ◀ One accessible 500 hectare site within ten kilometres of home.
- ◀ One hectare of statutory Local Nature Reserves per thousand population.

On this basis a population such as Gravesham (105,261) is recommended to have approximately 105 hectares of LNR. However, currently no sites are identified as LNR in Gravesham.

This study, in order to comply with guidance uses locally informed standards. It does not focus on the ANGSt Standard for accessibility as this uses a different methodology for identifying accessible natural greenspace to that advocated in the Companion Guidance.

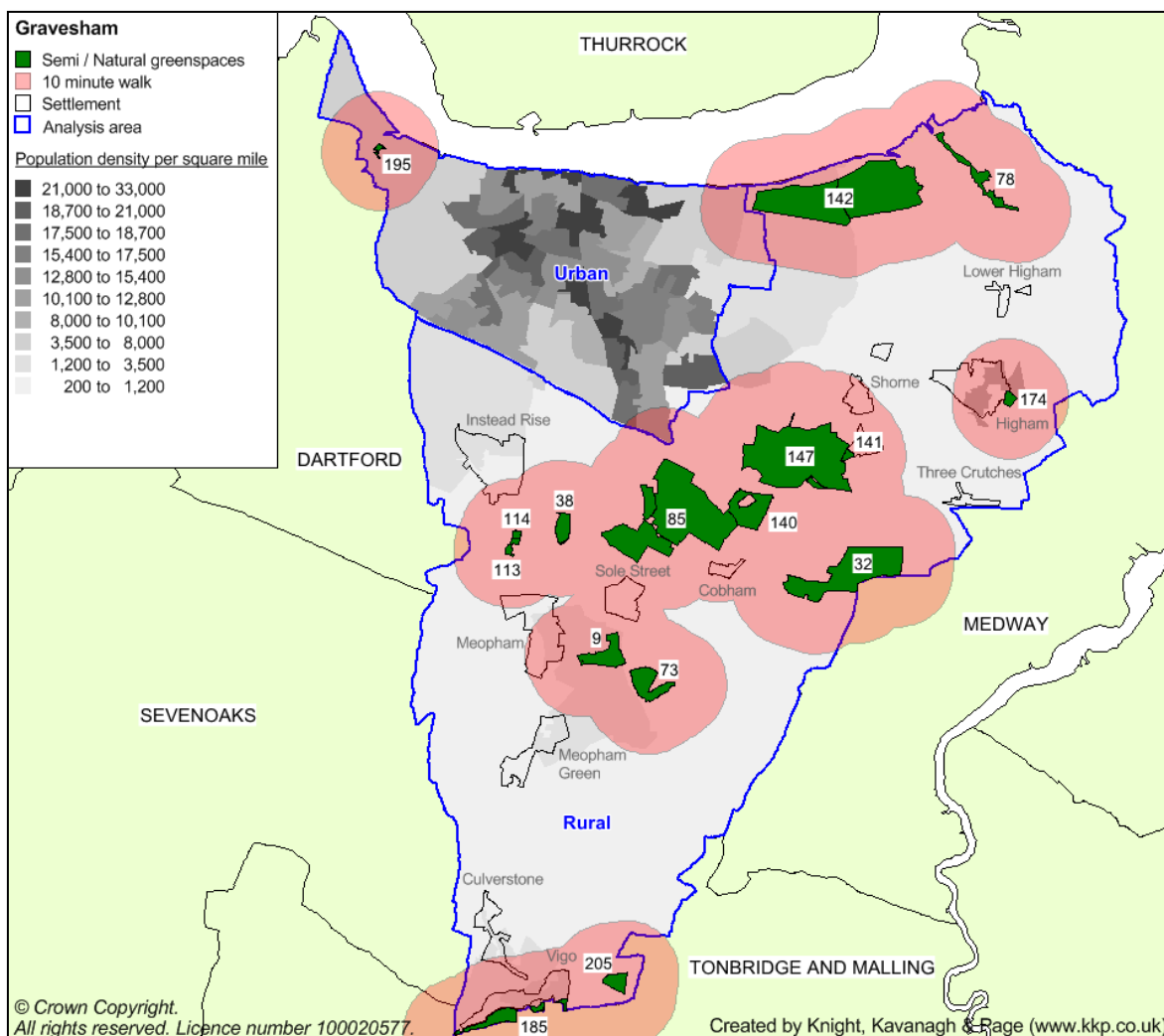
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Findings from the Parks and Open Spaces Survey found the most common travel time expected by respondents in order to access a natural space was up to 30 minutes by transport (35%).

This is followed by 24% of respondents willing to travel over 30 minutes by transport. Recently published guidance by FIT suggests an approximate catchment guideline of a 10 minute walk time for natural greenspace. As a result, for the purpose of mapping a 10 minute walk time and a 30 minute drive time catchment have been applied.

Figure 5.1 and 5.2 show the standards applied to natural and semi-natural greenspace to help inform where deficiencies in provision may be located.

Figure 5.1: Natural and semi-natural greenspace with 10 minute walk time mapped against analysis areas



GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 5.2: Natural and semi-natural greenspace with 30 minute drive time mapped against analysis areas

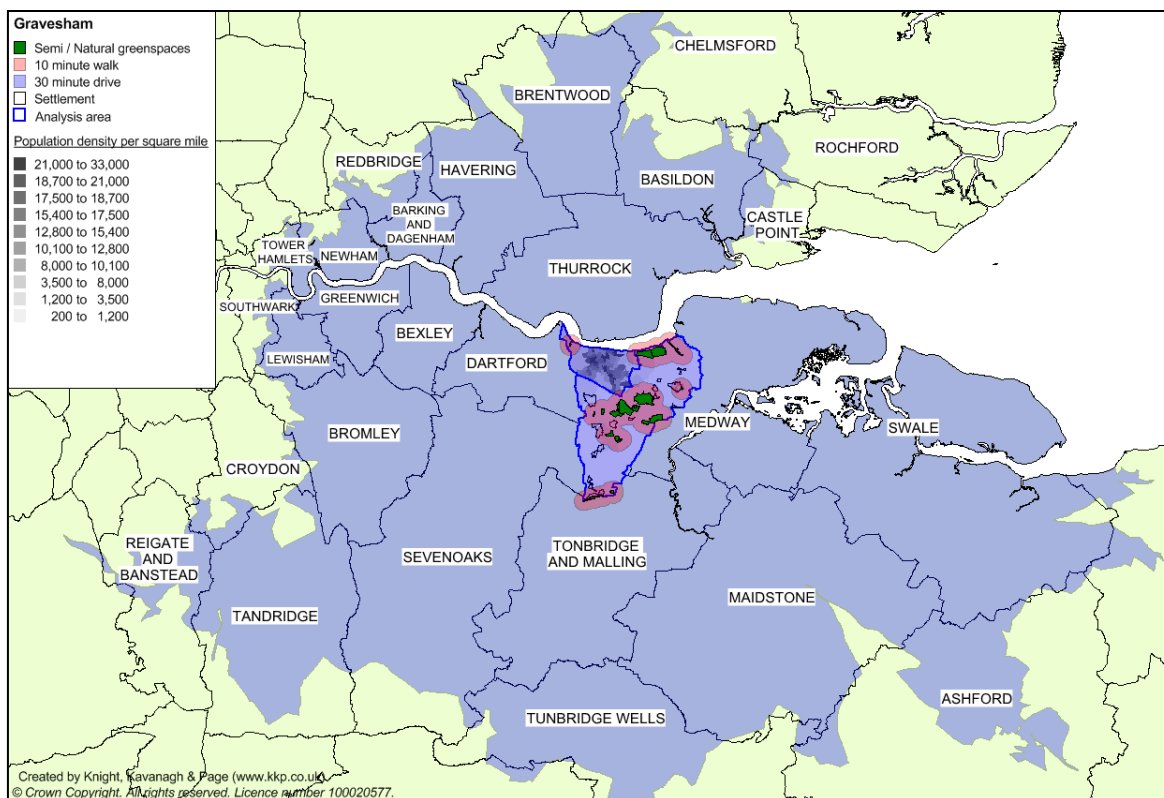


Table 5.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Settlement	Quality score	Value score
9	Camer Country Park	Rural	Luddesdown	66.7%	51.8%
32	Cobham Woods	Rural	Cobham	40.7%	32.7%
38	Cozendon Wood	Rural	Istead Rise	26.2%	20.0%
73	Henley Wood and Pasture	Rural	Luddesdown	27.9%	20.0%
78	Higham Common	Rural	Higham	24.6%	30.0%
85	Jeskyns Country Park	Rural	Cobham	88.8%	51.8%
113	Nurstead Wood 1	Rural	Meopham	64.5%	32.7%
114	Nurstead Wood 2	Rural	Meopham	41.8%	37.3%
140	Ashenbank Woods	Rural	Cobham	28.7%	20.9%
142	Shorne Marshes	Rural	Gravesend	26.2%	23.6%
141	Shorne Common	Rural	Shorne	28.7%	22.7%
147	Shorne Woods Country Park	Rural	Shorne	72.1%	39.1%
174	Telegraph Hill	Rural	Higham	31.4%	22.7%
185	Trosley Country Park	Rural	Vigo	79.8%	47.3%
195	Wallis Park Woodland	Urban	Northfleet	13.9%	12.7%
205	Whitehorse Wood	Rural	Vigo	43.4%	23.6%

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 5.2 shows all analysis areas are covered by the 30 minute drive time. Many surrounding neighbouring local authorities are also served by provision; particularly given the large size of some sites leading to them acting as destination sites.

The FIT 10 minute walk time map shows that the majority of provision is located outside of the densely populated areas of Gravesham. Given sites are of natural and semi-natural provision it is not unusual for such sites to be in these locations. Furthermore, a number of these sites are large in size and provide a role not just locally but regionally. For example the country parks, especially Jeskyns Country Park, are situated in the area. Such sites offer a recognised high level of provision that individuals are willing to travel further to in order to access.

The more densely populated areas, not covered by walk time catchments of natural and semi-natural greenspace, contain sites classified as other forms of open space; particularly amenity greenspace and parks and gardens (e.g. Northfleet Urban Country Park, Windmill Hill Park etc). Sites of these types of provision are likely to include features and opportunities associated with natural and semi-natural greenspace. Therefore new forms of natural and semi-natural greenspace provision are not necessarily required to meet this gap. However, ensuring that such sites include natural features, to a high quality and which are accessible to the larger surrounding areas should be ensured.

This approach is also recommended for the rural settlements of Istead Rise and Meopham Green. Both are not covered by the walk time catchment for natural and semi-natural greenspace but are served by amenity greenspace provision. It is also worth mentioning that as these settlements are in rural areas, and are recognised as having wider access to the countryside.

No issue with regard to a deficiency in the amount of natural and semi-natural greenspace is highlighted either through consultation or via the results of the Parks and Open Spaces Survey. Most respondents (44%) rate being quite satisfied with the amount of natural greenspaces in the Borough. A further 20% state they are very satisfied. Further supporting the existing amount of provision is the small proportion of respondents that are either quite dissatisfied (15%) or very dissatisfied (5%).

Ownership and management

There is a mix of responsibility in terms of the management and maintenance of the identified natural and semi-natural sites across Gravesham. The Council is only known to be responsible for the maintenance of three sites; Camer Country Park, Telegraph Hill and Wallis Park Woodlands.

In addition to the Council, Kent County Council (Shorne Woods Country Park and Trosley Country Park), the National Trust (Cobham Woods), Woodland Trust (Ashenbank Wood) and the Forestry Commission (Jeskyns Country Park) have an active role in the management and maintenance of some natural and semi-natural greenspace in Gravesham. Over 445 hectares of natural and semi-natural greenspace is highlighted as being managed by other organisations; accounting for 66% of the total provision identified.

Most of these large sites are linked by the Darnley Trail. The trail is a 10 kilometre circular route available for pedestrians, cyclists and equestrians.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

5.4 Quality

To determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by the Companion Guidance) scores from the site assessments are colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for natural and semi-natural greenspace in Gravesham. A threshold of 45% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of how the quality scores are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Natural and semi-natural greenspace has a slightly lower quality threshold than other open space typologies. This reflects the characteristic of this kind of provision. For instance, natural and semi-natural sites can be intentionally without ancillary facilities in order to reduce misuse/inappropriate behaviour whilst encouraging greater conservation and promotion of flora and fauna activity.

Table 5.3: Quality rating for natural and semi-natural greenspace by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <45%	High >45%
Rural	122	25%	46%	89%	64%	7	8
Urban	122	14%	14%	14%	-	1	-
GRAVESHAM	122	14%	44%	89%	75%	8	8

A total of eight natural and semi-natural sites (50%) in Gravesham rate above the threshold set for quality. However, eight sites also rate below the quality threshold applied:

- ✦ Wallis Park Woodland (14%)
- ✦ Higham Common (25%)
- ✦ Cozendon Woods (26%)
- ✦ Shorne Marshes (26%)
- ✦ Henley Wood & Pasture (28%)
- ✦ Ashenbank Wood (29%)
- ✦ Shorne Common (29%)
- ✦ Telegraph Hill (31%)

The lowest scoring site in Gravesham is Wallis Park Woodland with a rating of 14% for quality. It is the only natural and semi-natural greenspace identified in the Urban Analysis Area. At the time of the site audit it was noted as having a lot of litter contributing to the sites overall poor maintenance and cleanliness. Access into and throughout the site is also observed as being difficult.

Other low scoring sites are generally noted as being isolated with little or no additional ancillary features. However, most are recognised as providing opportunities towards habitats and wildlife development.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Sites scoring above the threshold are generally observed as being attractive and well maintained; offering plenty of good quality ancillary features such as bins, benches, parking and pathways. They are considered to be well used by people for recreational purposes whilst also offering significant opportunities for wildlife promotion. Sites scoring particularly high include:

- ◀ Jeskyns Country Park (89%)
- ◀ Trosley Country Park (80%)
- ◀ Shorne Woods Country Park (72%)

All three sites are observed as having excellent features and facilities. For instance, each has the added benefit of car parking whilst the other features on site (e.g. pathways, signage, information, seating etc) are viewed as being to an excellent standard. All three sites are also identified as being managed by the Forestry Commission (Jeskyns) or Kent County Council.

Jeskyns Country Park is a relatively new site having opened in 2007. It contains a number of features including ponds, wild flower meadow, community orchard, play areas and cafe to cite a few. The site is also host to a range of user groups such as walking groups, craft activities, a dog club as well as a monthly volunteer group who meet to carry out maintenance and conservation tasks. A new initiative recently started is the Forest Schools Programme; school aged learning centred on the outdoor environment. This has only recently started but appears to be popular.

Most respondents to the Parks and Open Spaces Survey are generally satisfied with the quality of natural greenspace provision. Just over half of respondents are quite satisfied (51%) in terms of quality with a further 18% being very satisfied. Furthermore, there are only a small percentage of respondents that are either quite dissatisfied (7%) or very dissatisfied (4%). Both Jeskyns Country Park and Shorne Woods Country Park are often cited as popular sites for respondents to visit. Other sites such as Trosley Country Park and Camer Country Park are also regularly mentioned. The play and toilet facilities at Camer Country Park are raised through consultation as having the potential to be better through improvements. A handful of comments also highlight the need to pay for parking at some country park sites as a negative.

The country parks within Gravesham are recognised through consultation as being high quality and important forms of open space which contribute to the perception and opportunities associated with natural greenspace as well as open space provision overall.

5.5 Value

To determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by the Companion Guidance) scores from site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the value assessment for natural and semi-natural greenspace in Gravesham. A threshold of 20% is applied in order to identify high and low value. Further explanation of how the value scores are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Table 5.4: Value scores for natural and semi-natural greenspace by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Rural	110	20%	32%	52%	32%	-	15
Urban	110	13%	13%	13%	-	1	-
GRAVESHAM	110	13%	31%	52%	39%	1	15

All natural and semi-natural greenspaces with the exception of one site rate above the threshold for value. The only site below the threshold is Wallis Park Woodlands in the Urban Analysis Area with a score of 13%.

It is the only site to rate below the threshold for both value and quality. It does not appear to be particularly well used although the habitat opportunity it provides is recognised. Site observations from the audit note it to be lacking in general maintenance and cleanliness in comparison to other sites; a large amount of litter was observed. Access in and through the site is also highlighted which is likely to limit its recreational use.

The highest scoring sites for value are the Jeskyns Country Park and Camer Country Park (52%). Both offer various recreational opportunities to a range people and activities (e.g. nature enthusiasts, tourists, families) to a high standard.

5.6 Summary

Natural and semi-natural greenspace summary

- ◀ There are 16 accessible natural and semi-natural greenspace sites covering 675 hectares.
- ◀ The 30 minute drive time accessibility standard shows no shortfalls. Gaps are highlighted from the 10 minute walk time catchment; mostly in the densely populated areas. New natural sites are not thought to be required to meet this gap but there may be a need to ensure that other types of open spaces contain such associated features.
- ◀ There are no designated LNRs in Gravesham which means the area is insufficient against the ANGSt standard for provision.
- ◀ Quality of natural greenspace sites is variable with half of sites rating above the threshold and the other half rating below.
- ◀ Sites rating below the threshold are often due to isolated location and lack of ancillary features in comparison to some of the other natural sites in the area.
- ◀ Nearly all sites rate above the threshold for value. Only one sites rates below the threshold for value and quality; Wallis Park Woodlands. Observation note litter and access issues as the main concerns. However, its role as habitat provision is acknowledged.
- ◀ Higher scoring sites for value, such as Jeskyns Country Park and Camer Country Park, provide an excellent range of opportunities and uses for residents and visitors.

PART 6: AMENITY GREENSPACE

6.1 Introduction

This is defined as sites offering opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas. It includes informal recreation spaces, housing green spaces, village greens and other incidental space. For the purposes of this study, recreation grounds have been included within this typology.

6.2 Current provision

There are 77 amenity greenspace sites in Gravesham; equivalent to nearly 97 hectares of provision. Sites are most often found within areas of housing and function as informal recreation space or open space along highways that provide a visual amenity. A number of recreation grounds are also classified as amenity greenspace.

Table 6.1: Distribution of amenity greenspace sites by analysis area

Analysis area	Amenity greenspace		
	Number	Size (ha)	Current standard (ha per 1,000 population)
Rural	17	34.59	1.66
Urban	60	62.33	0.74
GRAVESHAM	77	96.92	0.92

Of the 77 sites, only one is identified as potentially having restricted or limited access; Shamrock Road Open Space. It is uncertain whether the site is publicly accessible. At the time of the site visit audit it was unable to be accessed and observed as it was being used by horses for grazing.

There is a wider range in variation of site sizes within this typology compared to others. The size of amenity greenspace provision varies from the smallest incidental grass verge separating houses from the road, such as Nickleby Road Open Space (0.20 hectares), to the larger Culverstone Recreation Ground (9.68 hectares) and Northfleet Urban Country Park (9.19 hectares). Larger sites, such as the 12 sites identified as recreation grounds, serve a different purpose to smaller grassed areas and verges; often providing an extended range of opportunities for recreational activities due to their size and facilities.

Two sites below the site size threshold of 0.2 hectares, Ferguson Avenue (0.04 hectares) and Watercress Way (0.03 hectares), are included within the audit as they have been recently provided to meet the needs of occupiers of new residential development.

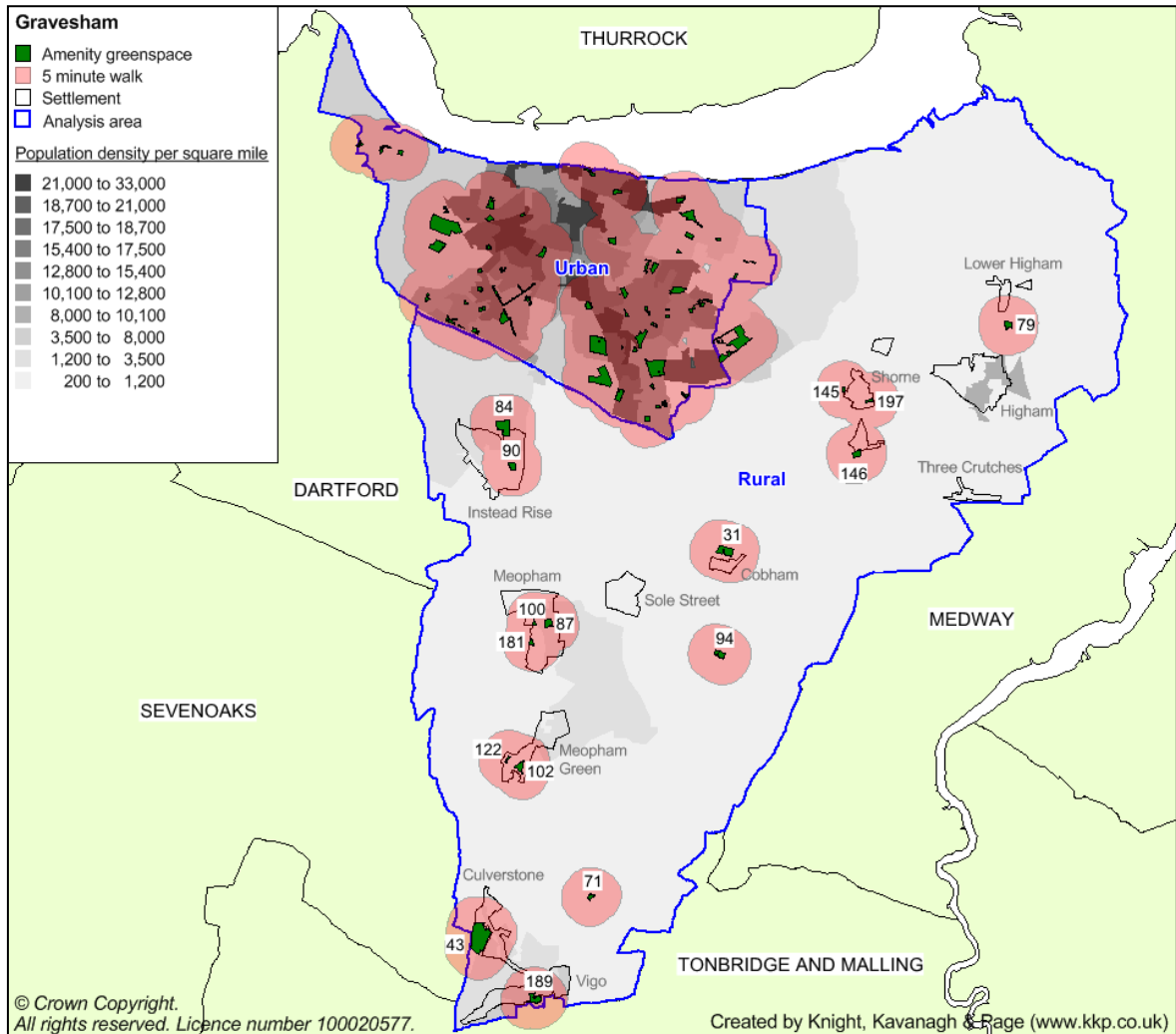
6.3 Accessibility

Findings from the Parks and Open Spaces Survey found the most common travel time expected by respondents in order to access amenity greenspace is less than a 5-10 minute walk (30%). This is followed closely by a less than five minute walk (27%). An approximate catchment guideline of a five minute walk time is suggested by guidance published by FIT.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Therefore for the purpose of mapping a five minute walk time catchment is applied. Figure 6.1 and 6.2 show the standard applied to help inform where deficiencies in provision may be located.

Figure 6.1: Amenity greenspace with five minute walk time mapped against analysis area



GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 6.2: Amenity greenspace with five minute walk time mapped against urban area

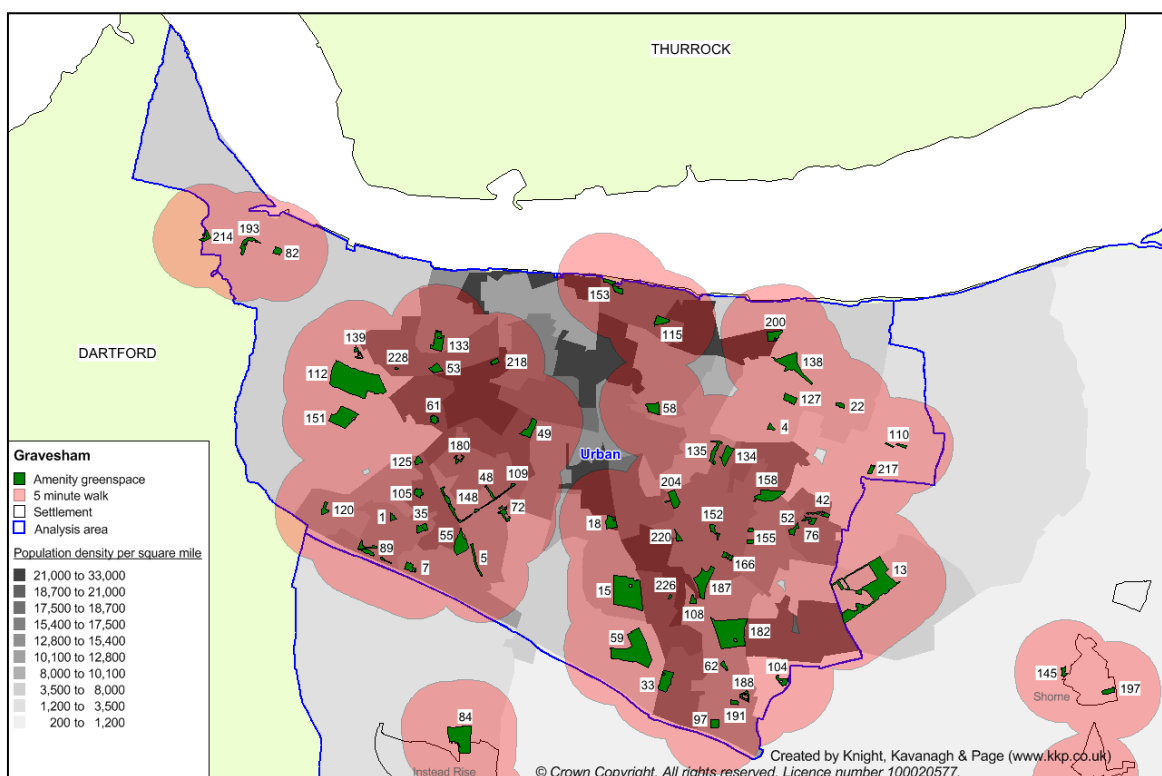


Table 6.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Settlement	Quality score	Value score
1	Aspdin Road Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	24.9%	11.6%
4	Bellman Avenue Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	42.2%	22.1%
5	Boucher Drive Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	28.3%	16.8%
7	Brightlands Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	47.5%	37.9%
13	Cascades Leisure Park	Rural	Gravesend/ Northfleet	72.3%	54.7%
15	Cedar Avenue Recreation Ground	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	44.8%	33.7%
18	Central Avenue Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	42.9%	38.9%
22	Chalk Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	55.4%	29.5%
31	Cobham Recreation Ground	Rural	Cobham	51.6%	49.5%
33	Codrington Crescent Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	45.0%	38.9%
35	Constable Road Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	38.0%	33.7%
42	Cruden Road Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	40.7%	24.2%
43	Culverstone Recreation Ground	Rural	Culverstone	71.6%	47.4%
48	Cygnets Gardens Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	56.5%	18.9%
49	Dashwood Road Recreation Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	71.8%	38.9%

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Settlement	Quality score	Value score
52	Doria Drive Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	47.1%	16.8%
53	Dover Road East Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	18.1%	11.6%
55	Durndale Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	61.6%	51.6%
58	Fleetway Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	53.3%	29.5%
59	Former Southfields School Site	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	32.8%	11.6%
61	Foxwood Grove Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	60.8%	40.0%
62	Franklin Road Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	62.7%	17.9%
71	Harvel Village Green	Rural	Harvel	49.0%	21.1%
72	Haynes Road Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	48.2%	33.7%
76	Hibernia Drive Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	46.3%	28.4%
79	Higham Recreation Ground	Rural	Higham	46.3%	22.1%
82	Hive Lane Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	42.0%	32.6%
84	Istead Rise Recreation Ground	Rural	Istead Rise	62.1%	43.2%
87	Judsons Recreation Ground	Rural	Meopham Hook Green	42.6%	40.0%
89	Landseer Avenue Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	45.2%	23.2%
90	Lewis Road Recreation Area	Rural	Istead Rise	38.8%	22.1%
94	Luddesdown Recreation Ground	Rural	Luddesdown	33.5%	25.3%
97	Mackenzie Way Recreation Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	47.5%	21.1%
100	Melliker Green	Rural	Meopham Hook Green	45.2%	21.1%
102	Meopham Green	Rural	Meopham Green	62.1%	50.5%
104	Michael Gardens Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	51.2%	54.7%
105	Millfield Drive Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	35.0%	26.3%
108	Nansen Road Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	48.6%	26.3%
109	New House Lane Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	50.8%	22.1%
110	Nickleby Road Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	45.2%	21.1%
112	Northfleet Urban Country Park	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	39.0%	22.1%
115	Ordnance Road Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	39.6%	16.8%
120	Pepper Hill Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	45.2%	26.3%
122	Pitfield Drive Open Space	Rural	Meopham Green	33.9%	22.1%
125	Riversdale Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	37.3%	31.6%
127	Riverside Family Learning Centre	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	59.9%	31.6%
133	Rosherville Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	56.9%	49.5%
134	Sandpipers Open Space (a)	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	38.4%	25.3%
135	Sandpipers Open Space (b)	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	40.7%	26.3%
138	Shamrock Road Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	10.2%	8.4%
139	Shepherd Street Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	44.4%	18.9%

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Settlement	Quality score	Value score
145	Shorne Recreation Ground	Rural	Shorne	42.6%	28.4%
146	Shorne Ridgeway Rec Ground	Rural	Shorne	53.1%	36.8%
148	Snelling Avenue Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	49.0%	15.8%
151	Springhead Recreation Ground	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	61.0%	48.4%
152	St Albans Close Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	40.9%	20.0%
153	St Andrews Gardens Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	69.9%	40.0%
155	St Dunstans Drive Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	24.9%	16.8%
158	St Gregorys Recreation Ground	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	66.7%	50.5%
166	St Patricks Gardens	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	42.9%	36.8%
180	The Crescent Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	40.3%	16.8%
181	The Pippins Open Space	Rural	Meopham	46.3%	43.2%
182	The Warren Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	54.8%	31.6%
187	Truro Road Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	39.6%	15.8%
188	Valley Lodge Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	49.7%	21.1%
189	Vigo Recreation Ground	Rural	Vigo	51.2%	37.9%
191	Virginia Walk Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	44.1%	21.1%
193	Wallis Park Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	46.7%	37.9%
197	Warren View Open Space	Rural	Shorne	31.6%	15.8%
200	Waterton Park	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	55.2%	47.4%
204	Whitehill Road Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	53.9%	37.9%
214	Black Eagle Drive	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	59.3%	33.7%
217	Priests Walk	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	45.2%	11.6%
218	Quarry Close	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	49.7%	28.4%
220	Whitehill Lane	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	45.2%	10.5%
226	Ferguson Avenue	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	76.3%	30.5%
228	Watercress Way	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	59.9%	24.2%

Catchment mapping with a five minute walk time applied shows a generally good level of coverage across Gravesham.

There are some noticeable gaps to the Urban Analysis Area. However, most of these appear to be served by provision of other open space such as parks (e.g. Penn Green and Woodlands Park).

Some settlements in the Rural Analysis Area are also noted as having gaps in the catchment mapping. Higham and Sole Street are observed as not being covered by provision. However, it is unlikely that new provision is required as the settlements are served by other forms of open space provision such as natural and semi-natural greenspace sites.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Respondents to the Parks and Open Spaces Survey are generally satisfied with the amounts of amenity greenspace in the Borough. The highest proportion rate being quite satisfied (27%) followed by a further 10% that are very satisfied. There are also 23% who state being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with quantity. Further supporting the existing amount of provision is the small proportion of respondents that state being either quite dissatisfied (11%) or very dissatisfied (5%).

In addition to the Council, sites are also owned by the parish councils. However, the maintenance of nearly all amenity sites is undertaken by Gravesham Council; including parish council owned sites. The exception is a handful of sites owned and maintained by either Kent County Council or private landowners.

6.4 Quality

To determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by the Companion Guidance); the scores from site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for amenity greenspaces in Gravesham. A threshold of 45% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of how the quality scores and thresholds are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 6.3: Quality ratings for amenity greenspaces by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <45%	High >45%
Rural	88	32%	49%	72%	40%	6	11
Urban	88	10%	47%	76%	67%	24	36
GRAVESHAM	88	10%	47%	76%	67%	30	47

Over half of amenity greenspace in Gravesham (61%) rates above the threshold for quality. The highest ratings sites for quality in the Borough are Ferguson Avenue with 76%; Cascades Leisure Park (urban), Culverstone Recreation Ground (rural) and Dashwood Recreation Area (urban) all with scores of 72%,

High scoring sites, such as the ones above, reflect the range of ancillary facilities available as well as the good standard of appearance and maintenance. They also tend to have plenty of ancillary facilities such as bins and signage and in some cases parking and play provision. Features such as these contribute to their overall quality and help to create more opportunities and reasons for people to access provision. In the case of Ferguson Avenue, the site appears to be fairly new with an excellent level of appearance and maintenance.

Of the 12 sites identified as recreation grounds in Gravesham, eight rate above the threshold for quality. The four sites to score below the threshold are:

- ◀ Cedar Avenue Recreation Ground
- ◀ Judsons Recreation Ground
- ◀ Luddesdown Recreation Ground
- ◀ Shorne Recreation Ground

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

The Cedar Avenue Recreation Ground is the only site located in the Urban Analysis Area; the other three recreation grounds are all in the Rural Analysis Area.

The four sites are observed as having a lack of paths and seating compared to other similar forms of provision. In addition, their general appearance is viewed as having the potential to be better. Shorne Recreation Ground was highlighted as being particularly boggy and difficult to traverse.

However, it is important to recognise that despite rating below the threshold for quality, they still have an important role to the local community. For instance, Judsons Recreation Ground is the main form of open space provision serving the settlement of Meopham Hook Green. It is therefore of high value; supported through consultation.

Some of the lowest scoring amenity greenspace sites in Gravesham are:

- ◀ Shamrock Road Open Space (10%)
- ◀ Dover Road East Open Space (18%)
- ◀ St Margaret's Crescent (22%)
- ◀ Aspdin Road Open Space (25%)
- ◀ St Dunstons Drive (25%)
- ◀ Boucher Drive (28%)

Observations from the audit assessment highlight that sites such as Shamrock Road, Dover Road East and St Margaret's Crescent have a poor appearance with evidence of rubbish also being noted. As mentioned earlier, the Shamrock Road site seems to be not accessible. At the time of the visit it was being used by horses for grazing.

Most sites that rate low for quality are observed as being fairly basic pockets of green space. These tend to be fairly small grassed areas lacking ancillary facilities intended to encourage extensive recreational use. Approximately a quarter of the sites (27%) to rate below the threshold for quality are noted as being highway verge type sites.

Two of the largest sized sites to rate below the threshold for quality are Northfleet Urban Country Park (9.2 hectares) and the Former Southfields School site (6.0 hectares). The latter is noted as being overgrown and is believed to be owned by a private developer. Both are observed as having a lack of ancillary features but with great potential for expanding future uses if required. Northfleet Urban Country Park is intentionally kept as a piece of natural space in a built up area. However, as functioning open space for recreation it is limited to activities such as walking. Consideration to reclassifying the site as natural and semi-natural greenspace may be warranted.

Most respondents to the Parks and Open Spaces Survey are generally satisfied with the quality of amenity greenspace. A quarter of respondents are quite satisfied (25%) in terms of quality with a further 6% being very satisfied. Furthermore, there are only a small proportion of respondents that are either quite dissatisfied (12%) or very dissatisfied (3%). There are also a percentage of respondents (27%) that are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the quality of amenity greenspace; a possible reflection to the typologies role as visual amenity (without any great attraction for physical use).

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

6.5 Value

To determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by the Companion Guidance) site assessments scores are colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results. A threshold of 20% is applied in order to identify high and low value. Further explanation of the value scoring and thresholds can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 6.4: Value ratings for amenity greenspace by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Rural	95	16%	34%	55%	39%	1	16
Urban	95	8%	28%	55%	47%	16	44
GRAVESHAM	95	8%	29%	55%	47%	17	60

The majority of amenity greenspaces (78%) rate above the threshold for value. Overall a greater proportion of sites are rated high for value compared to quality.

Similar to quality, sites rating below the value threshold tend to be smaller grassed areas with no noticeable features. Many are highway verge style sites which are small in size and lack any noticeable features thus their low value rating. They are recognised as providing some visual amenity to their locality and it is important to note that the main role of certain sites is to simply act as a grassed area, providing breaks in the urban form. Subsequently this is likely to partly account for the greater proportion of sites to rate below the threshold in the Urban Analysis Area.

There are 17 sites that rate below the threshold for value; with 11 of these also rating low for quality. Some of the lowest scoring sites are:

- ◀ Shamrock Road Open Space (8%)
- ◀ Aspden Road Open Space (12%)
- ◀ Dover Road East Open Space (12%)
- ◀ Former Southfields School Site (12%)
- ◀ Priests Walk (12%)

All five sites appear to have a lower level of use; which is likely to be a reflection on their appearance and perceived level of maintenance. For instance, Shamrock Road seems to be inaccessible, Dover Road East is viewed as having issues with fly tipping whilst the Former Southfields School site is overgrown.

Some of the highest scoring sites for value in Gravesham are:

- ◀ Cascades Leisure Park (55%)
- ◀ Michael Gardens Open Space (55%)
- ◀ Durndale Open Space (52%)
- ◀ Meopham Green (51%)
- ◀ St Gregorys Recreation Ground (51%)

These sites are recognised for the level of accessible recreational opportunities they offer to an excellent standard of quality intended for a wide range of users. Cascades Leisure Park provides an extensive range of social and health benefits due to the facilities found on site; such as sports provision and play facilities which meet the needs of a variety of people.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Amenity greenspace should also be recognised for its multi-purpose function, offering opportunities for a variety of leisure and recreational activities. It can often accommodate informal recreational activity such as casual play and dog walking. Many sites in Gravesham offer a dual function and are amenity resources for residents as well as being visually pleasing.

These attributes add to the quality, accessibility and visibility of amenity greenspace. Combined with the presence of ancillary facilities (e.g. benches, landscaping and trees), it is therefore more likely that the better quality sites are more respected and valued by the local community.

6.6 Summary

Amenity greenspace summary

- ◀ There are 77 amenity sites in Gravesham; nearly 97 hectares of amenity greenspaces.
- ◀ Provision is relatively evenly spread across Gravesham. Although the Urban Analysis Area has a slightly lower amount per 1,000 population (0.74) compared to 1.66 hectares per 1,000 population for the Rural Analysis Area.
- ◀ The five minute walk time suggests a good level of coverage. Gaps in provision are noted. However, these appear to be served by other open space typologies.
- ◀ Overall amenity greenspaces quality tends to be positive. More sites (61%) rate above the threshold and only a handful face any specific issues. A significant proportion of provision is identified as highway verges; which tend to score lower due to size, ancillary facilities and/or appearance.
- ◀ In addition to its multifunctional role, amenity greenspace makes a valuable contribution to visual aesthetics for communities – hence most sites rate above the threshold for value.
- ◀ 11 sites rate low for quality and value. Where sites cannot be improved, they may be better suited to be different forms of open space or may even feasibly be surplus.

PART 7: PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

7.1 Introduction

This includes areas designated primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people, such as equipped play areas, ball courts, skateboard areas and teenage shelters.

Provision for children is deemed to be sites consisting of formal equipped play facilities typically associated with play areas. This is usually perceived to be for children under 12 years of age. Provision for young people can include equipped sites that provide more robust equipment catering to older age ranges incorporating facilities such as skate parks, BMX, basketball courts, youth shelters and MUGAs.

7.2 Current provision

A total of 51 sites are identified in Gravesham as provision for children and young people. This combines to create a total of less than three hectares. The table below shows the distribution. No site size threshold has been applied and as such all provision is identified and included within the audit.

Table 7.1: Distribution of provision for children and young people by analysis area

Analysis area	Provision for children and young people		
	Number	Size (ha)	Current standard (ha per 1,000 population)
Rural	10	0.48	0.02
Urban	41	2.50	0.03
GRAVESHAM	51	2.98	0.03

Play areas can be classified in the following ways to identify their effective target audience utilising Fields In Trust (FIT) guidance. FIT provides widely endorsed guidance on the minimum standards for play space.

- ◀ LAP - a Local Area of Play. Usually small landscaped areas designed for young children. Equipment is normally age group specific to reduce unintended users.
- ◀ LEAP - a Local Equipped Area of Play. Designed for unsupervised play and a wider age range of users; often containing a wider range of equipment types.
- ◀ NEAP - a Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play. Cater for all age groups. Such sites may contain a MUGA, skate parks, youth shelters, adventure play equipment and are often included within large open space sites.

Play provision in Gravesham is summarised using the FIT classifications. Most is identified as being of LEAP (42%) classification; sites with a wider amount and range of equipment; designed to predominantly cater for unsupervised play.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Table 7.2: Distribution of provision for children and young people by FIT category

Analysis area	Provision for children and young people				
	LAP	LEAP	NEAP	Youth/ casual	TOTAL
Rural	4	5	1	-	10
Urban	16	16	6	3	41
GRAVESHAM	20	21	7	3	51

For youth provision, only standalone forms of provision are specifically identified. Where equipment catering for older age groups is found on a play area as part of a wider range of provision it has been included within the NEAP or LEAP classification. Several sites feature forms of play provision like a MUGA or a basketball area that can cater for a wide range of ages. For instance, MUGAs are found at a number of sites including:

- ◀ Istead Rise Recreation Ground
- ◀ Judsons Recreation Ground
- ◀ Kings Farm Recreation Ground
- ◀ Medhurst Gardens Amenity Area
- ◀ Wallis Park Play Area
- ◀ Warren Open Space
- ◀ Wombwell Park
- ◀ St Gregory's Open Space

There are also four sites identified as having a skatepark facility; Culverstone Recreation Ground, Istead Rise Recreation Ground, Riverside Leisure Area and Springhead Recreation Ground. Additionally, there is a 'pay and play' skate park at Cyclopark.

In addition, there are two sites identified as containing outdoor gym equipment; Riverside Leisure Area and Woodlands Park. Such provision does not solely provide exercise and health benefits for children, as they can also be popular facilities for adults.

7.3 Accessibility

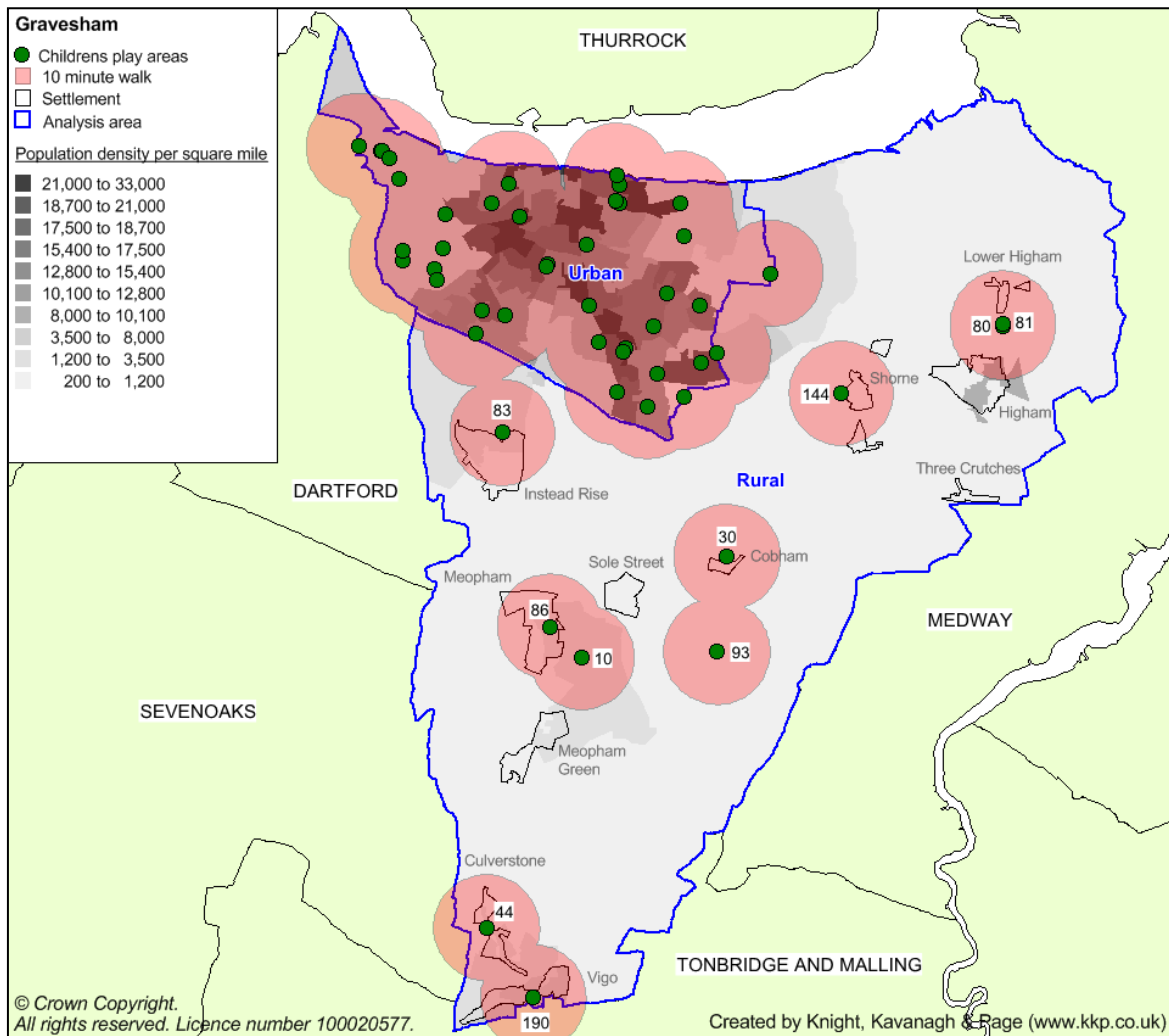
Findings from the Parks and Open Spaces Survey found the most common travel time expected by respondents in order to access provision for children and young people is an 11-15 minute walk (22%); followed by a 5-10 minute walk (17%).

Recently published guidance by FIT suggests an approximate catchment guideline of an approximate 5-10 minute walk. As a result, for the purpose of mapping a 10 minute walk time catchment has been applied.

Figure 7.1 and 7.2 show the standards applied to help inform where deficiencies in provision may be located.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 7.1: Provision for children and young people mapped against analysis areas



GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 7.2: Provision for children and young people mapped against urban area

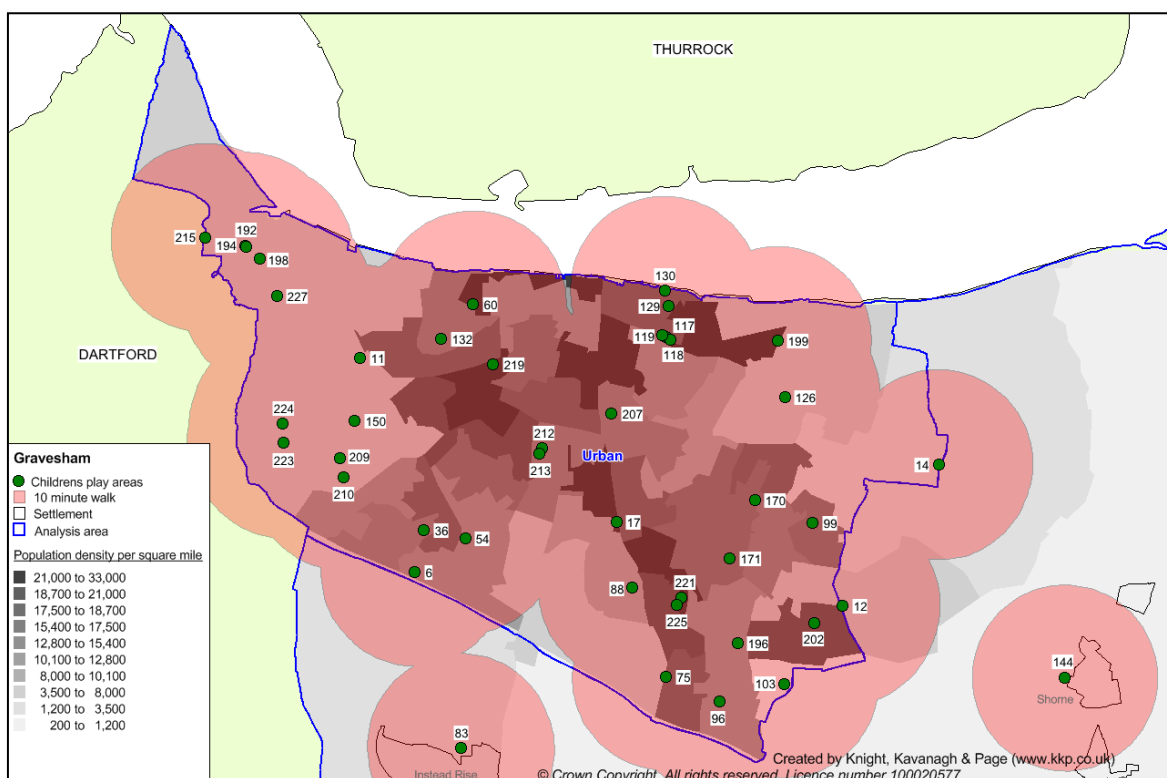


Table 7.3: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Settlement	Quality score	Value score
6	Brightlands open space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	54.3%	34.5%
10	Camer Park	Rural	Meopham Hook Green	52.5%	41.8%
11	Carl Eckman Park	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	49.1%	25.5%
12	Cascades Leisure Centre	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	74.5%	47.3%
14	Castle Lane Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	49.1%	36.4%
17	Central Avenue Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	46.2%	32.7%
30	Cobham Recreation Ground	Rural	Cobham	49.9%	50.9%
36	Cotswold Road Amenity Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	29.9%	25.5%
44	Culverstone Recreation Ground	Rural	Culverstone	69.3%	38.2%
54	Durndale Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	48.6%	36.4%
60	Fountain Walk Amenity Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	44.9%	14.5%
75	Hever Farm Open Space (lies within site 33 Codrington Crescent amenity greenspace)	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	57.2%	47.3%
80	Higham Recreation Ground (New)	Rural	Higham	51.7%	34.5%

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Settlement	Quality score	Value score
81	Higham Recreation Ground (Old)	Rural	Higham	48.6%	36.4%
83	Istead Rise Recreation Ground	Rural	Istead Rise	71.7%	58.2%
86	Judsons Recreation Ground	Rural	Meopham Hook Green	68.8%	41.8%
88	Kings Farm Recreation Ground (lies within site 15 Cedar Avenue amenity greenspace)	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	52.0%	49.1%
93	Luddesdown Recreation Ground	Rural	Luddesdown	24.4%	20.0%
96	Mackenzie Way Amenity Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	70.9%	58.2%
99	Medhurst Gardens Amenity Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	49.1%	45.5%
103	Michael Gardens Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	44.9%	34.5%
117	Park Place Amenity Area (Central)	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	50.1%	41.8%
118	Park Place Amenity Area (East)	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	48.6%	41.8%
119	Park Place Amenity Area (West)	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	49.6%	36.4%
126	Riverside Centre	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	47.2%	50.9%
129	Riverside Leisure Area Gordon Gardens	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	81.9%	41.8%
130	Riverside Leisure Area Gordon Promenade	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	70.1%	60.0%
132	Rosherville Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	57.7%	36.4%
144	Shorne Recreation Ground	Rural	Shorne	47.2%	23.6%
150	Springhead Recreation Ground	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	52.8%	45.5%
170	St. Gregory's Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	59.6%	38.2%
171	St. Patrick's Gardens	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	50.9%	25.5%
190	Vigo Village Green	Rural	Vigo	66.7%	36.4%
192	Wallis Park Junior Play Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	33.1%	25.5%
194	Wallis Park Toddlers Play Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	44.1%	23.6%
196	Warren Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	50.7%	43.6%
198	Warwick Place Amenity Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	50.7%	25.5%
199	Waterton Park	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	62.2%	43.6%
202	Whinfell Way Amenity Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	47.2%	21.8%
207	Windmill Hill Park	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	63.3%	41.8%
209	Wombwell Park Junior Play Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	48.8%	45.5%
210	Wombwell Park Toddler's Play Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	47.2%	41.8%

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Settlement	Quality score	Value score
212	Woodlands Park Fence Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	48.8%	32.7%
213	Woodlands Park Open Space	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	44.1%	38.2%
215	Black Eagle Drive Play Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	70.1%	36.4%
219	Quarry Close Play Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	65.4%	32.7%
221	Beckett Mews Play Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	52.0%	20.0%
223	Penn Green Play Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	74.0%	58.2%
224	Darwin Rise	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	74.5%	36.4%
225	Lander Close	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	57.5%	25.5%
227	Huntley Avenue Play Area	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	70.9%	41.8%

There is generally a good spread of play provision across Gravesham. Areas with a greater population density are within walking distance of a form of play provision. The Urban Analysis Area in particular appears to be well served.

However, Meopham Green, Sole Street, Higham and Three Crutches are all observed as not being covered by the catchment mapping of play provision. A play site is identified to the north of Higham (between Higham and Lower Higham) which is considered to serve both settlements. The low population density of the other settlements may suggest that these gaps in provision do not need to be filled.

Satisfaction towards the amount of play provision from respondents to the Parks and Open Spaces Survey finds a greater proportion are either quite satisfied (23%) or very satisfied (9%) compared to those either quite dissatisfied (16%) or very dissatisfied (6%). In addition, no comments regarding a lack of equipment are highlighted.

Ownership and management

Gravesham Borough Council owns and maintains many of the play sites for children and young people in the urban areas of the Borough. The exceptions being King Farm Recreation Ground and Riverside Centre which are the responsibility of Kent County Council. Sites provided as part of more recent housing developments are privately maintained (i.e. sites 215 – 227 in table 7.3 above). The sites in the rural area are largely owned by the parish councils but their maintenance is carried out by Gravesham Borough Council.

7.4 Quality

In order to determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for play provision for children and young people in Gravesham. A threshold of 50% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of the quality scoring and thresholds can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Quality assessments of play sites do not include a detailed technical risk assessment of equipment. For an informed report on the condition of play equipment the Council's own

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

inspection reports should be sought. These are undertaken on an annual basis by an independent inspector.

Table 7.4: Quality ratings for provision for children and young people by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <50%	High >50%
Rural	127	24%	57%	75%	51%	4	6
Urban	127	30%	55%	82%	52%	18	23
GRAVESHAM	127	24%	55%	82%	58%	22	29

Quality of play provision across Gravesham is mixed; although a slightly greater proportion of sites rate above the threshold (57%) compared to those which rate below (43%).

Both analysis areas are in keeping with this trend with 56% of sites in the Urban Analysis Area and 60% of sites in the Rural Analysis Area being above the threshold for quality.

There are, however, still 22 sites to rate below the threshold for quality. Some of the lowest scoring sites are:

- ✦ Luddesdown Recreation Ground Play Area (24%)
- ✦ Cotswold Road Play Area (30%)
- ✦ Wallis Park Junior Play Area (33%)

The quality of equipment provision and general appearance of these sites is observed as being poor. All tend to also rate low for elements such as adequate fencing/controls to prevent illegal use and appropriate surfaces. For instance, the Luddesdown Recreation Ground Play Area is limited containing only a set of swings (no seat) and a slide. Similarly the Cotswold Road Play Area is a standalone set of swings with no other discernible features.

Observations from the site visit audit frequently notes the dated and tired look of equipment at many play sites. Surface quality is also regularly highlighted as a negative contributor. The following forms of provision, all of which rate below the threshold for quality, are observed as being dated or tired in their appearance:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ✦ Carl Ekman Park | ✦ Michael Gardens Play Area |
| ✦ Central Avenue Play Area | ✦ Park Place (East) Play Area |
| ✦ Cobham Recreation Ground Play Area | ✦ Park Place (West) Play Area |
| ✦ Durndale Play Area | ✦ Riverside Centre Play Area |
| ✦ Higham Recreation Ground (Old) | ✦ Woodlands Park Play Area |
| ✦ Medhurst Gardens Play Area | ✦ Whinfall Way Amenity Area |

The Council undertakes an independent annual inspection of its play sites. Findings of the 2015 report highlight and recommend the removal and/or replacement of some equipment and features at sites due to their quality (i.e. those identified as moderate or high risk).

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Table 7.5: Summary of independent inspections

Site	Comment
Central Avenue Open Space	Fencing and gate require repairs
Cobham Recreation Ground	Cleaning and inspection of equipment required
Culverstone Recreation Ground	Surfaces and swings require attention
Durndale Open Space	General refurbishment
Riverside Leisure Area Gordon Gardens	Fungal growth and safety dimension of some equipment in junior area of site
Hever Farm Open Space	Surface surround roundabout and frame of junior swings require attention
Higham Recreation Ground	Two springy require removal
Istead Rise Recreation Ground	Surface surrounding toddler multi-play needs treatment. Half pipe retains water.
Judsons Recreation Ground	Surfaces and equipment require attention
Medhurst Gardens Amenity Area	Fencing and parts of MUGA need repairing
Michael Gardens Open Space	Swings and toddler multi-play showing signs of decay
Park Place Amenity Area (East)	Gate and equipment require attention
Riverside Centre	Slide and surfaces require attention.
Rosherville Open Space	Surface at entrance, ball court, junior swings and roundabout need attention
St Gregory's Open Space	Rope net requires replacing
St Patrick's Gardens	Entrance gate missing and seat on swing needs replacing
Wallis Park Junior and Toddlers Play Area	Multi-play requires improvements
Waterton Park	Chains on toddler swings need replacing
Whinfell Way Amenity Area	Climbing unit needs replacing
Windmill Hill Park	Frame of toddler swings, rope on trail blazer and slide need replacing
Woodlands Park Fence Area	Further investigation of some equipment required. Urgent repairs to climbing unit.

The Council is aware of the general quality and appearance of play provision across Gravesham. A historic lack of investment and scope for wide scale improvements means the approach in many instances is to remove equipment once it becomes unusable. Both Wombwell Park and Woodlands Park have had equipment removed (e.g. elements of the explorers challenge).

There have however been some additions and renewals of play provision at sites. Cascades, Riverside Leisure Area, Judson's Recreation Ground and Woodlands Park have all had additional forms of equipment installed.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Woodlands Park and Whinfall Way play areas are also both set for investment. The former is scheduled for extensive new equipment as well as refurbishment of the toilets on site. Whinfall Way is also due for some new equipment. Both projects are due to be complete by the summer of 2016.

A handful of comments from the Parks and Open Space Survey highlight the poor perception towards play provision at Woodlands Park. This supports the findings of the audit assessment which rates quality of play provision at the site as below the threshold; equipment on site is also viewed as dated. The play equipment at Wombwell Park and Camer Country Park are also cited as being poor by respondents. The latter rates above the threshold for quality in the audit assessment but is noted in the site observations as having the potential to be better. Play provision at Wombwell Park rates below the threshold for quality; with evidence of misuse being observed at the time of the site audit.

There have also been a number of new sites developed since the previous study; Beckett Mews, Black Eagle Drive, Darwin Rise, Lander Close, Penn Green and Quarry Close. The sites have been provided as part of areas of new housing developments. Subsequently they are not owned or maintained by the Council. All are located in the Urban Analysis Area and rate above the threshold for quality.

The highest rating site in Gravesham is Riverside Leisure Area with a score of 82%. It rates highly due to its range and excellent condition of play equipment including outdoor gym equipment. It also benefits from extensive additional features such as seating, bins, cafe and fencing. Other sites to receive particularly high ratings for quality include:

- ◀ Darwin Rise (75%)
- ◀ Penn Green Play Area (74%)
- ◀ Istead Rise Recreation Ground (72%)
- ◀ Mackenzie Way (71%)

These sites are all noted as having a range and good standard of equipment catering for different ages. The sites also contain other ancillary features such as benches and bins which are assessed as being of a generally excellent condition. Penn Green is one of the newer sites as identified above. Furthermore, sites such as Istead Rise Recreation Ground also benefit from having extended provision catering for older age ranges (i.e. skatepark, MUGA).

Respondents to the Parks and Open Spaces Survey tend to agree that quality of provision is slightly more satisfactory than not. Most respondents' rate quality as quite satisfactory (27%) or very satisfactory (4%) compared to those that view it as quite dissatisfactory (20%) or very dissatisfactory (5%). The results are not overwhelmingly positive and may reflect the general view and findings of the audit assessment that quality at many sites is dated and tired looking.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

7.5 Value

To determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by the Companion Guidance) site assessment scores are colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table overleaf summarises the results of the value assessment for children and young people in Gravesham. A threshold of 20% is applied in order to identify high and low value. Further explanation of the value scoring and thresholds can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 7.6: Value ratings for provision for children and young people by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Rural	55	20%	38%	58%	38%	-	10
Urban	55	15%	38%	60%	45%	1	40
GRAVESHAM	55	15%	38%	60%	45%	1	50

Nearly all play provision in Gravesham is rated as being above the threshold for value. This demonstrates the role play provision provides in allowing children to play but also the contribution sites make in terms of giving children and young people safe places to learn, to socialise with others and in creating aesthetically pleasing local environments.

The only site to rate below the threshold is Fountain Walk Play Area (15%). It is observed as being a single set of swings in fair condition with no other features. Subsequently its level of use and value is deemed low. The site is owned by Gravesham Borough Council.

Two other similar small sized sites with limited equipment, Luddesdown Recreation Ground Play Area and Beckett Mews Play Area, are noted as being just above the threshold with scores of 20% respectively. Again the lack in range of equipment is likely to impact on their value by individuals.

Sites scoring particularly high for value tend to reflect the size and amount/range as well as standard of equipment present on site. Some of the highest scoring sites are:

- ◀ Riverside Leisure Area (60%)
- ◀ Mackenzie Way (58%)
- ◀ Istead Rise Recreation Ground (58%)
- ◀ Penn Green (58%)

Diverse equipment to cater for a range of ages is also essential. More specifically, provision such as skatepark facilities and MUGAs are highly valued forms of play. Sites containing such forms of provision tend to rate higher for value.

It is also important to recognise the benefits of play in terms of healthy, active lifestyles, social inclusion and interaction between children plus its developmental and educational value. The importance of play and of children's rights to play in their local communities is essential.

One of the main reasons given for visiting open space provision by respondents to the Parks and Open Spaces Survey is to take children to play or use play equipment; with 40% of respondents citing it as a reason.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Further strengthening the role of play areas is the results of the survey aimed at primary school aged children which highlighted that 73% of respondents like to visit play areas as a type of open space provision. A total of 72% identified their reason for visiting such provision is in order to play; followed by 65% who visit to meet with friends.

7.6 Summary

Provision for children and young people summary

- ◀ There are 51 play provision sites in Gravesham; a total of nearly three hectares.
- ◀ Most play provision is identified as being of LEAP (42%) classification; sites with a wider amount and range of equipment; designed to predominantly cater for unsupervised play.
- ◀ The Urban Analysis Area has the highest number of sites. However, on a population basis (i.e. per 1,000 population) provision is evenly distributed.
- ◀ The 10 minute walk time accessibility standard covers the majority of the area. Rural settlements such as Meopham Green, Sole Street and Three Crutches are not served by provision.
- ◀ A greater proportion of play sites (57%) are above the threshold for quality. Quality is reasonable in general. However, there are a number of sites where provision is viewed as being tired and dated.
- ◀ A lack of available investment tends to result in equipment being removed as opposed to being replaced. There have however been a handful of new sites created.
- ◀ All play provision (with the exception of one site) is rated above the threshold for value; reflecting the important role such sites provide.
- ◀ Quantity of provision is viewed as being sufficient. However, quality of equipment at a number of sites requires attention.

PART 8: ALLOTMENTS

8.1 Introduction

Allotments is a typology which covers open spaces that provide opportunities for those people who wish to do so to grow their own produce as part of the long term promotion of sustainability, health and social interaction. This includes provision such as allotments, community gardens and city farms.

8.2 Current provision

There are 22 sites classified as allotments in Gravesham, equating to over 14 hectares. The Council own 14 of these sites and the number of plots equates to 348. The larger plots are divided up when they become vacant to meet high demand. The remaining eight sites are either owned by parish councils or are privately owned and managed.

No site size threshold has been applied to allotments and as such all provision is identified and included within the audit.

Table 8.1: Distribution of allotment sites by analysis area

Analysis area	Allotments		
	Number of sites	Size (ha)	Current standard (Ha per 1,000 population)
Rural	5	8.61	0.41
Urban	17	5.82	0.07
GRAVESHAM	22	14.43	0.14

Most sites are located in the Urban Analysis Area (17). However, most hectareage is (8.61 hectares) is found in the Rural Analysis Area.

It is noted that one of the conditions attached to the planning permission for the Ebbsfleet development requires the provision of a 0.5 ha allotment site at Springfield Park.

The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG) suggests a national standard of 20 allotments per 1,000 households (20 per 2,000 people based on two people per house or one per 200 people). This equates to 0.25 hectares per 1,000 population based on an average plot-size of 250 square metres (0.025 hectares per plot).

Gravesham, as a whole, based on its current population (105,261) does not meet the NSALG standard. Using this suggested standard, the minimum amount of allotment provision required for Gravesham is 26.31 hectares. Therefore, there is a shortfall of 11.88 hectares. The shortfall is to be predominantly found in the Urban Analysis Area, with only 0.07 hectares per 1,000 population, The Rural Analysis Area sufficiently meets the NSALG standard with 0.41 hectares per thousand people.

Despite this suggested shortfall, consultation with the Council reports that whilst the odd site has a longer waiting list, the majority of sites have a waiting list of less than a year. Compared to some other local authorities this is a relatively short waiting time.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

8.3 Accessibility

The Parks and Open Spaces Survey found the most common travel time expected by respondents is over a 15 minute walk (20%). Therefore for the purpose of mapping a 15 minute walk time has been applied.

Figure 8.1 shows the standard applied to allotments to help inform where deficiencies in provision may be located.

Figure 8.1: Allotments mapped against analysis areas

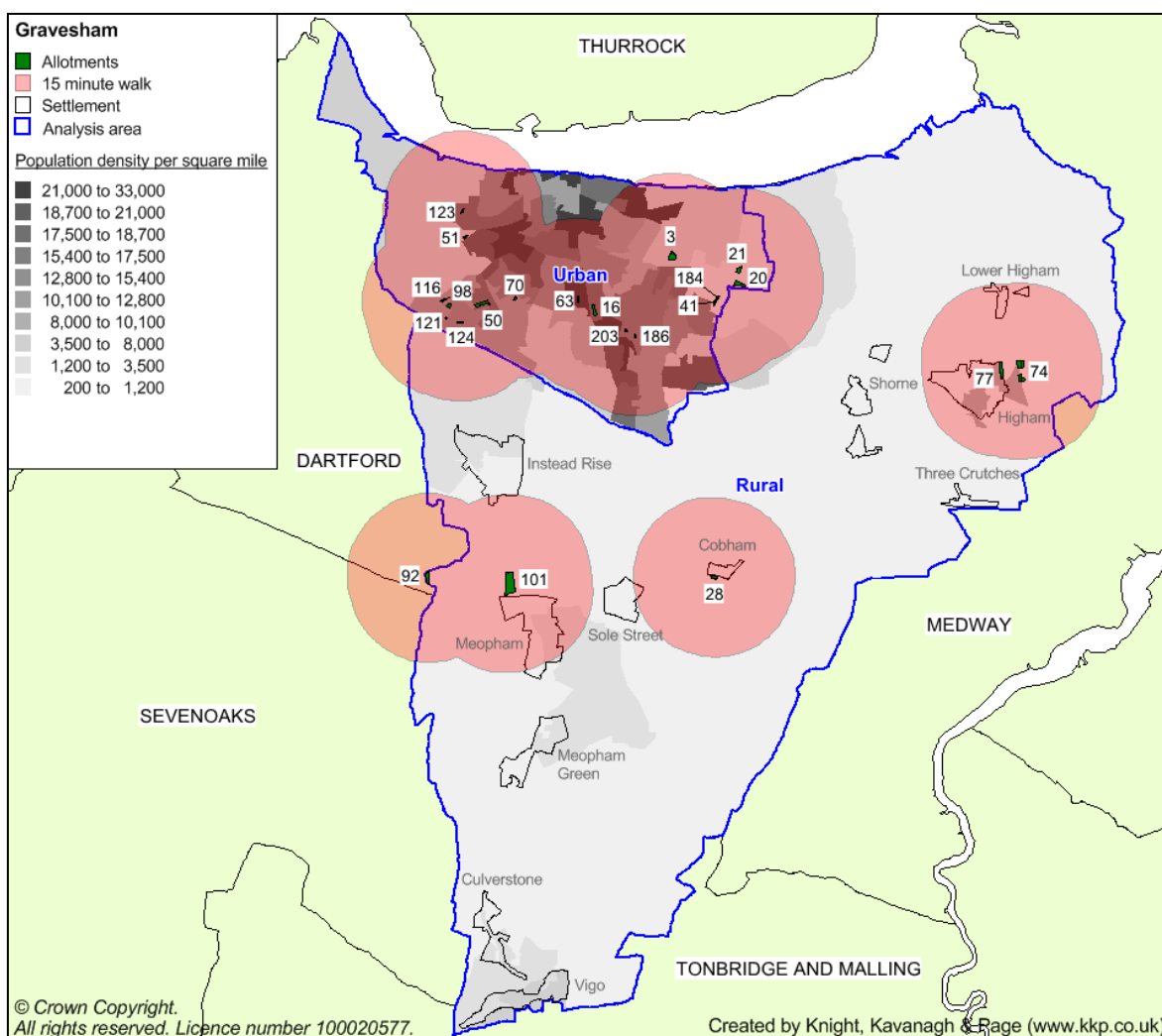


Table 8.3: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Settlement	Quality score	Value score
3	Bellman Avenue	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	54.6%	29.5%
16	Central Avenue	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	29.4%	31.4%
20	Chalk New Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	51.3%	30.5%
21	Chalk Old Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	50.4%	30.5%
41	Cruden Road Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	47.1%	26.7%

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Settlement	Quality score	Value score
50	Dene Holm Road Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	24.4%	15.2%
51	Detling Road	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	26.1%	22.9%
63	Gatwick Road West	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	26.9%	21.9%
70	Harden Road Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	30.3%	12.4%
98	Marconi Road Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	28.6%	16.2%
116	Painters Ash Lane Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	42.0%	23.8%
121	Pepys Close Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	47.9%	31.4%
123	Plane Avenue Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	42.9%	31.4%
124	Rembrandt Drive Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	43.7%	29.5%
184	Thong Lane Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	59.7%	35.2%
186	Truro Road Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	26.1%	14.3%
203	Whitehill Lane Allotments	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	31.1%	26.7%
28	Cobham Allotments	Rural	Cobham	41.2%	41.0%
74	Hermitage Road Allotments	Rural	Higham	40.3%	21.0%
77	Higham Allotments	Rural	Higham	21.8%	20.0%
92	Longfield Hill Allotments	Rural	-	43.7%	21.0%
101	Meopham Allotments	Rural	Meopham Hook Green	21.0%	26.7%

The majority of areas with a greater population density are covered by the 15 minute walk time catchment. However, there are minor gaps in provision around Gravesend and the outskirts of the Urban Analysis Area. This may show locations where more provision would help meet demand.

Although there are some settlements not serviced by allotment provision in the Rural Analysis Area, it is anticipated that people will be willing to travel further to access provision and may use a car or other forms of transport.

Of the Parks and Open Spaces Survey respondents, most state they have no opinion regarding the availability of provision (58%). This response could reflect the fact the allotments are a fairly niche open space provision. The individuals concerned with their accessibility are most likely to be plot holders or interested individuals.

Ownership/management

The majority of allotments (14 sites) are owned by the Council. The remaining sites are either privately owned or operated by allotment societies such as Meopham Allotment Society.

During the growing season the Council undertakes regular inspections of its sites. This is undertaken by rangers who keep a checklist on the extent to which sites are being attended to. During consultation the Council highlighted that it is hoping to improve this process by using software which helps with the organisation and maintenance of allotment sites.

The Council is also looking at updating the tenancy agreements for plot holders to make it the responsibility of plot holders to maintain pathways leading up to their allotment and individual plots.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

The Council has attributed reduced waiting lists of under a year, to now having a full time member of staff responsible for day to day running of allotments.

Demand

Consultation highlights a steady demand for the continuing provision of allotment sites and plots across the area. Currently demand appears to outweigh supply; demonstrated by the waiting lists at sites. This reflects the trend to have an allotment from a healthy living and self-sufficiency perspective.

There are currently 53 possible tenants on the waiting list for an allotment plot in Gravesham. Potential tenants can be on more than one waiting list, with their name being removed once they become lease holders. The waiting time for each site varies.

Table 8.4: Waiting lists for council owned sites

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Number on waiting list	Date joined waiting list
3	Bellman Avenue	Urban	6	08/12/2015
16	Central Avenue	Urban	14	20/02/2013
20	Chalk New Allotments	Urban	12	19/05/2015
21	Chalk Old Allotments	Urban	14	24/04/2015
41	Cruden Road Allotments	Urban	1	08/12/2015
50	Dene Holm Road Allotments	Urban	14	05/05/2014
63	Gatwick Road West	Urban	12	10/07/2012
70	Harden Road Allotments	Urban	9	05/05/2014
98	Marconi Road Allotments	Urban	5	28/05/2015
116	Painters Ash Lane Allotments	Urban	11	13/03/2014
121	Pepys Close Allotments	Urban	0	-
124	Rembrandt Drive Allotments	Urban	4	05/05/2014
186	Truro Road Allotments	Urban	5	20/08/2015
203	Whitehill Lane Allotments	Urban	3	21/12/2015

For the majority of sites, potential tenants have not yet waited longer than a year. However, there are six sites where people have waited over a year. All of these sites bar one (Rembrandt Drive Allotments) have a higher number of individuals on their waiting list. This suggests some sites are more popular than others. The only site without anyone on the waiting list is Pepys Close Allotment. This could be as a result of it scoring low on quality (see section 8.4) due to it being small with no fencing or water supply.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

8.4 Quality

To determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by the Companion Guidance) the site assessment scores have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for allotments in Gravesham. A threshold of 40% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of how the quality scores and thresholds are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 8.5: Quality ratings for allotments by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <40%	High >40%
Urban	119	21%	35%	55%	34%	10	7
Rural	119	42%	48%	60%	18%	-	5
GRAVESHAM	119	21%	38%	60%	39%	10	12

In the Urban Analysis Area, ten (59%) of the allotments score below the threshold and seven (41%) score above the threshold. In the Rural Analysis Area all five allotments score above the threshold.

The highest scoring sites are Meopham Allotments (60%) and Bellman Avenue (55%). They both score well due to good general maintenance and cleanliness, a fresh water supply and adequate controls to prevent illegal use.

Looking at the sites separately, Meopham Allotments is a fairly large site containing 164 plots with approximately six rods per plot. It also has good parking, informative signage, toilet facilities and is well used. Furthermore, the site is funded through the Lottery.

Bellman Avenue has good links to public transport. These features and ancillary facilities lead to a good quality score for both sites, resulting in them scoring above the threshold. Despite scoring above the threshold, during consultation Bellman Avenue has been identified as suffering from incidents of theft.

Consultation highlights Chalk New Allotments as a good site. The Council often receive positive feedback about this site with regards to paths and quality of soil. This was reflected in the non technical assessments with the site scoring above the threshold at 51%. Subsequently this site is the third highest scoring site.

The lowest scoring sites are Whitehill Lane Allotments (21%), Thong Lane Allotments (22%) and Cruden Road Allotments (24%). All have poor maintenance and cleanliness scores, inadequate boundary fencing and low quality paths. The site scores also reflect the views of the Council. Indeed the Council expresses that fencing is a key issue as well as fly tipping at some of its sites. Evidence of fly tipping is found at the Thong Lane Allotment and Cruden Road Allotment sites. This further decreases their quality and subsequently means they fall below the quality threshold.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

As previously mentioned the two lowest scoring sites are Whitehill Lane Allotments and Thong Lane Allotments. Whitehall Lane Allotments is owned by the Council whereas Thong Lane Allotments is privately owned. Thong Lane Allotments is described as being hard to find with no signage which impacts on its quality score.

Consultation highlights some significant problems with regard to overall quality of provision. The Council receives complaints about unattended plots, problems with fencing and fly tipping. Further to this some sites scoring above the quality threshold such as Bellman Avenue and Chalk New Allotments need improvements to fencing.

The quality of provision from non technical assessment is mixed, with ten scoring below the threshold and 12 scoring above. This is also reflected in the findings from the Parks and Open Spaces Survey with more respondents (9.3%) saying they are either very satisfied or quite satisfied with the quality. However, 6.9% of respondents state they are either quite dissatisfied or very dissatisfied.

The majority of respondents (64%) state they do not know how they would rate the quality of allotments. This is not uncommon as it reflects the niche use of this type of open space.

8.5 Value

In order to determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by the Companion Guidance) site assessments scores have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results. A threshold of 20% is applied to identify high and low value. Further explanation of how the value scores and thresholds are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 8.6: Value ratings for allotments by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Urban	105	12%	24%	41%	29%	4	13
Rural	105	24%	30%	35%	11%	-	5
GRAVESHAM	105	12%	25%	41%	29%	4	18

Nearly all allotments in Gravesham are assessed as high value. This is a reflection of the associated social inclusion and health benefits, amenity value and the sense of place offered by such forms of provision.

Only four sites score below the threshold for value; Gatwick Road West (12%), Painters Ash Lane Allotments (14%), Cruden Road Allotments (15%) and Harden Road Allotments (16%). All four sites are situated in the Urban Analysis Area and score low for value as they are identified as having plots not in use during assessment. They appear less popular, having a lower score for usage and subsequently less social inclusion value, leading to the sites scoring below the value threshold. It is worth noting the council have since informed us that all plots at these sites, with the exception of one plot at Cruden Road, are now occupied and that non-cultivation will be followed up from March 2016 onwards.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Despite Cruden Road Allotments scoring below the threshold, consultation did highlight this site as having high value due to it being used by the Tenant Participation Scheme. The site has been altered for improved disabled access and use and as such the beds have been raised and the paths have been improved.

The highest scoring sites for value are those identified as being well used (often as a result of being of a high quality). The highest scoring sites for value are the Plane Avenue Allotments and Meopham Allotments. They score 41% and 35% respectively with both these sites also having educational value through the Learn to Grow Scheme.

The value of allotments is further demonstrated by the existence of waiting lists identified at sites signalling greater demand for provision.

8.6 Summary

Allotments summary

- ◀ There are 22 allotments sites in Gravesham: equating to over 14 hectares. Of these, 14 are owned/managed by the Council and eight are either owned by parish councils or privately.
- ◀ Current provision for Gravesham is below the NSALG recommended amount. However, the Rural Analysis Area does meet the standard. It is the Urban Analysis Area that falls short.
- ◀ There are some deficiencies in provision in the Urban Analysis Area around the extremities, including Gravesend. This may identify areas that would benefit from additional provision. The Rural Analysis Area has bigger deficiencies, however it is anticipated people will be willing to travel further.
- ◀ There are waiting lists for allotments across Gravesham suggesting that demand for allotments is not currently being met by supply.
- ◀ There are mixed findings on quality. Just over half of the sites score above the threshold. However, ten score below. This could be attributed to difference in ownership and management. The Council also highlight some quality issues during consultation such as poor fencing and problems with fly tipping.
- ◀ Nearly all allotments are assessed as high value reflecting the associated social inclusion and health benefits, their amenity value and the sense of place offered by provision.
- ◀ Waiting list numbers and some issues with quality suggest that continuing measures should be made to provide additional plots in the future.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

PART 9: CEMETERIES/CHURCHYARDS

9.1 Introduction

Cemeteries and churchyards include areas for quiet contemplation and burial of the dead. Sites can often be linked to the promotion of wildlife conservation and biodiversity.

9.2 Current provision

There are 15 sites classified as cemeteries/churchyards, equating to over 14 hectares of provision in Gravesham. No site size threshold has been applied and as such all provision identified is included within the audit.

Table 9.1: Distribution of cemeteries by analysis area

Analysis area	Cemeteries/churchyards	
	Number of sites	Size (ha)
Urban	7	11.89
Rural	8	3.44
GRAVESHAM	15	15.33

The largest contributor to burial provision in the area is Northfleet Cemetery, in the Inner Urban Analysis Area. Despite Northfleet Cemetery (3.12 hectares) being smaller than Gravesend Cemetery (7.31 hectares) it currently has the most burial capacity remaining of just under five years.

9.3 Accessibility

No accessibility standard is set for this typology and there is no realistic requirement to set such standards. Provision should be based on burial demand.

Figure 9.1 shows cemeteries and churchyards mapped against analysis areas.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 9.1: Cemetery sites mapped against analysis area

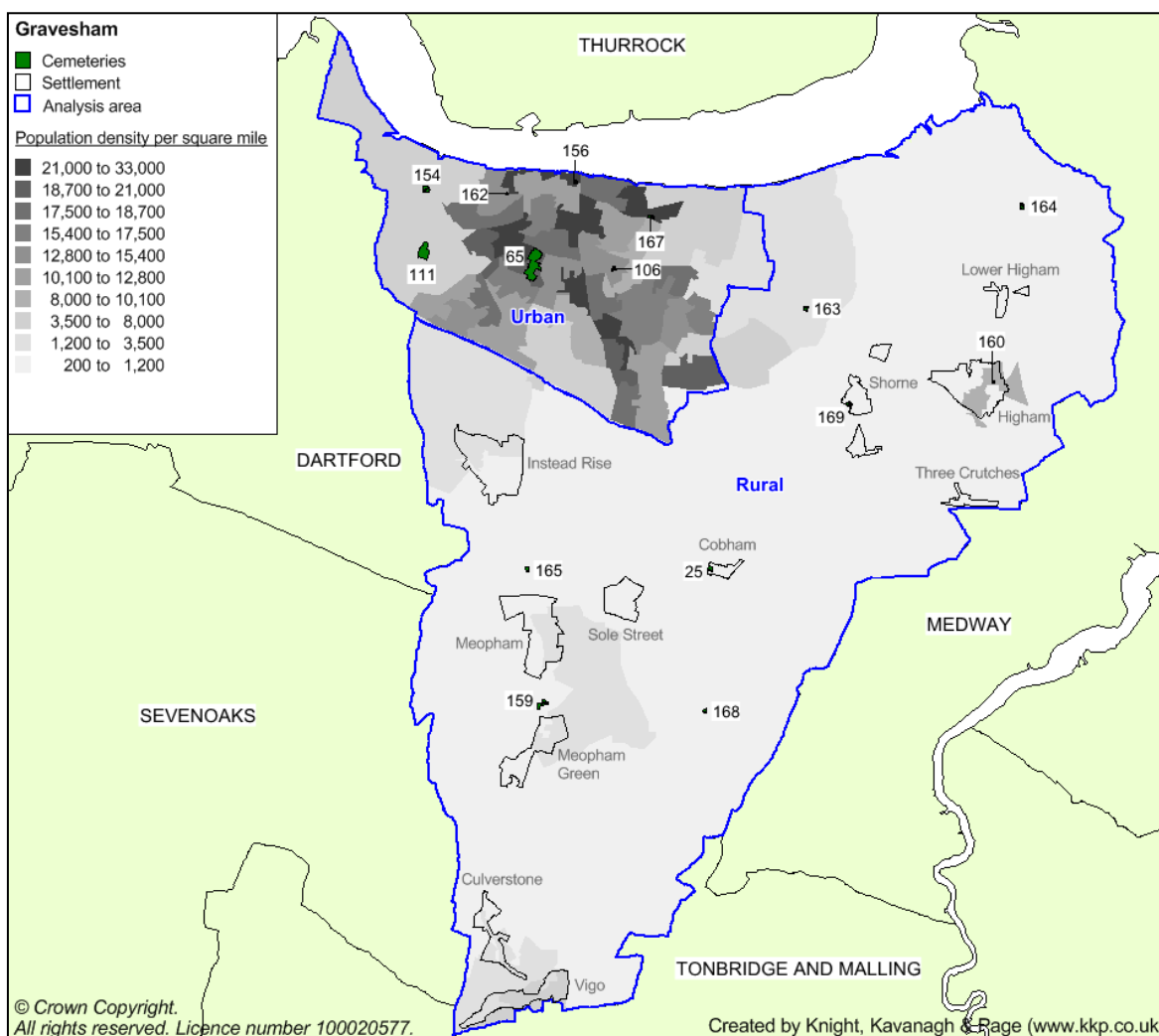


Table 9.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Settlement	Quality score	Value score
65	Gravesend Cemetery	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	47.6%	27.0%
106	Milton-next-Gravesend Christ Church	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	46.8%	38.0%
111	Northfleet Cemetery	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	57.8%	36.0%
154	St Botolphs Church	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	56.9%	35.0%
156	St Georges Church	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	52.4%	31.0%
162	St Marks Church	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	53.8%	26.0%
167	St Peter & St Paul Church	Urban	Gravesend/ Northfleet	53.8%	41.0%
25	Church of St Mary Magdalene	Rural	Cobham	48.4%	25.0%
159	St John the Baptist	Rural	Meopham	52.5%	24.0%
160	St John the Evangelist	Rural	Higham	56.7%	30.0%
163	St Mary the Virgin Church	Rural	-	47.0%	30.0%
164	St Marys Church	Rural	-	33.5%	24.0%

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Settlement	Quality score	Value score
165	St Mildreds Church	Rural	-	46.0%	20.0%
168	St Peter & St Paul Church Luddesdown	Rural	Luddesdown	38.5%	20.0%
169	St Peter & St Paul Church Shorne	Rural	Shorne	49.7%	21.0%

In terms of provision, mapping demonstrates a fairly even distribution across the area. As noted, the need for additional cemetery provision should be driven by the requirement for burial demand and capacity.

Most respondents to the Parks and Open Spaces Survey tend to rate the amount of cemetery provision as being quite satisfactory (31%). In addition, a quarter of respondents (25%) rate being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the amount of provision.

Ownership, management and maintenance

The Council owns, manages and maintains Gravesend and Northfleet cemeteries and is responsible for maintaining fencing, pathways, water supply and grass and tree cutting. It also maintains closed churchyards such as St Botolphs Church.

It is believed that Northfleet Cemetery has less than five years of burial capacity remaining. As of February 2016, Gravesend Cemetery is also only thought to have a few weeks remaining, with 10 full plots and 8 half plots currently available. In order to create some of these plots the Council has used redundant pathways.

Consultation highlights future plans for Gravesham with regards to burial capacity. A new private cemetery and crematorium is due to open on Rochester Road. In addition, St John the Baptist Church has recently been given land to expand the churchyard. It is hoped these new sites will take some pressure off the need for burial space in the area. The possibility of extending Northfleet Cemetery has been investigated by the Council but is not possible due to adjacent land being within a water source protection zone.

The main issue highlighted during consultation is the needed for additional maintenance of existing sites to help improve overall appearance and quality.

9.4 Quality

To determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by the Companion Guidance) site assessments scores are colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for cemeteries in Gravesham. A threshold of 45% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of how the quality scores and threshold are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Table 9.4: Quality ratings for cemeteries by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <45%	High >45%
Urban	161	46%	52%	58%	12%	-	7
Rural	161	34%	47%	57%	23%	2	6
GRAVESHAM	161	34%	49%	58%	24%	2	13

The majority of cemeteries and churchyards in Gravesham (87%) rate above the threshold set for quality.

The highest scoring site for quality is the Milton-next-Gravesend Christ Church churchyard in the Urban Analysis Area, with a score of 58%. Most other sites that rate above the threshold score similarly to each other, suggesting a generally high quality. The high scores are predominantly due to them being maintained to a good standard as well as having a number of features such as signage and benches.

Observations from the site visits and feedback from Parks and Open Spaces Survey highlight the generally high level of provision overall. Findings from the Survey show that 42% of people are either very satisfied (9%) or quite satisfied (32%) with the quality of provision. The majority of remaining respondents had no opinion on cemetery and churchyard provision.

Two sites rate below the quality threshold; St Mildreds Church (34%) and St Peter & St Paul Church Luddesdown (39%). The former scores lower, in comparison to other sites, due to a lack of bins, signage and specific features such as furniture, garden of remembrance and a children's burial area. However, this could be attributed to the fact they are both small village churchyards. It is important to note despite scoring below the threshold these sites are noted as being well cared for.

9.5 Value

To determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by the Companion Guidance) site assessment scores are colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the value assessment for cemeteries in Gravesham. A threshold of 20% is applied in order to identify high and low value. Further explanation of how the value scores and threshold are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 9.5: Value ratings for cemeteries by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Urban	100	20%	30%	38%	18%	-	7
Rural	100	20%	27%	41%	21%	-	8
GRAVESHAM	100	20%	29%	41%	21%	-	15

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

All identified cemeteries and churchyards are assessed as being of high value, reflecting the role in community lives. In addition, the cultural/heritage value of sites and the sense of place they provide to and for the local community are acknowledged in the site assessment data. Sites also often receive a score for value from their contribution to wildlife/habitats or sense of place to the local environment.

Even those sites which score below the threshold for quality rate above the threshold for value. As noted above, despite this, they still obviously provide a role to the communities they serve. This is evidenced by assessments reporting a high number of the sites having local heritage, historical interest and sense of place within their community. The majority of sites were also noted as having high or reasonable levels of use.

Cemeteries and churchyards are important natural resources, offering both recreational and conservation benefits. As well as providing burial space, cemeteries and churchyards can offer important low impact recreational benefits (e.g. habitat provision, wildlife watching).

9.6 Summary

Cemeteries summary

- ◀ Gravesham has 15 cemeteries and churchyards: over 14 hectares of provision.
- ◀ There is a fairly even distribution of provision across Gravesham.
- ◀ The majority of cemeteries and churchyards rate as high for quality. However, two score below the threshold. These are viewed as having fewer features such as bins, signage and cemetery and graveyard specific features such as a garden of remembrance. However, this can be attributed to the sites being small village churchyards.
- ◀ All cemeteries are assessed as high value in Gravesham, reflecting that generally provision has a cultural/heritage role and provide a sense of place to the local community.
- ◀ Burial provision is driven by the demand for burials and capacity. Although council sites are approaching capacity, with only a few years of burial space remaining at Gravesend and Northfleet, there are plans in place for a new private cemetery and crematorium on Rochester Road and an extension to the churchyard at St John the Baptist Church.

PART 10: CIVIC SPACE

10.1 Introduction

The civic space typology includes civic and market squares and other hard surfaced areas designed for pedestrians, providing a setting for civic buildings, public demonstrations and community events.

10.2 Current provision

There are three civic space sites, equating to less than one hectare of provision, identified in Gravesham. In addition, there are likely to be other informal pedestrian areas, streets or squares which residents may be viewed as providing similar roles and functions as civic spaces.

Table 10.1: Distribution of civic spaces by analysis area

Analysis area	Civic space	
	Number of sites	Size (ha)
Urban	3	0.67
Rural	-	-
GRAVESHAM	3	0.67

Civic space provision is only identified in the Urban Analysis Area. There are three civic spaces; two are observed as being seating areas and the third is situated within a car park. No provision is noted in the Rural Analysis Area. This is likely to be attributed to it being made up of rural settlements with less densely populated areas.

It is worth noting that within the parks typology the Riverside Leisure Area site is also identified as featuring a promenade, which will contribute to provision of civic space. However, as it is part of a park site, during the audit assessment it has been included within the study as part of its primary typology as the Riverside Leisure Area site.

10.3 Accessibility

No accessibility standard has been set for civic spaces. Figure 10.1 shows civic spaces mapped against analysis areas.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Figure 10.1: Civic spaces mapped against analysis areas

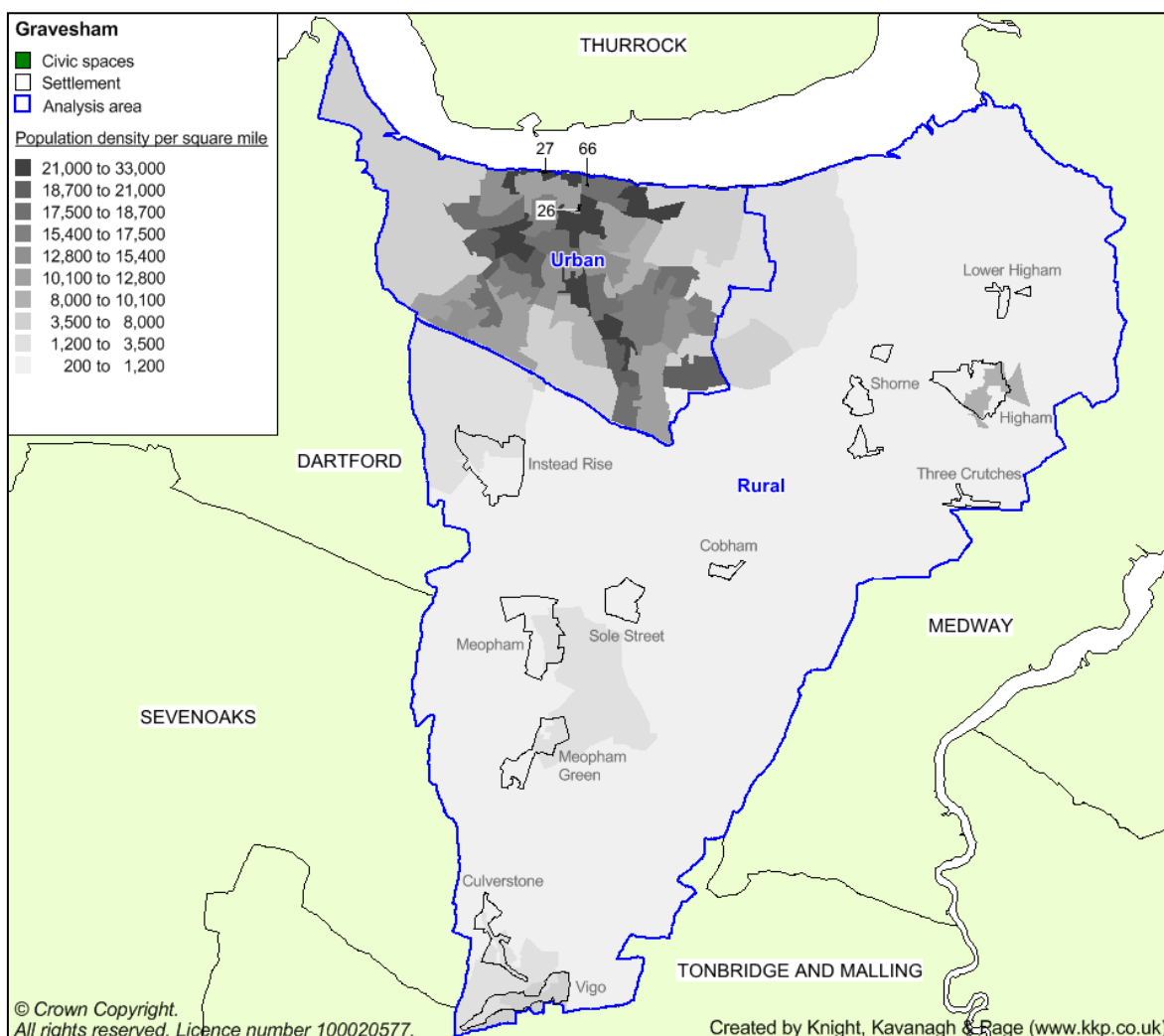


Table 10.2: Key to sites mapped

Site ID	Site name	Analysis area	Quality score	Value score
26	Community Square	Urban	71.3%	45.0%
27	Clifton Marine Parade	Urban	42.3%	19.0%
66	Gravesend Market Square	Urban	36.2%	38.0%

The Rural Analysis Area is without access to designated civic space provision. However, it is reasonable to accept that formal civic space may only be at existing sites of provision especially in areas of greater population density.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

10.4 Quality

In order to determine whether sites are high or low quality (as recommended by guidance); the scores from the site assessments have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the quality assessment for civic spaces in Gravesham. A threshold of 50% is applied in order to identify high and low quality. Further explanation of how the quality scores and thresholds are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 10.3: Quality ratings for civic spaces by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <50%	High >50%
Urban	141	36%	50%	71%	35%	2	1
Rural	141	-	-	-	-	-	-
GRAVESHAM	141	36%	50%	71%	35%	2	1

Out of the three civic space sites, only one scores above the set threshold for quality: Community Square. This site is noted to have a number of features including lighting, litter bins, seating and signage. It is also reported to have good pathways and disabled access. The site is observed as being aesthetically pleasing and well maintained. As a result of its features and appearance this site scores highly (71%) for quality.

The two sites scoring below the threshold: Gravesend Market Square and Clifton Marine Parade score 36% and 42% respectively. These sites lack features such as signage. Gravesend Market Square is also observed as being within a car park with no seating or bins. Both sites are additionally noted as rating low for disabled access. Not ideal given the role of civic space provision to hold community events. This combined with a lack of key features subsequently leads to a low quality score.

The Gravesend Market Square site is affected by the proposed development of the Heritage Quarter. This will see the Market Square replaced by a new civic space set amongst surrounding buildings with active ground floor uses. Subsequently this will see improvements and an increase in the amount of civic space provision in Gravesham.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

10.5 Value

To determine whether sites are high or low value (as recommended by the Companion Guidance) site assessment scores have been colour-coded against a baseline threshold (high being green and low being red). The table below summarises the results of the value assessment for civic spaces in Gravesham. A threshold of 20% is applied in order to identify high and low value. Further explanation of how the value scores and thresholds are derived can be found in Part 2 (Methodology).

Table 10.4: Value ratings for civic spaces by analysis area

Analysis area	Maximum score	Scores			Spread	No. of sites	
		Lowest score	Average score	Highest score		Low <20%	High >20%
Urban	100	19%	34%	45%	26%	1	2
Rural	100	-	-	-	-	-	-
GRAVESHAM	100	19%	34%	45%	26%	1	2

Two out of the three civic spaces are assessed as being of high value, reflecting their important function to the local community and area, for example holding regular community events such as markets (Gravesend Market Square). This is further supported by site visit observations, which confirms amenity benefits and a sense of place due to them being located in urban settings.

Despite Clifton Marine Parade scoring below the threshold, all three sites are observed as having high levels of use, further emphasising their importance within communities.

10.6 Summary

Civic space summary

- ◀ There are three sites classified as civic spaces in Gravesham; equating to less than one hectares of provision.
- ◀ Only one site scores high for quality due to it being aesthetically pleasing, well maintained and having a number of features such as lighting, bins and signage. It also has good disabled access.
- ◀ Two sites score below the set threshold for quality: Gravesend Market Square and Clifton Marine Parade. These sites lack features and rate low for disabled access.
- ◀ Gravesend Market Square forms part of the proposed development of the Heritage Quarter. This will likely create an increase in the amount and quality of civic space in Gravesend.
- ◀ Two out of the three civic spaces are assessed as being of high value. Despite Clifton Marine Parade scoring below the threshold, all three sites are observed as having high levels of use, further emphasising their importance within communities.

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX 1: EXAMPLE ONLINE SURVEY



Parks and Open Spaces Survey

This questionnaire is designed to provide you with the opportunity to give your views on the provision of open space and outdoor recreational facilities in Gravesham.
Please complete the survey by selecting the appropriate box(es) or by typing in your answer.
All responses will be treated in the strictest confidence. Results will only be used for the purposes of the study and will not be used for any commercial purposes.

Q1 How often have you visited each of these open space and outdoor recreation facilities within Gravesham in the last twelve months?
Select ONE on each line

	<i>More than once a week</i>	<i>Once a week</i>	<i>2-3 times a month</i>	<i>Once a month</i>	<i>Less than once a month</i>	<i>Never</i>	<i>Don't know / no opinion</i>
Park, public garden or recreation ground	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nature area (e.g. woodland, wildlife site).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Play area for children.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teenage provision (e.g. skatepark, teen shelter, basketball pod)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open space in residential area (e.g. grassed area in housing estates, village green)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor sports facilities (e.g. football pitches, bowling greens & tennis courts).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allotments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cemeteries and churchyards.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Civic space (e.g. civic or market square, war memorial).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q2 Which open spaces/outdoor recreation facilities in Gravesham have you visited most frequently in the last twelve months?

Q3 Have you visited open space/outdoor recreation facilities outside Gravesham in the last twelve months?

Yes..... No.....

If yes, please specify where and for what reason

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Q4 Thinking about the open spaces and outdoor recreation facilities you have visited in Gravesham, what are your reasons for visiting these facilities?
Please tick ALL that apply

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| To play sport/games informally | <input type="checkbox"/> | To relax/contemplate..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To exercise..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | To meet with friends | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To play sport/games formally (e.g. attend a class, play a competitive game)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | To observe wildlife | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To take a shortcut/pleasant route..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | To take children to play/use the play area | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To walk the dog..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | To spend lunchtime..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To enjoy floral displays/nature | <input type="checkbox"/> | To see events/entertainment..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| For a family outing | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- Please specify.....

Q5 What are the main reasons that prevent you from using open space and outdoor recreation facilities in Gravesham?
Please tick ALL that apply

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Don't know where the facilities are..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Facilities are too far away | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Wrong type of facilities provided..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Hours of opening not suitable..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Lack of public facilities (e.g. toilets, café) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Not interested/nothing there for me | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Fear of crime/personal safety | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mobility and access problems..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Presence of dogs..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Facilities are not maintained or are in a state of disrepair | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Too busy working | <input type="checkbox"/> | Car parking problems..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Too expensive..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Don't know | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sites too busy to enjoy..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
- Please specify.....

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

OVERALL VIEWS

Q6 How far are you willing to travel to visit the following?

Select ONE on each line

	Less than 5 minute walk	5-10 minute walk	11-15 minute walk	Over 15 minute walk	Up to 10 minutes by transport	Up to 30 minutes by transport	Over 30 minutes journey time	Don't know / no opinion
Park, public garden or recreation ground	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nature area (e.g. woodland, wildlife site)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Play area for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teenage provision (e.g. skatepark, teen shelter, basketball pod)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open space in residential area (e.g. grassed area in housing estates, village green)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor sports facilities (e.g. football pitches, bowling greens & tennis courts)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allotments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cemeteries and churchyards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Civic space (e.g. civic or market square, war memorial)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q7 Thinking about all the different types of open spaces, overall how important or unimportant are open spaces to you?

Please select ONE only

Very important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not very important	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quite important	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not at all important	<input type="checkbox"/>
Neither important nor unimportant	<input type="checkbox"/>	No opinion	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q8 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the AMOUNT of each of the following in the area where you live?

Please select ONE on each line

	Very satisfied	Quite satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Quite dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know / no opinion
Park, public garden or recreation ground	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nature area (e.g. woodland, wildlife site)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Play area for children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teenage provision (e.g. skatepark, teen shelter, basketball pod)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open space in residential area (e.g. grassed area in housing estates, village green)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor sports facilities (e.g. football pitches, bowling greens & tennis courts)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allotments	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cemeteries and churchyards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Civic space (e.g. civic or market square, war memorial)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you are 'very dissatisfied' with the amount of provision please provide further details

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Q9 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the QUALITY of each of the following in the area where you live?

Please select ONE on each line

	Very satisfied	Quite satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Quite dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know / no opinion
Park, public garden or recreation ground	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nature area (e.g. woodland, wildlife site)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Play area for children.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teenage provision (e.g. skatepark, teen shelter, basketball pod)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Open space in residential area (e.g. grassed area in housing estates, village green)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outdoor sports facilities (e.g. football pitches, bowling greens & tennis courts).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allotments.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cemeteries and churchyards.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Civic space (e.g. civic or market square, war memorial).....	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you are 'very dissatisfied' with **quality** of provision please provide further details

Q10 Thinking about where you live, what do you think is most important when it comes to the open spaces in your community?

Please select up to 4

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Attractiveness of sites, e.g. well-kept grass, flower beds and trees | <input type="checkbox"/> | Use existing spaces better (e.g. for other activities or events) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| New open spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> | Improve access to open spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| New facilities at existing open spaces | <input type="checkbox"/> | Better awareness of where open spaces are | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Repairs and improvement to existing facilities (e.g. footpaths, seats, shelters, heritage features)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | More community involvement in looking after open spaces..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cleanliness and maintenance..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| More naturalised areas (e.g. for nature and wildlife)..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | | |

Please specify.....

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Q11 Do you have any other comments on the provision of open spaces in Gravesham?

To help us get responses from a range of people, it would be helpful if you could give us some information about you.

Q12 Please select your gender

Female Male

Q13 Please select your age band

Under 16..... 45-64
16-24..... 65+
25-44.....

Q14 To which of the following groups do you consider you belong?

Asian or Asian British White
Black or Black British Other ethnic group (including Chinese).....
Mixed.....

Q15 What is your full home postcode or the area you live? E.g. DA12 1AU

This information will only be used for the purposes of mapping the survey responses and will not be used for any other reason

Postcode

Area

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP AND CO-OPERATION

Please return the questionnaire to:

Open Space Survey
Gravesham Borough Council
Civic Centre
Windmill Street
Gravesend
DA12 1AU

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

APPENDIX 2: ONLINE COMMUNITY SURVEY RETURNS

Parks and Open Spaces Survey

To gather the wider views of residents and users of open space provision in Gravesham an online Parks and Open Spaces Survey was created.

The survey ran for three months from 14th September to the 11th December. Links to the survey were made available via the council's website and posted on social media outlets. Hard copy paper versions of the survey were also made available at key community centres such as libraries.

A total of 209 completed surveys were returned. Analysis of the answers to the survey questions is set out in Part 3. A breakdown of the demographic data is provided below.

Q12. Gender

Please select your gender			
No reply	Female	Male	Base
16	129	64	209
7.7%	61.7%	30.6%	100.0%

Q13. Age bands

Please select your age band						
No reply	Under 16	16-24	25-44	45-64	65+	Base
5	2	15	59	107	21	209
2.4%	1.0%	7.2%	28.2%	51.2%	10.0%	100.0%

Q14. Ethnicity

To which of the following groups do you consider you belong?						
No reply	Asian or Asian British	Black or Black British	Mixed	White	Other ethnic group (including Chinese)	Base
13	9	3	4	178	2	209
6.2%	4.3%	1.4%	1.9%	85.2%	1.0%	100.0%

Q15. Postcode/area

A total of 194 out of the 209 respondents provided a postcode or locality. Of these, 178 map within Gravesham. These can be analysed by ward.

Ward	Analysis area	Respondents	%
Central	Urban	30	16.6%
Pelham	Urban	19	10.7%
Singlewell	Urban	15	8.4%
Northfleet South	Urban	15	8.4%
Riverside	Urban	12	6.7%

GRAVESHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL OPEN SPACE ASSESSMENT

Ward	Analysis area	Respondents	%
Whitehill	Urban	11	6.2%
Westcourt	Urban	11	6.2%
Woodlands	Urban	10	5.6%
Painters Ash	Urban	7	3.9%
Riverview	Urban	8	4.5%
Coldharbour	Urban	7	3.9%
Meopham North	Rural	7	3.9%
Northfleet North	Urban	6	3.4%
Meopham South and Vigo	Rural	7	3.9%
Shorne, Cobham and Luddesdown	Rural	6	3.4%
Chalk	Urban	3	1.7%
Istead Rise	Rural	3	1.7%
Higham	Rural	1	0.6%
Total	Gravesham	178	99.7%

Children survey

A simplified online survey was also created to aim at children of primary school age. The link was distributed to any primary school that wanted pupils to take part in the survey following a request being sent out by the Council. A breakdown of the age and gender data for the 129 completed surveys is set out below.

Age

Please select your age band								
No reply	Under 6	6	7	8	9	10	11	Base
14	11	11	24	18	17	28	6	129
10.9%	8.5%	8.5%	18.6%	13.9%	13.2%	21.7%	4.7%	100.0%

Gender

Please select your gender			
No reply	Girl	Boy	Base
15	59	55	129
11.6%	45.7%	42.7%	100.0%